

**THE GEETĀ:  
AS A CHAITANYITE READS IT**

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**THE GEETĀ:  
AS A CHAITANYITE READS IT**

**BY**

**TRIDANDI SWAMI B. H. BON**

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TO  
MY MASTER  
**PARAMAHANSA SRILA SARASWATI GOSWĀMI,**  
WHO IS NO MORE IN THIS WORLD



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**INTRODUCTION**

***BY TRIDANDI SWAMI B. H. BON***



## INTRODUCTION

Vedic Literature is vast. It has more than often been difficult for the short-lived and blunt intellect of the self-forgetful fettered jivas of this Kali Age to assimilate and digest the hidden meaning and purpose of human life, implicitly described therein. The Vedas are like a beautiful flower-garland—the flowers of Karma, Jnāna, Yoga, and Bhakti being strung together with the thread of a progressive thought that ultimately binds the two ends at the Absolute. But what is this implicit thread, readers of the Vedas have often missed to catch. Some accepted Karma, some Jnāna, some Yoga and some Bhakti, wrongly believing that each of these paths would lead them to the ultimate End. The truth was that these were gradual steps, and should be followed according to one's normal inclination in a particular station in life.

There came a time in India when the country was under a heat-wave of ambitious Karmins, wrangling Jnānins, austere Yogins and ardent Bhaktas, who all based their messages on the Vedas. The result was that the laity did not know what was the right interpretation of the Scriptures. Owing to the misidentification of these readers of



their real selves, they failed to grasp the Transcendental Undivided Knowledge of the Vedas, and their reading was like one's indigestion of food which is swallowed without proper mastication.

It was, therefore, towards the end of Dwāpara and in the beginning of the Kali Age that the Supreme Lord Sree Krishna was graciously pleased to address His Own friend Arjuna, in order to teach and save the fallen, on the only Path to the realisation of the Highest Bliss in life, independent for ever of all unwholesomeness of the relativities of mundane time and space. The Lord showed a Way how to get from the phenomenal world to the Transcendental Realm. Thus this Address of Sree Krishna to Arjuna in the Geetā became the sum and substance of all the Four Vedas, the Sruties, the Smrities and the Purānas.

It is divided into Eighteen chapters, which are, in fact, from the Twenty-fifth to the Forty-second chapters of the Bhisma-Canto of the Mahābhārata.

The Geetā opens with a question by the old politician and worldly-wise King Dhritarāstra, who was also blind. Sanjaya answers him in the following seven hundred verses, but, strangely enough, the name of King Dhritarāstra is never again mentioned in the whole of the Geetā. When Dharma or



**Absolute Duty is challenged by Karma or relative duties, the result cannot possibly be conceived by the physical and intellectual capacities of empiricists who are blinded by self-forgetfulness. The solution is given by Sree Krishna. The Pāndavas from the plane of Dharma (Dharmakshetra), being instructed by Sree Krishna, received the challenge of the sons of Dhritarāstra on the field of Karma (Kurukshetra) and defeated them—the relative duties in human life were subordinated to the absolute duty of all souls.**

**The Geetā has shown a clear-cut way as to how one should follow the gradual steps in one's onward march to the Destination of all human life, according to the particular inclination and aptitude of individuals in their abnormal existence of self-forgetfulness, which should all harmoniously and favourably be subservient to Unalloyed Devotion or Bhakti, which is the normal nature of a freed soul. The Summum bonum of life is the loving service of the Godhead. Loving service of the Supreme Personality of God lies in self-dedication, which is positive; selfishness is hellish, selflessness is negative, while unconditional self-surrendering is positive and divine.**

**There are books which have laid stress on Karma or Jñāna, and have even gone to the extent**



of holding the view that Karma and Jñāna are the the highest paths to follow. But on a close analysis we can understand their significance. Karma and Jñāna have been prescribed for those whose normal tendencies in their abnormal existences are so inclined on the relative physical and mental planes respectively; while the Sruties and the Smrities as well as the Geetā have definitely established the supremacy and positiveness of Unalloyed Devotion or Bhakti to be the final Means to the Ultimate End on the Plane of Transcendence, Where the Means and the End are identical. Prema-Bhakti is not tinged by the baseness of the rind of fruitive Karma and the seed of dry Jñāna. Prema-Bhakti is like a sweet ripe fruit which has no rind and no seed.

Readers of the Geetā may be divided into two groups : the exoteric and the esoteric. The former are busy with the externalities, such as grammar and the literary merits of the Book, while the latter are earnestly desirous of entering into the depth of the intended Teachings of Sree Krishna. It is for this reason that the superficial readers of the Geetā hold that Karma, enjoined by the Shāstras and prescribed for Brāhmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras as well as for Brahmachārins, Grihasthas, Vānaprasthas and Sannyāsins, is eternal ; that



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Arjuna followed the Varna-dharma of a Kshatriya by giving battle to his enemies, and that therefore Karma was the object-lesson of Sree Krishna. But to the serious readers of the Geetā, this view is untenable, and they consider it to be too gross and superficial an approach to the great Geetā. They hold either Brahma-Jnāna—Knowledge of the Absolute, or Parā-Bhakti—Unalloyed Devotion, to be the real purpose of the Geetā. According to the esoteric reading of the Geetā, Arjuna's acceptance of fighting as a Kshatriya was only an example of one's adherence to the relative duties in a particular station in life ; but Sree Krishna's ultimate teaching was to adjust all the relative duties to the absolute duty of unconditionally surrendering to the Wishes of the Supreme Lord.

In this world it is but wisdom to act according to one's normal tendencies in the abnormal state of existence ; otherwise life would be unbearable and unprogressive. The innate function of an individual soul in its normal realisation of its eternal aptitudes should not be misidentified with the normal inclinations of a fettered entity in its abnormal state of being engrossed in the physical body of flesh and blood and the subtle body of mind, intelligence and perverted ego. Karma is, therefore, essential in order to have a smooth living. Karma, when rightly



directed and its fruits dedicated to the Supreme Receiver of every object, helps true understanding and right perspective of the phenomenal objects, as well as further enkindles in the individual the fire of pure Knowledge of the Transcendental World; this Jñāna awakens the dormant nature of the pure soul, which is Bhakti or loving service to the Transcendental Personality of the Godhead.

Karma and the relative duties with reference to the body and the mind have distant relation to Undivided Knowledge. Bhakti is the direct function of the soul. So long as individual entities are not freed from the shackles of worldly affinities, Karma and Varna-dharma are unavoidable. The duty of giving battle to his enemies was incumbent on Arjuna as a Kshatriya by birth, which he performed; but Arjuna as an individual soul surrendered himself unconditionally to the Wishes of Sree Krishna, the Supreme Lord. The one was his absolute duty, while the other was his relative duty. His relative duty of Karma was subordinated to his absolute duty of Bhakti or self-dedication.

The real teaching of the Geetā therefore is that one should follow Karma according to one's rights and abilities in the particular station and stage of life in which he is placed in his state of bondage, while his ulterior aim of life should be to realise his



reciprocal relationship with, and the eternal function towards, the Supreme Lord Who is ever beyond the reach of man's physical and mental senses as well as objects of phenomena.

Our present engrossed state of existence within the four walls of the limitations of mundane time and space is not palatable indeed. It is certainly wise to aspire after a life eternal in an atmosphere of divine bliss in the kingdom of God, Which is a perfect system, instead of being enchained by the ties of worldliness and changeabilities. This eternal and ever progressive blissful life should be the End in view. To achieve an eternal End, the Means need necessarily be eternal—a changeable Means leads one to an uncertain End.

Various means have been laid down by various teachers with the aim of attaining to the eternal flow of felicity in the heart of the soul. Some have described sacrificial rites, some have prescribed Yoga and concentration of the mental faculties and physical senses, some have eulogised logical wranglings some have stressed upon piety, austerities, abnegation, others have given more importance to the worship of and prayers to God, performance of one's duties, self dedication, etc.—as the Means to the same End. But on close examination, we can divide all these various paths mainly into three prin-



principles of Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti. All these different paths as means to an end though professing to attain the same end do not really lead one to the same conclusion—in fact, every path has its particular end to reach, quite distinct from the rest. Ends which are apparently similar in nature need not be identical—a glow worm and a spark are similar in appearance, but they are not the same.

All souls are animate eternal beings with no beginning and no end, like the Godhead. Souls can neither be created nor can they be destroyed. They are identical in nature, in essence with God, and at the same time distinct from Him. Like the rays of the Sun, the souls are many and God is One; they are infinitesimal separated parts of the Godhead and therefore liable to be overpowered by the influence of Māyā, while God is always the Lord of Māyā. The birth of an individual soul is nothing else but being imprisoned within the four walls of time and space, the prisoner's dress being the physical and mental bodies and the fetters the chains of wordly affinities. How and why these transcendental entities come in contact with mundane existence is beyond human conception—the only way to explain this anomaly is to ascribe it to the inscrutable Will and Wishes of God.



These souls are either freed or engrossed. Those who are not shackled to the chains of *Māyā* are the freed, while those who misidentify their eternal selves with the physical body and subtle mind are the engrossed.

The freed souls are of two kinds—those who are eternally free from mundane bondage, and those fettered souls who have attained to the stage of self-realisation. Both these self-realised souls are beyond the scope of the Scriptures. The scriptural injunctions on the distinctive conceptions of Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti are synthesised and harmonised on the plane of transcendence of the Muktas—the freed. But they have their special application to the particular stage of life of the fettered jivas or souls. Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti merge into the stream of Divine Love or Prema with the Muktas, while Karma and Jñāna are gradual steps in life to the fettered which lead them to Bhakti. In the engrossed stage of individuals when Karma and Jñāna attempt to challenge Bhakti and try to take an independent stand, they are soon diagnosed to be the delirious symptoms of the self-forgetful unhealthy souls; Bhakti is the sign of their normal health.

In the *Geetā* there are eighteen chapters. Karma is described in the first six chapters, Bhakti



in the middle six chapters, and Jnāna is explained in the last six chapters. Having described them separately, Bhakti has again been finally established to be the Highest Means to the Highest End. Karma and Jnāna are like two bye-lanes which meet the Main Road of Bhakti from either side. Bhakti is therefore described in the middle six chapters. Bhakti is the life, Karma and Jnāna are, as it were, its gross and subtle bodies respectively. The final teaching of Sri Krishna to Arjuna is given towards the end of the eighteenth chapter when the Lord says :

“Forsake all socio-religious systems  
 Of caste and stations in earthly life,  
 Renunciation of Karma or action,  
 Abandonment of the fruitive Karma,  
 Rigid austerities in order to control the inner  
 and outer senses,  
 Meditation, concentration of attention,  
 Obedience to the grandeur and lordliness of  
 Iswara  
 And all such things that have been told before  
 In order to gain knowledge of Brahman and  
 Paramātman.  
 Shun them all,  
 Take absolute refuge in Me, Who am the  
 Highest Divinity—



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The Supreme Lord of all gods.  
Then shall I deliver thee  
From all the bondage of this world  
As well as from offences and all sins and  
penalties  
That may arise from thy abandonment of all  
those duties  
That are enjoined thee by the Scriptures.”—

This is the most secret teaching of the Geetā.  
This great truth cannot be understood by those who  
are blinded by the vanities of high lineage, immense  
opulence, vast erudition and beauties of youth.

In this volume I have made an attempt to put  
in English an explanatory translation of the Geetā  
on the basis of the philosophy and teachings of  
Sri Krishna-Chaitanya, Who was born at Sri  
Māyāpur in the district of Nadia in Bengal in 1486  
A. C. There are, no doubt, other translations of the  
Geetā, but they are based on the monistic com-  
mentary of Sri Sankara, whereas I have tried to  
give a running explanation of the important verses,  
or otherwise giving an English rendering of the  
ordinary verses, according to the commentaries of  
Sri Viswanātha Chakravartty, Valadeva Vidyā-  
bhusan and Srila Thākura Bhakti Vinode, the pioneer  
of the revival of the Bhakti-cult in Bengal in the  
present century. There has not been a single



attempt till now to put in English an explanation of the Geetā as a Vishnuvite in general and a Chaitanyite in particular read it. In presenting this English explanatory translation of the Geetā according to the interpretations of Vaishnava teachers to the English reading public, my only motive is to serve the wishes of my Master Paramahansa Srila Saraswati Goswāmi, who is no more in this world.

There are several Sanskrit commentaries on the Geetā, the oldest available is that of Sree Hanumān. The more commonly read commentaries are those of Sri Sankara, Sri Rāmānuja, and Sri Madhwa and Sri Valadeva. We hear of the "Geetā-tātparya" of Yāmunāchārya before the time of Sri Rāmānuja. The commentaries of Sridhar Swāmi known as "Subodhini-tikā," and the "Gitārth-Vivarana" of Sri Vallabha and the "Geetā-tātparya" of his son Sri Vitthala are also famous amongst scholars. The "Amrita-tarangini" of Sri Pursottama is also widely read. "Tattva-prakāsikā" of Keshava Kashmiri belongs to the Nimbārka School. The "Geetā-bhāṣya-vivechana" of Sri Ānanda Giri and the commentary of Sri Madhusudana Saraswati belong to the pantheistic school. Besides these, the names of the following commentators of the Geetā are also fairly well known: Arjuna Misra, Chaturbhuja, Janārdana Bhatta,



Devabodh, Devaswāmi, Nandakishore, Nārāyana-Sarbajna, Nilakāntha, Chaturdhara, Paramānanda Bhattāchārya, Jajnanārāyana, Ratnagarbha, Lakshmana Bhatta, Bimalbodh, Vaisampāyana, Srinivāsāchārya, Madhyamandir, Varadrāj, Vyāsātirtha, Satyabhinava Yati, Angesvarapāl, Krishnāchārya, Keshava Bhatta, Jayatirtha, Jayārāma, Rāghavendra, Rāmānanda Tirtha, Vidyādhirāj and others.

But amongst this galaxy of commentators on the Geetā, the commentary of Sri Viswanātha Chakravartty is most lucid and soul-stirring as well as greatly valued by the Vaishnava Schools. To the readers of Bhāgavatam, the name of Viswanātha is well known, because of his simple and yet forceful commentaries on these great works. All his commentaries are overflowed with the nectar of Divine Love for the Supreme Lord. Sri Viswanātha Chakravartty comes in the preceptorial order of the Gaudiya School, whose disciple was Valadeva Vidyābhusan, who wrote "Govinda-Bhāsyam" of the Brahma Sutras. Viswanātha was born in a Brāhmin family in the Nadia district, sometimes towards the close of the 16th century. There are few in the Gaudiya School who wrote so many volumes of Sanskrit Books as Sri Viswanātha—he left a vast Vaishnava literature behind him. In this volume I have based my explanation mainly on his commentary.



It is hoped that this new explanation of the Geetā in English, based on the Chaitanya philosophy and unalloyed devotion and transcendental Love or Prema to the Supreme Personality of Sri Krishna, will throw light on the Vaishnava outlook of approach to the teachings of Lord Krishna to Arjuna in the great book of the Hindus.

A Chaitanyite reads the Geetā with the eyes of unalloyed devotion, beautified with the collirium of Divine Love. If this volume will help to waken a love for God in the heart of the readers, I shall feel that I have been able to render some service to my Master.

I beg to take the opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Miss Sara de Laredo who revised and polished my English rendering. I am thankful to my friend Swami B. P. Tirtha who helped me in understanding some of the verses. I have also the pleasure of acknowledging the kindness of Mr. E. G. Schulze and Sri Pyarimohan Brahmachāri, Bhakti-Shastri, Kārukovid, who took great pains in typing the manuscript copy.

Morvi State Guest House,  
Morvi, Kathiwar. }  
The 15th March, 1938. }

B. H. BON.



## CHAPTER ONE

### *ARJUNA INSPECTS THE ARMY*



# THE GEETĀ:

## AS A CHAITANYITE READS IT

### CHAPTER ONE

#### ARJUNA INSPECTS THE ARMY

“**S**AID Dhritarāstra, “O Sanjaya !  
What did Duryodhana  
And my other sons and the Pāndavas,  
Led by Yudhisthira, do  
When, intent on giving battle they assembled  
On the sacred field of Kurukshetra ?”  
Sanjaya answered, “Majesty !  
When this king Duryodhana saw  
The troops of the Pāndavas  
Marshalled in military array,  
Approached he Dronāchārya saying,

“**M**ASTER ! see the force great  
Of the Pāndavas,  
Who are massed in close formation  
By your talented disciple,  
Dhristadyumna the son of Drupada.  
In that army are matchless archers,



Bhima and Arjuna, and  
 Other heroes of equal prowess  
 As the warrior Sātyaki and Virāta,  
 Drupada the mighty charioteer,  
 Dhristaketu and Purujit,  
 Famous Savya, the mighty Yudhāmanyu,  
 The great King of Benares, and Kuntibhoja,  
 Abhimanyu son of great Subhadrā,  
 And Draupadi's five sons—  
 All are expert charioteers.

“**P**RECEPTOR! now I name  
 All the commanders of our forces.  
 Besides the conquerors invincible like you,  
 Bhishma, Karna, Kripa, Aswatthamā,  
 Vikarna and Bhurishravā, son of Somadatta,  
 Jayadratha and countless other heroes  
 Who are adroit in fighting and well equipped  
 With various offensive and defensive weapons  
 Are ready to sacrifice their lives for me.  
 Our forces marshalled by  
 Great Bhishma are enormous  
 While the forces of the Pāndavas  
 Led by Bhima are but limited.\*

---

\* In the sense of encouraging Drona: Our force though small will yet come out victorious under the skilful and exceptional command of Bhishma, and therefore seem enormous, against the huge army of the Pāndavas under the command of the less intelligent and inefficient charioteer Bhima, which thereby becomes limited.



Or

Our forces marshalled by great Bhisma  
Are not sufficient to cope  
With the Pāndavas' huge, strong force  
Under the command of Bhima.†  
Now it behoves you, Bhisma, to defend  
From your respective phalanxes."

“**T**HEN the mighty, venerable Bhisma,  
Aged grand-sire of the Kurus,  
Sounded the war-cry on his conch-shell  
To encourage Duryodhana.  
Simultaneously with loud blasts on the conch-shell,  
Trumpets, tabors and the beating of the drums,  
Came the vigorous martial music.  
On the other side Sree Krishna, the Lord of the  
senses,  
And Arjuna riding in a splendid chariot  
Drawn by a pair of horses white,  
Placed the lordly bugles to Their lips  
And sounded a noble fan-fare.

---

† In the sense of the power of foresight of Duryodhana: though our forces under the command of Bhisma are far greater than the limited troops of Pāndavas under the lead of Bhima and though Bhisma far excels Bhima in keen intelligence, experience and knowledge of warfare, yet our huge army is not sufficiently competent to fight against the limited force of the Pāndavas owing to the fact that Bhisma is favourably disposed to the Pāndavas, and therefore our force is limited while the Pāndavas have a stronger army.



“**T**HE bugle-calls of Krishna and Arjuna then  
Were played respectively on “Pāñchajanya”  
and on “Devadatta”;

Loud was the clarion-call from Bhima’s “Paundra.”  
The clarions of the son of Kunti,  
Yudisthira, Nakula and Sahadeva  
Respectively were “Ananta-Vijaya,” “Sugosha” and  
“Manipuspaka.”

The dexterous archer King of Benares,  
The great charioteer Sikhandi,  
Dhristadyumna, Virāta and invincible Sātyaki,  
And “Ruler of the earth, O Dhritarāstra!” said  
Sanjaya,

“Drupada, the five sons of Draupadi,  
And Abhimanyu Subhadrā’s mighty son—  
All these sent out their clarion-calls.  
The mighty trumpets sounded o’er the earth  
Echoing across the far horizon,  
Cleaving the hearts of Dhritarāstra’s sons  
With terror of heart-breaking.

“Your Majesty!” said Sanjaya to Dhritarāstra,  
“Seated in his monkey-crested chariot,  
Beholding the soldiers of your offspring’s  
Faction ready to give battle,  
Setting his arrow to his bow,  
Thus said Arjuna to Sree Krishna :”



**“O** Indestructible !  
 Place Thou my chariot between the army  
 That I may see the army I am to fight,  
 And discern those who have espoused the cause,  
 And assembled here as partisans  
 Of the evil-minded Duryodhana.”  
 Sanjaya said, “Bhārata !  
 When thus besought by Gudākesha\* Arjuna,  
 Sree Krishna Who knew well the heart of him,  
 Placed the majestic chariot amidst the army, saying  
 “O Pārtha ! behold thou Bhishma,  
 Drona and other Kauravas  
 Assembled here to fight.”  
 Arjuna beheld amidst the armies of both factions,  
 His paternal uncle, brothers, grand-sire and pre-  
 ceptor,  
 Maternal uncle, father-in-law, and many other  
 friends.  
 Thus seeing his friends and kinsmen  
 Ready to give battle in the field,  
 Arjuna, son of Kunti, was greatly moved to pity,  
 And cried out in grief :

---

\* The word “Gudākesha” means : One who has conquered sleep owing to his constant remembrance of the friendly affection and divine fascinating beauties of the Supreme Personality of Sree Krishna. Or, One being beloved of Sree Krishna is loved by Brahmā, Vishnu and Siva.



“**O**H Krishna ! seeing these my friends and  
near kinsmen

Awaiting the signal to begin to fight,  
My limbs droop and my lips are parched,  
My body trembles, my hair doth stand on end,  
My hand relaxes upon Gāndiva, my bow,  
And my skin is scorched.  
I am failing in strength,  
My mind is utterly bewildered ;  
Keshava ! I discern signs ominous which auger ill.  
I find no good resulting from the killing  
Of friends and relatives in battle.  
O Krishna ! I no longer crave for victory  
Nor have I any more ambition to enjoy kingdom.

“**O** Govinda !\* what further need have we now  
of a kingdom ?

What need for happiness and pleasure ?  
What good is there in saving life ?  
For, all those for whom kingdom and wealth are  
worth having  
Are now all present here to fight.  
If Thou dost argue that even at the cost of my own  
life,  
I should fight to gain kingdom,  
Wealth and happiness for my own friends,  
In the present circumstance there is no certainty

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\* Govinda—One Who satisfies the functions of all senses  
and therefore knows the feelings of the heart.



If all these for whom I am to seek  
Such happiness will but survive  
As they are all assembled here to fight.

“IF Thou holdest, my Lord !  
That I should exterminate all foes  
For the safety and prosperity of the kingdom,  
Even then do I decline  
To adopt such jealous process of brutal slaughter.  
If the argument be that I must kill  
But sons of Dhritarāstra and not others  
Who put us to countless tribulations and afflictions,  
What peace can the Pāṇdavas hope to have here-  
after  
When the first rush of glorious victory be over,  
And they writhe in torture at the recollection  
That they had killed their brothers ?  
Should any one be killed, that must be done  
By Thee alone, O Lord !  
For Thou art the Creator,  
Preserver and Destroyer of this world—  
Nor sin nor piety can touch Thee.  
And therefore the taking of the lives  
Of all these here assembled to fight  
Does not befit me at all.

“WHEN I see, Madhusudana !  
That teacher, father, son, grand-sire,



Maternal uncle, father-in-law, and grand-son,  
 Brothers-in-law, friends and relatives—  
 All have resolved to sacrifice their lives and treasure—  
 And are ready now to fight upon this field of battle,  
 I do not wish by any means to kill them  
 Even though they rob us our lives.  
 O Janārdana ! what pleasure can derive  
 From the slaying of the sons of Dhritarāstra  
 Albeit that result  
 In the lordship of the triple world ?

✕ “**T**HOUGH statutory law approves  
 The killing of those criminals  
 Who perpetrate the crime arson,  
 Poisoning and robbery,  
 Yet will it be a sin against the laws of Scripture  
 To take the life of the superiors and elders,  
 Though they do prove to be such kind of enemies. ✕  
 ✕ I therefore feel myself not entitled  
 To kill the sons of Dhritarāstra  
 With their friends and kith and kin.  
 Mādhava, Lord of real knowledge !  
 What joy can ever come of killing kith and kin ?  
 Duryodhana and his friends are stupified by grief  
 And disregard the faults accruing to families effete,  
 And sin by treachery to friends;  
 But Janārdana !  
 Why should we not desist from sinful acts like these—



When they are so apparent unto us?  
When once traditional religious rites  
End with the passing of a family,  
Degeneration and unrighteousness do speedily  
corrupt the rest.

“O Krishna!—Jewel of the race of Brisni!  
When irreligion thus prevails, even noble  
maidens go astray,

An inter-marriage among the castes  
Disturbs the purity of blood.  
The origin of mixed blood leads  
A family and its pollutor into hell;  
The forebears of such family  
Are liable to sink to hell  
When they are deprived of funeral cakes and water..  
Age-old customs, rites, traditions  
And duties of pure caste  
Will be thus annulled by vices that promoted hybrid  
castes.

I am told, O Janārdana!  
That the families thus ruined  
Are perforce all doomed to hell.

A LAS! what tragedy!  
Intoxicated by the greed  
Of lording o'er a kingdom,  
We now resolve to sin outrageously



By dealing death to friends and relatives alike.  
When I, unarmed, refrain from retribution,  
If Dhritarāstra's sons should kill me in the fray,  
Then even that would I prefer as better far for me."  
This said, Arjuna cast aside his bow and arrow  
And sat on his chariot with a melancholy heart.

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**CHAPTER TWO**  
***THREAD OF THE BOOK***



## CHAPTER TWO

### THREAD OF THE BOOK

“**S**ANJAYA said, “Then seeing the dejection of  
Arjuna

Whose eyes were dim and moist with unshed tears,  
Madhusudana Who slays all mental anguish by His  
tender words,

Did with compassion then address the Prince Arjuna.

The Blessed Lord Sree Krishna said, “Arjuna !

Why art thou at this great trial overpowered by  
illusion:

Unmerited, disgraceful, a reproach to heaven,—

Unworthy of an Aryan ?

Son of Prithā ! succumb not to such cowardice

And be not destitute of all verility ;

It ill becomes thee.

✕ Being My friend thou dost not lack in valour;

Thou canst be conqueror of all thy worldly foes.

But this despondency is due to thy religious  
conscience

Concerning thy revered elders, Bhishma and the like.

Tormentor thou of enemies !

Out with this petty weakness of thy heart

And rise up thou to fight”. ✕



**A**RJUNA thus replied, "Madhusudana—Slaught-  
terer of foes !

How can I feel inclined to fight against my master  
Drona,

Or aim an evil arrow at great Bhishma the revered ?

'Twere better far to live on alms

Than kill great souls who are my own superiors.

If Thou wilt say that how can these be deemed 'great  
souls' ?

When they are mercenary teachers and therefore  
should be killed,

Even in such case destruction may bring forth

Prosperity in this poor world alone,

But can afford no peace or true felicity

In life allotted in the worlds to come.

If I should kill preceptors who are my superiors

And therefore held in high esteem,

I would perforce enjoy a world but stained with  
blood.

**"I** know not whether begging is to be preferred  
to war,

For, vanquished or victorious

We do not wish survival at the death

Of Dhritarāstra's sons who are now ready for the  
fray.

A beggar's life though free from jealousy

And all those pangs of separation after death,



Which are concomitants of war,  
 Is far beneath the dignity of a Kshatriya,  
 A ruling race, whose duty and religion is  
 To breast the arrows of his foes.  
 Conversely if we stood victorious in the fight,  
 'Twould be past bearing to endure  
 The pangs of separation from our kith and kin  
 And from the sons of Dhritarāstra,  
 Who are brothers all to us,  
 And the remembrance of the killing of the elders  
 And the jealousy arising out of love for worldly  
 pomp  
 Would torture us in consequence throughout an  
 after-life.  
 So entering upon a war  
 Whether we vanquish or be vanquished,  
 We shall be losers, and shall suffer in the end.  
 Thus placed upon the horns of a dilemma,  
 I dare not make a selection now of either course of  
 action.

**I** fall a victim to the stigma of rank cowardice  
 Owing to vacillation of my nature.  
 I cannot ascertain my duty at the present hour.  
 I therefore Thee implore, O Krishna!  
 To inform me what is good for me.  
 I am Thy true disciple.  
 Surrender I entirely to Thee,



And take Thee as my refuge.

Were I to attain the sovereignty of all the world,  
Free from impediments e'en the lordship over all  
the gods in heaven

Yet would I find no remedy against this grief  
That would absorb the vigour of my mind,  
And would torment my sense."

**S**ANJAYA said, "Then the tormentor of enemies  
And conqueror of sleep became taciturn ;  
Addressing the Lord of Senses Sri Krishna, he said,  
" Govinda ! I shall fight no more !"

Then, O Dhritarāstra ! smilingly  
Did the Lord of all senses speak to Arjuna  
Dejected in the midst of the belligerent."  
Now it beseemed the Lord Sree Krishna to reveal  
That a temporary abnegation  
That arose from griefs and earthly miseries  
Leads not to the renuciation of the world  
Or to the life of a recluse.

**T**HE Lord said unto Arjuna,

"Though thou speakest like the wise,  
Yet art thou mourning ; but the truly wise  
Do not lament nor for the living nor for the dead."  
To demonstrate the difference in Spirit and in  
Matter,  
Sree Krishna here explained that soul is everlasting



And not bound by the laws of bodily mortality  
 Being identical in nature with the Over-soul  
 And therefore there is no cause to grieve.  
 "Two kinds of souls there are" said He,—  
 "Paramātmā the Over-soul, and Jivātmā the individual soul.

I am the Over-soul—Paramātmā.  
 Thou and these Princes  
 Are individual souls—Jivātmās.  
 There was no time in all the ages past,  
 When I and thou and all these Princes  
 Did not live before;  
 Nor shall We cease to live in countless aeons yet to come;  
 In other words, We now exist,  
 And did exist, and shall, for all eternity."

**N**EXT He referred to the embodied souls, saying:  
 "Just as this fleshly body passes on  
 From childhood into youth, which in its turn  
 Becomes metamorphosed into maturity  
 And yet the corporeal self remains identical the while,  
 So does the soul not cease to be  
 Throughout its age-long cycle of births and deaths.  
 Thus it is that the intelligent  
 Do not deplore the loss by way of death  
 Of the soul's gross mortal tenement.



"O son of Kunti! sense-perceptions  
 Must be pleasant or be fraught with pain;  
 That which is pleasant in one instance  
 May be a pang when new conditions rule.  
 Welfare and woe, heat and the bitterness of the  
 cold,  
 And all the appetites of earth,  
 Have their existence but in the transient world of  
 sense.

It is a duty, commanded by the Scriptures  
 That thou endure them patiently.  
 Fighting, then, is no more or less  
 Than a religious duty of a Kshatriya,  
 Default of which involves grave penalty.

**G**REAT soul!

The temperate one who is not ruffled by the  
 heat or cold,  
 The pleasure or the pain of this material world,  
 May gain a blissful comprehension  
 Of the true nature of the self.  
 That body formed of flesh and blood is hardly real,  
 Hence changeable and thus ephemeral;  
 But, investing subtle mind and grosser body  
 The Jivātmā, individual soul, is real,  
 Unchangeable and thus eternal;  
 The soul is indestructible.  
 Grief and infatuation are the properties of nonsoul;



Springing from affinities of earth  
 They exist not in the transcendental plane of soul—  
 Eternal and immortal.  
 They who have learnt the purest Truth  
 Have made this great division :  
 Reality apart from non-reality,  
 Substance as distinct from shadow.  
 Hence the souls of Bhishma, Drona and others  
 Are immortal, though their bodies are destructible.

**J**IVA, the deathless soul, pervades man's body.  
 Though but a fraction of the Over-soul's  
 pure essence,  
 His potency sustains the body's life;  
 He cannot perish or be killed; he is eternal.  
 The gross and subtle bodies of the soul—  
 The physical and astral—but fetter its existence;  
 The soul though circumscribed  
 By time and space in earthly life  
 Is free, eternal, beyond measure  
 And can never be destroyed.  
 So Bhārata !  
 Rather than grieve at physical existence,  
 Fight as a dutiful Kshatriya should,  
 According to the Scriptures.  
 He, who imagines that one soul  
 Could possibly destroy another  
 Or itself be killed by any other soul,



Knows naught of truth.

A soul does not kill any one, nor suffers death itself.

**M**Y dear Arjuna ! being a soul thyself  
None can destroy thee or be destroyed by thee.

The Jiva-soul was never born;

He is eternal, existing in all time,

Before the past and far beyond the future.

No births and deaths for him

Nor process of decay or growth;

He is the ancient of all ancients,

Yet ever fresh and new;

Births and deaths associated with the body

Do not affect the soul;

There is no essential relation

Between him and his present body.

O Pārtha !

Can he who truly knows the soul to be immortal,

Unborn eternal and unchangeable,

Kill anyone or cause another to be killed ?

Just as a person dons new clothes

Casting aside his old and worn-out ones,

So the soul sheds, in regular succession,

His dying body entering upon a fresh life-span

In newer fleshly garb.

**N**O weapon can destroy him,

Nor water soil, nor air dry,



Nor fire burn him.

The soul can ne'er be cleft asunder:

He is beyond burning; nothing can soil him;

Nor can he e'er be absorbed;

He is omnivagous, serene, immutable, existing ever.

He is beyond description—

More subtle than the subtlest thing in the material world,

Beyond perception by the mortal eyes.

He is beyond conception, too.

Pervading all the body,

Surpassing human reasoning and thought

But realisable through transcendental sound.

He is immutable,

Not subject to the attributes that handicap the flesh,

Birth, hunger, thirst, disease, decrepitude and death;

Nor is he prone to lust, infatuation, fear,

Or anger, avarice, or grief or vanity

Or malice of the mind.

**K**NOWING the nature of the soul

Thou shouldst abandon all thy melancholy thought.

O Mighty-armed! if thou believest the soul

To be inseparably bound up with the body,

And that it shares its births and deaths

Within the cycle of fruitive action,

Or if thou holdst the view of the Vaibhāsika



That soul and body and consciousness are one,  
 Ending in complete annihilation;  
 Or once again if thou shouldst think  
 The soul is subject to eternal birth and death,  
 Even then hast thou no reason to be sorrowful:  
 Grief will debase thee to a still more heinous level  
 Than the worst of atheists.

**C**ONSIDER next the arguments of the logicians.

If at the expiry of either joy or pain  
 As the result of thy fruitive acts,  
 Death be inevitable after birth,  
 And if rebirth is certain after death  
 To suffer or enjoy the actions of this life,  
 Then does it not befit thee to lament  
 Over inevitable consequence.  
 If thou be led away by grief,  
 Thou wilt degrade thyself thereby  
 Far lower than the worst polemic.  
 O Bhārata ! those elements which manifest  
 Between the periods of birth and death  
 Become unmanifest again when they decay;  
 There is no use in wailing.  
 Though this belief is non-acceptable  
 By them who know the real nature of such  
 principles  
 Yet for the sake of argument if it be so admitted,  
 Then shouldst thou fight in order to fulfil



The duties of a Kshatriya.

**S**OME view the soul as marvellous;  
 Describe him in rich and wondrous terms,  
 And others, knowing him to be extra-ordinary,  
 Listen to his real nature;  
 Besides these, there are others  
 Who, despite their hearing, cannot understand him;  
 Out of such ignorance of the true nature of the  
 Jiva-soul  
 Arise the misconceptions of materialism,  
 Cessation of animation and monism.  
 In fact, corporeal souls continue to exist as entities  
 Eternally imperishable, even after death.  
 Therefore does it not befit thee  
 Thus to mourn for them.  
 If thou wilt but consider  
 The meet responsibilities of thy class in society,  
 Thou canst not be afraid of giving battle in this way,  
 For there is no more worthy act for a Kshatriya  
 Than to fight on for a cause that's right,  
 And such an act protects the subjects,  
 Rules righteously the kingdom  
 And helps subdue the foe.

**T**HE duties in society are twofold  
 In accordance with the freed  
 And bound state of the souls.



The duties of a soul unfettered  
 Transcend all gross and subtle references,  
 Whereas the duties of all the souls engrossed  
 In certain sections of society  
 Are more or less attributed to mundane relativities.  
 In their conditioned and diversified existences,  
 The duties of such souls accordingly do vary.  
 When a conditioned soul is born into the human  
 state,  
 His duties at that stage will then be appropriate  
 If they be classified into four parts and orders  
 Ruling life according to his qualities and actions  
 As laid down by the Scriptures.  
 Such stipulated duties then, are normally incumbent  
 Upon conditioned souls in this society.  
 What other course is therefore meet  
 For a Kshatriya, but to fight ?

**O** Pārtha ! happy those Kshatriya brave,  
 To whom this battle comes  
 Like unto an unexpected open door, direct to heaven.  
 If thou ledest not this battle in a righteous cause,  
 And sin by shirking now thy licit duties,  
 Thou wilt be forcibly diverted  
 From thy present path and fame.  
 Then will the world cry shame on thee for long  
 For infamy in men of high repute  
 Is worse than death.



Great charioteers who hold thee in such high esteem  
Will think but lightly of thee.

They will assume that thou hast turned

Thy back upon thine enemies in fear.

They will cry shame on thee and will deride thy  
prowess!

What more regrettable for thee

Than thou hear thine enemies revile thee?

O son of Kunti! if thou be killed in battle

Thou shalt enter heaven;

If thou emerge victorious, thou shalt enjoy the world.

Rise up, then, O Arjuna!

With a firm determination now to fight.

Sin will not touch thee if thou fight

With aim at final liberation,

Steadfast in indifference to weal or woe,

To gain or loss, defeat or victory.

**T**HUS far the diverse forms of Jñāna  
And social religious duties are described;

Now listen to the deeper concepts of Bhakti,

Loving service to the Personality of God,

That links the Karma-Yoga, elevation,

With that of Jñāna-Yoga, which for salvation  
stands.

Pārtha! If thou wilt cultivate the Yoga of devotion

Thine is the undying bliss

Of loosening the bonds that bind the world.



Karma which is action and Jñāna—intuitional perception,  
 Are two paths on the fleeting planes  
 Of mundane relativities,  
 And therefore limited, imperfect ;  
 Whereas Bhakti, service of souls to God's Divinity,  
 Is wholly of the transcendental Plane.

**W**HEN both Karma and Jñāna yield to Bhakti,  
 They blend into devotion, perfect path.  
 That which is Karma-Yoga  
 Aims at the limit of fruitive acts,  
 While Jñāna seeks to extend the aim  
 To abstract Knowledge or Sāṅkhya-Yoga.  
 That which transcends the bounds of both  
 And rise to the plane of true devotion,  
 Which is the normal service of devout pure souls,  
 Is known as Bhakti, or the perfect dedication  
 Of all intelligence towards eternal kinship.  
 Bhakti is the deathless link  
 Connecting all pure souls with God.  
 Sāṅkhya-Yoga gives the explanation  
 Most clearly of the diverse principles involved.¶

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¶ The slokas from 12 to 30 deal with the conception of the pure soul, and from 31 to 38 explain the nature of non-souls and their relative duties. The relation between soul and non-soul is described ahead.



**N**O effort to perform these services devotional  
 Will ever be in vain ;  
 Slight though this service be,  
 It will deliver the devotee  
 From all the horrors of the world.  
 When Jnānins do energise all their activities  
 To that objective only, keeping in view  
 The nature of the purest self  
 This is called "one definite unmixed intelligence",  
 While the attention of the shifting embodied souls  
 Aims at inclinations without limit.  
 Here apprehension enters  
 Lest actions be destroyed and duties be infringed.

Or

**O** Son of Kunti !  
 Bhakti-Yoga is of two fundamental kinds :  
 The first the primary devotional performances  
 As chanting, listening and meditation;  
 The secondary Bhakti does consist in absolutely  
 offering to Me  
 All the results of thy fruitive acts.  
 I am the sole Acme and the Aim  
 Of spiritual loving services.  
 Mind that is dedicated unto Me alone  
 Is based on firm conviction.  
 Devotees such as these are stable in their purpose.



But those who are indifferent to Me  
 Or no steadfast attachment have for Me  
 Do cultivate an inclination unawares  
 For multifarious fruitive acts.  
 As their attention wanders over manifold objectives,  
 So are their yearnings also endless.

**O**F all processes Bhakti-Yoga is explained  
 As of the highest wisdom,  
 Being steadfastly concentrated in the One,  
 Sree Krishna the Supreme;  
 Whereas all other methods of progression  
 Direct to innumerable ends,  
 Are ineffective and uncertain.  
 A genuine devotee thinks:  
 "The means becomes the end itself,  
 Meditating on the glories  
 Of my Blessed Lord Sree Krishna and His Host  
 Is the very essence of my life  
 As taught me by my Master :  
 The means and end are one :  
 The only covetable aim in life—  
 No other wish have I but this.  
 Be there pain or pleasure  
 When I sleep or wake,  
 Whether the world continues or it be destroyed,  
 What matters aught to me ?  
 My sole existence is the loving service of my Lord !"



Sincere devotees only give unflinching love like this.  
 But in Karma-Yoga yearnings know no limit  
 And attention is dispersed as in Jñāna o'er many  
 paths.

**T**HOSE who are vacillating e'er are ignorant;  
 Extol the Vedas knowing not their inner  
 meaning,  
 And misinterpret them;  
 They desire the paltry fruits of action;  
 They are the seekers of a lowly heaven  
 Beneath the transcendental Realm of God;  
 They satisfy their ears with honeyed words,  
 Agreeable at first but poisoned at the end,  
 For they are led astray by the alluring taste  
 Of their fruitive acts and abstract wisdom  
 To render certain duties  
 Resulting in the cycle of new births and deaths  
 And an insatiable longing  
 To enjoy an earthly happiness  
 With wealth and power o'er others.  
 Those foolish ones who are addicted  
 To voluptuous enjoyment of their grandeur,  
 Cannot attain the higher scales of wisdom  
 Nor are they steadfastly attached to Me.

**T**HE Scriptures have a two-fold object—  
 The ultimate intent and the object indicated.



The one straightly aimed at, the other pointed out.  
 That which is aimed at in a given Scripture  
 Is the acme of that Scripture ;  
 And that which points out the acme  
 Is the end that's indicated.  
 Now, when the Pole-star is intended,  
 The brightest nearest star to it is pointed out,  
 Which is not in itself the end.  
 The Vedas' final aim is Truth—  
 The Absolute Who's inconceivable to human minds.  
 The Vedas also therefore use in the beginning  
 Qualified principles to indicate the end intended.  
 That is why Māyā or Deluding Energy  
 With her three qualities of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas  
 Appears superficially to be the subject-matter of  
 the Vedas.  
 O Arjuna ! be not attracted to that indicated end,  
 But free thyself from the triple qualities  
 By realising the Supreme Being  
 Who is beyond all mundane attributes  
 And Who is the intended Subject of the Vedas.

**I**N the same Vedas there is often mention  
 Of Karma, actuated by the principles of  
 Rajas-Tamas  
 Which is an active and an opiate quality combined.  
 Sometimes the Vedas tell of Jnāna,



The abstract knowledge, promoted by the principle  
of Sattva.

Now Sattva is the first principle of relative bene-  
volence

Which is one of the inherent traits of Māyā, the  
Deluding Energy,

And only on occasion is pure Bhakti mentioned  
and enjoined.

Let Me, Arjuna, here remind thee

That pure Bhakti is the loving service of a soul

No longer misidentified with mind and body,

Dedicated to the Personality of God.

Absolve thyself, Arjuna, from such qualitative  
sentiments

Of honour or dishonour;

Associate thou ever with eternal entities—

These are My devotees.

Desist thou from the quest of Yoga,

For, this search after objects unattained

Is aimed at by salvationists;

And free thyself of Kshema,

The earthly care that thou dost lavish

In preserving such results attained.

Apply thy pure intelligence to all

The highest aims, and reach thy goal

Of unalloyed existence

Without these qualities that cloy.



**S**MALL pools and larger sheets of water such as lakes,

Both serve the self-same purposes  
 For bathing and for quenching thirst.  
 So also the Brāhmanas who have solved  
 The mysteries of Vedas and their parts  
 Like the Upanishads,  
 Essentially declare Me to be Lord,  
 Ultimate, Supreme and that all things  
 Are fully served by serving Me.

**A**CTION has been divided into Karma proper,  
 Then Akarma and lastly Vikarma.

Of these, both Vikarma or sin  
 Committed by the violation of thy duties  
 And Akarma, the negligence of duties,  
 Do occasion great calamities.  
 Incline not to Akarma,  
 Do thy duty and adopt the Karma very carefully,  
 Leaving aside Akarma.

There are three basic kinds of Karma, namely:  
 Daily duties which are Nitya-Karma;  
 Those which are causal and occasional  
 And take the name of Naimittika-Karma,  
 And those which are gift-desired or interested,  
 And known as Kāmya-Karma.

Of these, the last,  
 The act performed with motive of some gain



Is deeply ominous. Those who act thus  
 Perforce must suffer or enjoy  
 The fruits of all their actions.  
 Therefore I tell thee for thy good :  
 Refrain from all fruitive acts.  
 Perform such duties as devolve upon thee  
 By the socio-religious laws of Scriptures,  
 But bear in mind that these do not entitle thee  
 To claim their fruits.  
 Those who follow this "Yoga" - method are allowed  
 To do their duty day by day  
 To earn their livelihood.

**O** Dhananjaya ! Cast aside all longing for results  
 Of good or evil, and occupy thyself  
 In the performance of thy socio-religious duties.  
 Face the success or failure of fruitive acts  
 With calm and equability, for this is Yoga.  
 Cultivate, Dhananjaya, an aptitude devotional,  
 Applying pure intelligence,  
 Pursue disinterestedly the Karma proper;  
 For 'tis contemptible to follow virtue for her gifts.  
 They who do Kāmya-Karma with some gain in view  
 Drift back into the stream of births and deaths  
 As a result of their fruitive acts,  
 And they are low and mean.  
 Right thinking in discharging selfless deeds  
 Shows in adroit performance of all acts.



Apply thyself disinterestedly to work,  
 Casting aside good deeds and evil in this world.  
 Rise thou above such wordly relativities.  
 The truly wise give up by perfect understanding  
 All thought of either joy or suffering  
 Accruing from the discharge of their duties,  
 And thus they are released from further bondage of  
 rebirth,  
 Attaining to the highest bliss  
 Which liberates from limitations and all strife—  
 That End which devotees attain.

**W**HEN by the practice of such selfless deed  
 Dedicated to the Lord—for I am He  
 Thy own free will forsakes the quicksands of  
 infatuation,  
 Thou wilt incline to cultivate a pure devotion,  
 Holding impartial views of all the Scriptures  
 That are yet to be, and those that have been heard.  
 When thou hast ceased to be bewildered  
 By diverse expositions of the Vedas and the Srutis,  
 Steadfast shall be thy meditation  
 On the inner meaning of the text  
 And thou shalt attain true "Yoga":  
 Clearest conception of the harmony  
 Between a dedicated action,  
 Devotion and knowledge freed from misconception.\*



**A**RJUNA said, "Tell me, O Keshava!

The traits of such a person  
Who with steadfast mind and heart  
Maintains such deep serenity.  
What does he think of honour and disgrace,  
Or praise and blame, or love and hatred ?  
What is his attitude towards the outside world ?  
'Sore is my anxiety to know."

The Lord replied : "O Pārtha !

When an individual renounces  
All the glamour of the mind  
And revels in the bliss and calm security  
Of self-realisation, he can be said  
To have achieved serenity.

He is free from any sort of perturbation ;

His mind remains unruffled

In the midst of weal and woe.

He does not hanker after physical or mental  
pleasures

Or the enjoyments of society ;

He is indifferent to pleasures and to pain ;

Free from the fear of peril or of apprehension as to  
action.

Firm controlled intelligence becomes the sign  
Of this exalted soul.

**B**OUND not by the ties of flesh to any,  
His wisdom is well founded,



For he is not exultant nor despondent  
 In either good or evil circumstance.  
 So long as human body must exist,  
 Questions of worldly gain and loss are wonted  
 factors,  
 Yet he who will need them not,  
 Attains to sweet tranquility of mind.  
 The senses are by nature unrestrained  
 Prone to exploit the full range of phenomena,  
 Yet with the truly wise they rest subservient  
 To a controlled mind, for as the tortoise  
 Draws its feet beneath the shelter of its shell  
 And uses them when needs arise,  
 So does the wise one with a firm determined mind  
 Bring full control to bear upon his senses  
 Which for a right cause may be exercised at will  
 And subsequently kept in check.

**T**HE practices of abstinence from food and self-  
 denial

Are only for the ignorant.

Thus can they best control the senses of the body  
 With eight processes for the concentration of the  
 mind,

Such as forbearance and special regulations,  
 Even to their ways of sitting, breathing,  
 Meditation and practices of abnegation.

These ways do not hold good for the wise ones.



Who are self-controlled.  
 For them alone is the Divine Beauty of Eternal  
 Truth—  
 I am the Eternal Truth.  
 No longer do they feel the need for worldly joys.  
 Though rules of fasting to control  
 The senses are prescribed for many,  
 Such paths lead not to everlasting good,  
 Unless the principle of Love  
 Ecstatic and Divine be present too.  
 Attachment to Divinity  
 Causes a corresponding detachment  
 From the lower inclinations.  
 When once Divine Love is awakened  
 And self's relation to the Lord is understood,  
 Worldly enjoyment ceases to entice.

**O** Son of Kunti ! even the self-controlled  
 Who master their senses on the path of  
 abstract concentration  
 Are sometimes swept away by sense-storms:  
 For the allurements of the senses is often very great.  
 Only the path of unalloyed devotion  
 And Divine Love, frees man from such danger.  
 He who, by following the course  
 Of disciplined detachment from all mundane things  
 And cleaving unto My Divinity,  
 Allotting to his senses just their proper place



And rightful functions, otherwise keeping them  
controlled,  
Follows the path of Karma-Yoga,  
With a view to render loving service unto Me,  
He is in very truth a person self-controlled.  
The human mind forever seeks enjoyment from  
phenomena  
Using the senses, as a vehicle,  
But there is no permanence in this.  
I am the Lord of senses and phenomena  
Made manifest on earth.  
Thus he who worships Me with pure devotion  
Is indeed self-disciplined—  
Perfect in his abnegation.

**S**EE the ill effects of mock-asceticism.  
To meditate on worldly things  
And ponder overmuch about renouncing them,  
Begets undue attachment and desire for them;  
Attachment then gives rise to lust or passion;  
Lust, when repressed, arouses anger;  
Anger leads to infatuation;  
This, again, the memory betrays;  
Loss of memory wipes out all knowledge  
And conception of Reality,  
And this loss of wisdom, in destruction ends.  
Even in mechanical asceticism  
Which is divorced from pure devotion,



There is no escape from mundane contemplation  
Which gradually engenders thirst for earthly joys  
Either in a gross or subtle form,  
Ultimately leading the ascetic  
To the vortex of an earthly sojourn.  
Such are the evil consequences of pseudo-asceticism  
As laid down in the Yoga-system.

**A** self-controlled well-balanced soul  
Can know a perfect bliss within  
Though he applies his ordered mind to the phenomena of earth  
By being free from love or hatred of them.  
A Yogi true has neither sympathy nor antipathy  
For any worldly thing.  
He has supreme command of all his senses,  
And in the service of the Lord  
Lies their power and proper use.  
Out of that tranquility of mind  
Follows the end and healing of all earthly pains.  
The heart of such a peaceful soul soon  
Becomes intent upon his object of devotion.  
Bliss is attainable only by devotion.  
Self-content attends the cultivation of devotion  
And services like this alone can banish grief and pain.  
The truest devotee does dedicate his efforts  
To fulfilling the desires of the Lord.



**H**E who is not bound close to the Divine  
 By the internal tie of transcendental Love  
 Cannot conceive of Mellowness Divine;  
 Unless there be knowledge and the thought of Love-  
 Divine,  
 None can escape from worldly lust  
 In either gross or subtle form.  
 He therefore lacks serenity and any means  
 Of cultivating lasting bliss.  
 Those souls which are ungoverned  
 Have no knowledge of their true and pure existence:  
 They cannot thus conceive  
 The transcendental Personality of God.  
 Those who cannot meditate on God  
 Because they lack a true conception of Divinity  
 Cannot have peace of mind,  
 And being without peace,  
 How can bliss attain upon God-realisation ?  
 Just as a ship is tossed and shaken  
 To and fro by an unfavourable wind  
 And ultimately doomed to wreck and ruin,  
 So also the mind of an uncontrolled soul  
 Is at the mercy of the senses  
 Devoid of all discrimination  
 And thereby led astray.

**S**O, great Prince ! he whose serenity of mind  
 Is not disturbed by objects of the senses,



Is veritably equipoised.  
This can only be obtained  
By adoption of a balanced abnegation.  
Such is true asceticism,  
Which is, in other words, devotion.

**A**RJUNA ! intelligence is two-fold—  
One bent upon self-consciousness,  
The other upon selfish gross enjoyment  
Either by acceptance of material things  
Or subtle through mechanical renunciation.  
The state of self-realisation is  
As the screen of night for worldly minded people.  
Just as the sleepers know not what takes place at  
night,  
So those of the world are ignorant  
Of what self-conscious beings know.  
He who is self-conscious is awakened  
In that sphere of night, and enjoying everlasting bliss.  
From steadfast comprehension  
Of his own self and the Supreme Soul.  
They are awake who welter  
In the sink of worldliness,  
Conscious of selfish joys  
And grief, fear and delusion,  
For their sphere is like the night to the self-conscious.  
Who are therefore unaware of this.  
Thus the self-conscious people sleep



In that sphere where the worldly-minded wake.  
 That which is night for one is day for others.  
 Where the self-conscious are awakened  
 And when it is like day to them,  
 That is to say, when they enjoy  
 Eternal bliss in the realisation of the Over-soul,  
 They of the world do sleep,  
 Ignorant of all bliss that passes through their night.  
 Indifferent to pain and pleasure  
 Which entangle worldly men in meshes of illusion,  
 They who are divinely conscious  
 Accept the things of earthly life with nonchalance.

**T**HOSE who have inordinate desires  
 Can never know true happiness.  
 Just as rivers entering the Ocean  
 Cannot create disturbance there,  
 So the desires embosomed  
 In the hearts of all the self-controlled  
 Cannot ruffle their tranquility of mind and senses;  
 They alone are happy.  
 Whosoever slips the yoke of egotism  
 Does not desire enjoyment or renunciation;  
 He is indifferent to all phenomena;  
 Lives in an unattached and very humble manner,  
 He ever-lasting bliss and peace attains.

**O** Son of Prithā ! such firmness and stability  
 Lead one to know Brahman.



He who reaches that stage even at the hour of death,  
Like King Khattānga, realises  
Spiritual identity with Brahman,  
That which is salvation  
And free from worldly bondage.  
Casting off the yoke of time and space,  
The soul attaining to the realm of Brahman,  
Tastes of all-conscious bliss for ever—  
This is the true Nirvāna.  
Brahman is distinct from Matter.  
He who is settled in that sphere,  
Savours the mellowness of Transcendental Love.”

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**CHAPTER THREE**  
***SELFLESS KARMA***



## CHAPTER THREE

### SELFLESS KARMA

**A**RJUNA questioned :  
"O Janārdana ! Thou Final Goal—  
Solicited by those who seek the Highest End !  
If thou deemst that disciplined intelligence,  
Free from the threefold attributes  
Within the bounds of time and space,  
Is loftier than Karma - action,  
Why then dost Thou, Keshava !  
Controller of Creator Brahmā and Destroyer Rudra !  
Prompt me to engage in this terrific war ?  
The advice Thou hast given me  
Seems misleading and ambiguous,  
Not because Thou, my Lord and Friend, doth mean  
it so,  
But to my limited intelligence it appears so.  
Tell Thou me therefore finally  
What path is good for me.  
Somewhere Karma-Yoga is the choice,  
Socio-religious duties or fruitive acts ;  
Again Thou hast advised me  
On the selfless discharge of my duties  
Or Niskāma Karma-Yoga :



Thou hast also told me of the concentration  
 Of the mind and meditation, Yoga,  
 And how intelligence may be applied  
 And aimed at Brahman, Jnāna-Yoga.  
 Above all Thou hast pointed out to me  
 How the relationship of loving service  
 Is awakened when we realise the true  
 Nature of the pure soul and the Supreme Soul  
 By following the path of pure devotion.

**B**EWILDERED, what I understood is this :  
 Sāttwika-duty ranks above the Rājas-duty,  
 Yet is inferior to wisdom;  
 But Bhakti which transcends the attributes  
 Of limited phenomena, to all these is superior.  
 If I am as yet unfit for this,  
 How may I follow Sāttwika-Jnāna,  
 And discard the yoke of worldly bondage?  
 Those who are intent on action  
 Limited by mundane time and space  
 Are best advised to follow Karma;  
 They who seek emancipation from such bondage,  
 Should Jnāna-Yoga choose;  
 While Bhakti-Yoga is the only path  
 For those who earnestly desire  
 Eternal union with Divinity  
 In loving service to the Personality of God,  
 Which service is the innate and normal function



Of every pure soul.  
Tell me, therefore, Krishna,  
What course is best for me."

**T**HE Blessed Lord replied :  
"What I have said before  
Does not imply that either Karma or Sāṅkhya-Yoga  
Can of itself lead to salvation or self-realisation.  
There is no second path but Bhakti to that end.  
In this pursuit of Bhakti,  
Aspirants of two kinds appear.  
The wise are known as "Sāṅkhyas"  
And those whose hearts are purified  
Ascend the path of abstract knowledge  
And steadfastly adhere to Jñāna-Yoga.  
But those whose hearts are not so purified  
And are incapable of rising above empiric knowledge,  
Are known as Karma-Yogins.  
Their tendency is normally directed  
To the path of selfless actions,  
The fruits of which they dedicate  
To Me, the Sole Divine Recipient.

**T**HE path of selfless action  
Which they consecrate to God  
Leads to attainment of pure knowledge  
Which, when cherished in a sinless heart  
Helps them to realise the nature



Of the unalloyed soul and Over-soul,  
 And ultimately reach the Realm  
 Of unalloyed Devotion.  
 Verily the process is but one,  
 Varying according to aspirants' aptitudes  
 At diverse stages of advancement  
 Towards the Final Goal.  
 Karmins do purify their hearts by selfless Karma—  
 And, thus purified, ascend the plane of Jnāna.  
 Jnāna can unfetter from the bonds  
 Of time and space, when pure devotion  
 Leads them to the final aim:  
 Endless, ageless bond that binds  
 All individuals to the Supreme—  
 The Fountain-head of all things sentient and  
 insentient.  
 "This is", said Krishna to Arjuna,  
 "The essence of My speech".

**T**HAT stage of perfect selflessness,  
 When all life's fruits and actions become  
 offerings to God,  
 Can be attained by faithful discharge of thy duties  
 As laid down in the Scriptures.  
 Neglect of spiritual Ordinance  
 Swiftly defiles the heart,  
 And a heart impure is, from the perfect goal,  
 debarred



Setting at naught the codified injunctions of the  
Scriptures,

They who perform the worldly duties  
Forced upon them by the qualities of Māyā,  
Are men of impure heart.

They should observe most faithfully  
The duties which the Scriptures have ordained,  
That they may cleanse their hearts of all impurity.

**O**F what avail for him whose heart is thus impure  
To try to curb his fleshly senses ?

He who controls his fleshly organs,  
Mentally enjoys phenomena by means of spurious  
meditation

And such an one is but a hypocrite.  
He whose senses have been controlled  
And has engaged his fleshly senses in conformity  
With the duties of domestic life,  
Without attachment to it,

Stands far superior to such a hypocrite.

An undeserving novice should accept  
The course of action, rather than become  
Inactive by neglect of duties.

As the soul and body cannot be preserved  
Except by action, how can relief from Karma then  
be possible ?

Therefore, leaving aside all the fruitive acts,  
Purify thy mind by doing daily duties



Such as fighting, governing and prayer.  
 Thus wilt thou reach the plane of pure intelligence  
 Whence thou shalt finally attain  
 The path of true devotion that will lead thee  
 To an understanding of thine inmost self.

**C**ONSECRATING all the fruits  
 Resulting from thy selfless Karma  
 To Godhead Hari, is called Yajna.  
 All forms of Karma done  
 With motives other than Yajna  
 Are only ties of bondage in this world,  
 Proceeding from fruitive acts.  
 Thus, for the satisfaction of Hari,  
 The Lord of sacrificial rites,  
 Act, thou, son of Kunti ! nor desire thou  
 To enjoy thine action's fruits.  
 Deeds that are shackled with desires  
 Even when offered to the Lord, God of all,  
 Are but a source of bondage.  
 Disinterested acts are helpful to the progress  
 And smooth the path that ultimately leads  
 To real devotion.

**H**E of the impure heart  
 Must still perform unselfish actions ;  
 He must not cease to act,  
 For such cessation has no inherent virtue.



If selfless actions be impossible to him,  
 He may yet offer his actions' fruits to God  
 Expecting the fulfilment of his heart's desires.  
 But let him beware of welcoming Akarma and  
 Vikarma

Denying the injunctions of the Scriptures.  
 In the Ādi-Sarga or the Primitive Creation  
 After creating mankind as his progeny  
 Brahmā said unto them :

Thrive ye step by step by means of this same  
 Yajna ;

May this Yajna give ye your desired end !

May your hearts be purified

And your bodies nourished by this Yajna.

It shall lead you to eternal liberation.

**M**AY thou please the gods with this same Yajna  
 And they being pleased with thee

Bless thee with thy desired boons

And give thee happiness thereby.

May this mutual satisfaction bring thee

To a knowledge of thy real self.

He who enjoys his food and drink,

Produced and given by the gods

And does not offer them

By way of Yajna, sacrificial rites,

To them, is reckoned as a thief.

Learn ye the sacrificial rites due to the gods,



The Yajna; they are five:

Brahma-Yajna—performed by studying the Vedas;

Pitri-Yajna—oblations of sesame and water to  
ancestors who are dead;

Daiva-Yajna—offering butter to the gods by burning  
it in holy fire;

Bhuta-Yajna—offering of food to needy beings;

And lastly Nri-Yajna—offering hospitality to guests.

**THEY** who solely accept

The residue of offerings as food

Can free themselves from all sin,

But those who eat and drink for selfish pleasure,

Suffer from those very sins.

Such are the sins of Pancha-sunā,

Committed by taking lives in sundry diverse ways:

Kandaneē—in the pestle and the mortar;

Peshanee—with the grinding stones as means;

Chullee—the method in the furnace;

Under a water-jar—Udakumbhee;

Mārjaneē—by the agency of a broom.

Ye may destroy the sins committed

In gaining sustenance

By the performance faithful

Of the sacrificial rites.

**B**EINGS are brought into existence by food,  
Food is produced by rain;



Rain pours as a result of Yajna  
 And Yajna arises out of Karma;  
 Karma follows from Brahmā or the Vedas,  
 The Vedas originated from  
 The Transcendental Name "Achyuta", the Unborn.  
 Therefore the All-Pervading Brahman  
 Is present in all Yajna.  
 People of this stage of evolution  
 Should thus adhere to Yajna,  
 The causal factor of the cycle of the universe.  
 O Pārtha! he who refrains  
 From performing this sacrament,  
 The stimulator of the Universe,  
 Lives a lascivious life in vain  
 Among the selfish doers of fruitive acts.  
 Selfless Karma—duties done for God  
 Are free from all tinge of virtue or of vice,  
 For that is the right way to reach Nirguna-Bhakti.  
 This is the loving service  
 To the Personality of God  
 Free from the limited atmosphere  
 Of worldly time and space,  
 As laid down in the Scriptures.

**B**Y following this path  
 Man can easily purify his heart.  
 But they who have eschewed it,  
 Are swayed by sinful appetites :



Their very life is desecration.  
Yet they may curb profanity  
By pious deeds and deep atonement.  
Prescribed Yajna is Dharma or pious acts.  
Piety is the performance of such deeds  
As bring about the good of the majority,  
Ensuring the continuance of the cosmic cycles.  
Such piety redeems inevitable sins,  
Born of Pancha-Sunā, the five-fold sins, described  
before.

Personal joy, promoting universal good,  
Can count as pious deeds and Yajna.  
They who enact unseen  
The universal good, are known as 'gods',  
Born of the cosmic potency of God.  
Sins can be washed away  
By gaining the contentment of these gods  
And satisfying them.  
This is called Karma-chakra,  
The mighty "Wheel of action".  
Acceptance of thy Karma by worshipping these gods  
Is known as "consecrated action to the Lord".  
They who advocate mere ethics  
Think these scriptural injunctions only mundane,  
And so act accordingly.  
Even with duties well performed,  
They offer not the fruits to Vishnu,  
He Who preserves the universe entire.



Better for such in their peculiar station  
To offer to God the fruits of their own Karma.

**T**HEY who revolve mechanically  
With the wheel of Karma  
Perform their duties under harsh compulsion,  
But he who finds delight in the truest self,  
Who can distinguish between this and the non-self,  
Content therewith, has no Karma to perform under-  
compulsion.

He moves within the plane of pure intelligence  
By virtue of his own true self.  
Though he may work to keep together soul and body—  
Yet he does naught that can be claimed  
As daily duties—Nitya-Karma,  
Causal and occasional—Naimittika-Karma—  
Or gift-desired Karma—Kāmya-Karma.  
For him no irksome toiling with the wheel of action.  
But all the bliss and dignity  
Of work without attachment.  
Hence do his deeds not fall within the Karma's-  
category,  
But in their own condition,  
Are either Jnāna-Yoga, purely intellectual,  
Or loving devout as Bhakti-Yoga,  
Loving service to the Personality of God.

**W**HO has discerned the blameless soul's felicity,  
Is not responsible for vice or virtue



Due to the performance or neglect of duties.  
Depends he not on any entity alive  
Or man or god,  
For the fulfilment of his ends,  
For he has attained perfection  
By self-realisation.  
What he does or fails to do  
Results in bliss and eternal good,  
For he transcends the limitations  
Of all mundane relativities.  
Even in this stage, none the less  
He must attend to the performance or neglect of  
Karma.

Perform thy duties ever, then,  
Without attachment to their fruits,  
For by degrees the engrossed soul  
May come to know its real nature,  
Free from the coverings of mind and body,  
By the detached performance of its Karma.  
Salvation is but the knowledge  
Of the soul's eternal function  
Of single-minded service to the Lord,  
Which is the climax of all duties,  
Commanded by the Scriptures.

**J**NĀNINS like Janaka only realised their nature  
After their hearts are purified by fulfilling Karma.  
Be thou a teacher of mankind.



Thou deem'st thyself a Jnāni or knower of the  
Truth,

Then must thou work for the world's enlightenment  
By adopting Karma likewise.

Howe'er the great behave in life,  
The masses follow them accordingly;

That which is held to be authentic

As a standard of the great

Is accepted by the mass as truth.

See thou, Pārtha ! in this triple world

I have naught incumbent on Me as a duty.

I am the Lord Supreme,

No object is beyond My reach,

Yet have I had recourse to Karma.

Where I to cease performing duties,

Others by following Me would also shirk their debt.

**T**HOUGH I am Lord of all, I manifest

In the family of Yādavas who are rulers,

And were I to fail to show them now

By example of My personal life

The duties that devolve on them,

They, too, would fail and thereby would be ruined.

Thus though I am beyond all regulations

Yet must I set an example to others.

Thou also art My friend

And therefore beyond all human duties,

Yet thou must teach the others



Who are juniors, by thine example.  
 Condescend thou to a lower plane  
 For the good of those who occupy it  
 Though thou be not bound by Karma's dictates.  
 If I were to cease to work,  
 People would go to wreck and ruin  
 By neglecting their respective duties,  
 And if a rupture were created  
 In the regulated life by Me,  
 That would contaminate the people's minds  
 By striking at the roots of pure and gradual growth.

**O** Bhārata!

As the ignorant become attached to Karma,  
 So should the wise adopt it, but without attachment  
 For the good of the people.  
 The difference between the Karma of the two  
 Lies not in the mode, but in the motive:  
 Whether it be selfishness or otherwise.  
 An ignoramus understands not that the aim of  
 Karma  
 Is to wake the dormant nature of the soul,  
 And he who in his unintelligent heart  
 Cherishes attachment for this Karma  
 Is called a Karmasangi or fruit-seeker.  
 Such ignoramuses have no avidity for knowledge  
 Even when it is explained to them.  
 The wise, therefore, should teach them selfless  
 Karma



That it may purify their hearts  
 Setting a fine example for them  
 By following a Karma aloof from worldly interest.

**P**REMATURE attempt to prove the difference  
 That lies between Karma and pure intelligence  
 Would but distract the mind.  
 No good results would e'er accrue  
 From forcing knowledge ere its time.  
 Remember this My dictum  
 To them who teach the Jnāna-Yoga.  
 But these directions are not meant  
 For preachers of a pure devotion unto Me.  
 Because such knowledge is dependent  
 On the purging of the heart,  
 Which is again contingent  
 Upon unselfish Karma,  
 But Bhakti, loving service rendered unto Me  
 Depends on the heart's purification,  
 For, that occurs in just degree to the devotion.  
 Now let me tell wherein the wise  
 And ignorant do differ.

**P**RAKRITI, the cosmic Energy or Māyā-Nescience,  
 And he who identifies himself with the perverted  
 ego,  
 May think he is the arbiter of every act,  
 Which, as a matter of fact, is performed



Beneath the influence of Māyā,—  
For, God is the Essential Cause,  
As Māyā is the material cause  
Of every action limited by time and space.  
That is the sign of ignorance.  
But O thou Mighty-armed!  
The sage who knows the truth  
Knows that the soul is self  
Apart from mundane qualities and actions,  
Knows himself a sentient being  
Of concentrated bliss  
With the everlasting faculty of serving God  
And that as fortune wills  
He is enveloped in the gross and subtle bodies  
Which are the outcome of external Māyā-potency  
And must not dominate him,  
Though they have forced him in the present state  
To yield to the dictates of Māyā  
In the material world.

**N**O perfect independence ever signalizes his  
activities,  
For he alone is not the doer of all that he is known  
to do,  
And thus thinking, he stands detached from them.  
Every material act is guided  
By the vanities of Māyā-glamoured souls.  
The Cosmic Energy



And the Indwelling Lord of all—  
 All three together.  
 A truly wise man is not guided  
 By his body or his mind,  
 With which an ignoramus identifies himself,  
 But on the contrary he guides them  
 To his destination of Eternal Bliss.  
 There is a distinction between qualities and action.  
 The qualities are three: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas:  
 The actions form three groups respectively  
 According to which quality prevails.  
 Sāttwika refers to duties of the gods,  
 Rājasika the acts of the eleven senses,  
 And Tāmasika, action directed towards the objects  
 of the senses.  
 Yet the soul is neither guna—nor guna-kārya,  
 Which means objects of the senses,  
 Nor has it any true relation to them.  
 Therefore he who is truly wise is unconcerned with  
 them.

**T**HE ignorant who are infatuated  
 By the triple qualities of Māyā  
 Think they are born of matter  
 And identify themselves  
 With qualities of Prakriti—the cosmic energy.  
 Let not the wise bewilder these unfortunates.  
 Rather should they be advised to follow



A gradual process to the higher knowledge  
Beginning with strict adherence to Karma-Yoga.  
Just as a person obsessed by evil spirits  
Identifies himself with all that evil,  
So does he who is overshadowed by the qualities of  
Māyā

Think himself born of Māyā.

As exorcising by the act of invocation  
Is the remedy of one possessed of evil spirits,  
So also practical selfless Karma  
Is advised by sages to the ignorant  
As the remedy to rid them  
Of the influence of actions.

The wise should not attempt an explanation  
Of the self and non-self and their functions  
But should mention only selfless action,  
Just as a sorcerer applies his incantations  
Rather than try to convince a man possessed  
That he is not a ghost, in order to effect a cure.

Thus realising, Arjuna,

The nature of true wisdom and thy real self,  
Dedicate thy Karma unto Me,  
Forsaking all the egotism of the world  
And earthly consequences.

Absolve thyself from all thought of results  
Thinking thou: "I do this as desired by my Lord."  
Forget anxieties and lamentation  
O'er loss of friends and relatives



That may result from war,  
And fight out this battle  
As is thy bounden duty being a Kshatriya.

**T**HOSE who perform Niskāma-Karma or unselfish  
Karma-Yoga,

Offering the fruits of their activities to Me,  
Are freed for ever from the bondage of all Karma;  
And those who are unable to perform this Karma  
But yet have faith and confidence in such  
Bereft of any spite or malice,  
Also attain that end,  
Acquiring freedom from Karma's bondage.  
Know thou for certain that they  
Who do not follow this My principle  
Of selfless Karma-Yoga, out of malice,  
Deprive themselves of all true knowledge  
And their intellect is blunted.

**B**ELIEVE not thou,  
That if a wise man turns ascetic,  
Suddenly denying mundane qualities and acts  
After adjudging of the self and the non-self,  
This will do him any good.  
Those who are slaves to senses,  
Though intelligent and wise,  
Are after all but fallen souls;  
And near to follow out the course of long accustomed  
habits



They have become entangled  
By the mighty laws that govern  
Cosmic Energy—Prakriti.  
To rid themselves of long accustomed inclinations,  
They should with watchful eyes upon the goal  
Perform such Karmic deeds as are prescribed  
For that special status and condition  
In which they find themselves within the bounds of  
time and space.

Unselfish Karma with its fruits  
Presented unto Me, should be  
The only beneficial path  
For one whose heart is not awake,  
Yet longing to perform unselfish services to Me,  
Albeit genuine and balanced in his spirit ;  
For, observance and amelioration of socio-religious  
duties  
Are simultaneously served by practising Niskāma-  
Karma.

The non-performance of these duties  
Leads man astray upon immoral paths.  
But when true and loving Bhakti  
Is enkindled in the heart by both My Grace  
And that of My Associates,  
No need is there further for happy souls like these  
To tread the path of selfless Karma  
In order to fulfil the duties of society  
Since they have realised a far



Superior path, the Bhakti-Yoga,  
Linking them in close touch with Me.

**I**F thou shouldst argue that association  
With the senses and their objects  
Will make thee more attached to them,  
Then listen thou to Me:  
Sense-perceptions of themselves  
Are never detrimental to the soul,  
But love and hatred for them are the greatest foes.  
The love which is forbidden for another's wife,  
Arrests the progress of the soul  
As much as an aspirant's weak reluctance  
For worship at the Feet of the Preceptor.  
So, love and hatred e'er must be controlled  
Whilst coming into contact with the sense-  
perceptions.  
For thereby thou wilt not be shackled  
By these objects of the senses  
Even when they meet with thee.

**M**AN has to grapple with phenomena while  
fleshly bodies last;  
Yet diminishing his love and hate of objects born  
of Māyā,  
He may achieve a certain non-attachment  
Though he associates with them.  
This firm control of love and hate for objects



Is essential that man may not be enslaved by them,  
 Whereas a vastly different aim is comprehended  
 When speaking of My service ;  
 Thus temporal significance does not apply  
 To objects that assist the spirit's progress;  
 In other words, love for those things and deeds  
 Which stimulate devotion,  
 Must be supported by aversion  
 To those things that hinder deeds to me  
 Cherish the wish to serve Me lovingly;  
 Banish the sense-perceptions that engender self-  
 importance.

**F**OUR castes there are in which embodied souls  
 Discharge their duty to society :  
 The teachers, warriors, peasants and the servants.  
 Swa-Dharma or the duty of a Brāhmaṇa  
 Is to expound the Vedas,  
 Living on the charity of men,  
 Controlling all his senses.  
 That of a Kshatriya, to fight his enemies,  
 Protect his kingdom and collect his revenues.  
 That of a Vaisya is to till the land,  
 To trade and deal with agriculture.  
 Swa-Dharma of a Sudra is to serve the other three  
 castes.  
 Duties outside one's rightful status in society are  
 Para-Dharma.



So that the duties of a Brāhmaṇa or Vaisya or a  
Sudra

Would be Para-Dharma for Kshatriyas.

Both Swa-Dharma and Para-Dharma are socio-  
religious duties

Allotted to the person of a fallen soul.

That which is different from these is Ātma-Dharma,

Endless function of the soul.

Hence, in assessing fruits of Karma dedicated unto  
Me,

Swa-Dharma though imperfectly discharged

Is more acceptable than perfect Para-Dharma.

If thou shouldst meet with death performing thy  
Swa-Dharma,

Ere thou canst reach a higher plane,

That were acceptable,

For, Para-Dharma is unstable always.

**N**OW, when the dormant nature of the soul is  
once awakened,

For the normal function of the soul is Bhakti

Untrammelled by all mundane attributes,

Then there remains no further need

To do the duties ordered by Swa-Dharma,

For, Swa is Ātman and Dharma, function ;

And the eternal function of the pure soul

Is as Swa-Dharma then revealed.

Thus of this stage, the past Swa-Dharma of a fallen  
soul



Concerning mind and body  
 In his own place in society  
 Becomes the Para-Dharma to the awakened soul."

**A** RJUNA spoke: "O Bārshneya !  
 Thou Scion of the family of Brishni !  
 Who prompts a Jiva-soul to sin though it be quite  
 against his will ?  
 Since Thou hast told me that a soul  
 Is an ever-pure, self-conscious entity  
 Free from the yoke of mundane relativities  
 And that to sin is foreign to its nature,  
 Pray tell me plainly, who does incite to wicked acts  
 The souls of this world that revel in foul sin?"  
 Bhagavān replied: "Arjuna! know thou that Kāma,  
 The devouring-fierce desire,  
 And flaming anger born of Rajas,  
 Tempt souls to sin and therefore are  
 The greatest enemy of mankind in this world.  
 Kāma is desire to lord it over earth's phenomena  
 According to the hankerings of former births.  
 Kāma it is that takes another form  
 As anger, when conditions differ.  
 Rajas principle gives birth to Kāma,  
 Which, when redressed in its fulfilment  
 Is profaned by Tāmas and manifests as anger.  
 Kāma is very fierce and insatiable.  
 All that the world contains of wealth and woman



Fails to content the lust of a voluptuous man;  
Hence it is the greatest foe.  
As a fire is withheld from sight by smoke  
And a mirror obscured by dust  
And the womb is enveloped by the uterus,  
So fallen souls are engulfed by this Kāma.  
Kāma has screened the world with ignorance—  
Sometimes but lightly, at other times more deeply  
And sometimes with extreme density.

**J**UST as the flame of fires lurking behind the  
smoke  
May readily be seen,  
So also a fallen human being  
Can meditate on God  
Even though the normal function of his pure self  
Be influenced by Kāma;  
At this stage the fallen soul  
Like a blossom still in bud  
Engages in a selfless Karma-Yoga.  
A worse condition is as dust upon a mirror,  
Obscuring the reflexion on it;  
At this stage a soul is deeply involved in Kāma  
Nor can he remember God nor think of Him,  
Even though born in human form,  
And lead a moral but atheistic life;  
This shrinking condition of the innate function of  
the human soul.



May be compared with that of birds and beasts.  
 The worst and last state of existence of the soul  
 Is spent beneath the influence complete of Kāma.  
 As the womb enveloped by the uterus,  
 And lives with consciousness enshrouded  
 Like the trees and other vegetation.

**O** Son of Kunti! this Kāma  
 Is man's eternal enemy, which in the form of  
 ignorance

Saps his wisdom in discerning self and non-self.  
 Lust cannot satisfy the fire of Kāma (desire)  
 Any more than grease can extinguish blazing fire.  
 Kāma is nescience, man's greatest enemy  
 And, like a burning fire, consumes  
 The soul's own consciousness of its real nature.  
 God, the Over-soul, and individual Jiva-souls are  
 both self-conscious;  
 God is the Omnipotent Entire Being,  
 While the individual soul is an atomic spirit,  
 Self-conscious and possessing faculties  
 Cognitional, of will and emotion.  
 All these are in relation to the potency of the  
 Supreme.

**T**HE Jiva's function is eternal service to the Lord.  
 Which is known as Love Divine.  
 Spirit or sentient being has free will



In contrast to insentient matter.  
Souls may make a proper use of free will or abuse it..  
Kāma or nescience is the misuse of free will  
And a base perversion of the holy principle of Love.  
Those who abuse their free will and forget  
Their nature of eternal service to the Lord,  
Do welcome Kāma.  
The more they are attracted by the lure of Kāma,  
Thicker grows the screen of their illusion.  
This is the worldly bondage of the soul  
Which throws man on the rolling wheel of births  
and deaths.  
Souls fettered by the bondage of their gross and  
subtle bodies  
Are deluded by this Kāma;  
Their pure intelligence held fast within its fortress  
of the senses.  
When such a soul of pure intelligence and  
spirituality  
Is held within the form of flesh and blood,  
It is called Dehi;  
Intelligence, called Buddhi,  
Is the heart's discriminating faculty ;  
Manas, the inclination, that wavers from doubt to  
firm decision.

**C**ONSIDER now the veils of ignorance  
With which the Cosmic Energy, Avidyā,



Tends to clothe the soul.  
 The first which is the subtlest form of Kāma  
 Offered to the spiritual ego  
 Is a perverted and circumscribing egotism.  
 This is the outer wall of Kāma's fortress,  
 Known as perverted *Buddhi* or intelligence.  
 Once it matures, it forms the second barrier  
 That which is mind or *Manas*, linking with it  
 Faculties of will, cognition and emotion.  
 Mind then constructs the third enclosure,  
 That of the senses, when it attunes itself  
 To objects of phenomena.  
 Into the vortex of the world,  
 Strengthened by this triple fortress,  
 Kāma immerses souls.  
 This egotism, child of Kāma,  
 Causes aversion to the service of the lord.  
 Kāma is therefore known as nescience or ignorance.  
 When such a fallen soul abandons *Māyā*  
 Turning his face to God with wish to serve Him,  
 Rightly exerts he his free will,  
 By choosing *Vidyā* or true intelligence,  
 Whereas the misuse of free will  
 Is called *Advidyā* or delusion.

**T**HEREFORE Bharatarshava!

Thou must triumph over Kāma  
 The great sin and destroyer,



Spoiler of Jñāna, pure intelligence  
 And Vijnāna, the love of Me.  
 Regulating thy mind and senses,  
 Kāma that dominated thee and thy self-consciousness  
 Must be destroyed.  
 Attune thyself to the love and basic harmony.  
 The broad path for a fallen soul to follow  
 Is that of Karma-Yoga.  
 Practise the duties of Swa-Dharma  
 Incumbent on thy status in society,  
 Then offer the results of these to Me,  
 Keeping in view a genuine asceticism,  
 That is, acceptance of the objects of phenomena  
 When they promote My service  
 Rejecting them when detrimental to My cause.  
 Be thou detached from them in either case,  
 Then shalt thou follow by degrees  
 The path of loving service rendered to My satisfaction  
 Which is beyond the scope of mind and body,  
 Only attainable by My Grace and that of My  
 Associates.

**K** NOW thyself to be a soul,  
 Whose real nature is divine,  
 Though still identified with senses,  
 Manas which is mind and *Buddhi*, thine intelli-  
 gence.  
 All this is due to thy delusion



Caused by Avidyā, the Cosmic Energy of the  
Deluding Potency.

The grossest principle is Matter ;  
More subtle are the senses, hence a state superior ;  
Mind is more subtle and superior still,  
Yet infinitely far above the mind, is Buddhi.  
But thine immortal soul is infinitely subtler than  
intelligence itself  
And therefore worlds above it.

**T**HUS, O Mighty-armed ! equipped now  
With the transcendental truth anent thy self,  
Kill the destroying enemy, called Kāma.  
Pure self is the eternal servant of the Lord and I am  
He,  
Cast off all thoughts of mundane relativity  
And personalities.  
Remember thou art spirit in thy liberated state  
And My eternal servant ;  
Sustain thyself by this conception of thine inmost  
self,  
And by the grace of My Indwelling Spirit  
Shalt thou follow, step by step, the Way Devout  
And slay this fierce Kāma which hinders now  
The consummation of thy greater Self."

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## CHAPTER FOUR

# ***EMPIRICISM AND KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSCENDENCE***



## CHAPTER FOUR

### EMPIRICISM AND KNOWLEDGE OF TRANSCENDENCE

**B**HAGAVAN—He Who is possessed  
Of All-Majesty, All-Might,  
All-Supremacy, All-Glory,  
All-Beauty and All-Wisdom—said,  
‘I first taught this eternal Jñāna-Yoga,  
By which selfless Karma may be best performed,  
To the Sun-God; the Sun-God taught the same to  
Manu  
And Manu in his turn gave it to Ikshwāku.  
And thus it passed down the succession apostolic of  
the Royal Sages;  
But, Parantapa—thou slayer of the foes !  
The ruthless hands of time  
Have nigh erased this Yoga from the world.  
Once more do I declare to thee today  
This eternal, blissful, confidential Yoga  
For thou art My friend,  
The tenderness of thy heart has been directed unto  
Me  
And thou art My devotee for submitting thou to  
Me.”



**A**RJUNA queried:  
 "The Sun-God came before Thee  
 Who art born to this world now,  
 How can I comprehend  
 That Thou didst teach this Yoga unto him?"  
 Sree Bhagavān said: "O Arjuna!  
 Manifold births had you and I;  
 As the Supreme Lord I remember,  
 But thou, O slayer of thy foes!  
 Being a fragment of My Self, thou hast forgot.  
 Albeit thou and I do come into this world  
 And go and come again,  
 Yet there is all the world of difference in thy births  
 and My Descents.  
 I am the Supreme Lord of all life;  
 I am Unborn, Eternal; and manifest Myself in My  
 Own Form  
 Out of My gracious kindness for all fallen souls  
 Through the agency of My Indwelling Ecstasy.

**B**UT Jiva-souls are born of My external Māyā-  
 Potency  
 Obscuring recollection of their former births.  
 By Karma-law the fallen soul is carried  
 In its subtle form of mind, from one birth to another.  
 Only by My Free Will do I descend at times  
 Among the gods or lower forms.  
 Unlike the fallen souls My transcendental Form



Is not enveloped by a subtle or a grosser body.  
 By My Divine prerogative I manifest  
 My transcendental Form, out of Mine Own positive  
 Spiritual Realm.  
 From far beyond the boundary of earthly time and  
 space  
 Came I into this Cosmic world.  
 If thou wouldst know how My Transcendence  
 May be brought within the range  
 Of this universe of limits—then listen :  
 My Potency is inconceivable by human mind :  
 Beyond all mundane reasoning,  
 And the outcome of its activities  
 Cannot be known to human understanding's limits.  
 Even thine empiricism should allow  
 That the All-Powerful Lord Supreme with all  
 His inconceivable and mighty Potencies  
 Does not submit to earth's experiences.  
 His Kingdom by His Will can manifest in this world  
 as It is.

**H**E can accommodate Himself and all Entourage  
 In the minutest particle of matter  
 And all the worlds can He accommodate  
 In the hair-end of His Divine Form—  
 For this is His Divinity.  
 Therefore, what wonder that My transcendental  
 Movements



Are beyond the scope of mundane hence limited  
regulations ?

What doubt, then, can there be about the possibility  
Of My Descent in Mine Own Form Eternal  
Without recourse to human attributes, into this  
world ?

The Potency, deluding fallen souls,  
Is My External Potency.

She is by name the Māyā-Shakti or Deluding Potency,  
Whereas the Internal Potency that dwells within  
And is the Counter-Whole Predominated Aspect of  
My Own Self,

Unites with Me for ever.

My potency indeed is one,

Though She assists Me in My transcendental  
Occupations

Guiding My true devotees and all their loving service  
While in other aspects She deludes the fallen  
Who are fastened by the chain of Karma.

**B**HARATA ! In every age when irreligion doth  
prevail

I manifest Myself.

In My Divine Form Eternal

Descend I unto earth, meeting the deluded people.

As if I were born like them

That I may save the soul-surrendering devotees.

And by a method indirect,



Replace upon the path of righteousness the wicked,  
And re-establish for all souls their own eternal  
duties.

I am Self-willed and Self-effulgent ;  
I descend upon the world whenever I desire.  
Thus when the Vedas are distorted,  
Love stigmatized, or duties disregarded,  
When irreligious principles, or sins predominate,  
I, by prerogative divine, reveal Myself.  
Eternal are My cosmic laws;  
Yet when the stream of time produces forms  
Perverted, due to some unknown causes,  
And spreads corruption, owing to the  
Failings of inconstant time,  
None but I can end that chaos or disorder.

COME I to purge the world of all perversion  
From religion proper,  
I manifest not only in this India  
But also in celestial and material realms  
According to their needs.  
Do not believe My Revelations are denied to hethens  
or barbarians.  
When among these appear debased conceptions of  
religion,  
This I protect through One of My Saktābeshāvatāras,  
This means Divine Descent, when I endow a soul  
Freed for eternity, with godly powers



To fulfil a special mission in the world.  
 The relative socio-religious duties  
 Of the four divisions in society,  
 Formed on the basis of qualities and actions,  
 Are best performed in India.  
 This land I favour especially as God Supreme.  
 I remove the foreign elements that tend them to  
 absorb.  
 It is for this reason that all  
 My soul-attracting Yugāvatāras  
 And Amsāvatāras do manifest in India.

**K**RISHNA is the Fountain-Source of all Divine  
 Descents,

Who hold an equal power with Him,  
 As diverse lights of equal power  
 May be enkindled from one master light.  
 Krishna is known as Svayam-Rupa—  
 Lord in His Own Eternal Form,  
 His first Manifestation being Svayam-Prakāsh-  
 called.  
 His Name is also Valadeva,  
 Who in one Aspect serves the Lord in half a score of  
 diverse ways  
 And in another Aspect is explained  
 As Mulasamkarsana.  
 He the Primeval Power is,  
 Who fertilizes all the hearts



In which the seed of love Divine  
And worship of the Lord, can grow  
Into sublime devotion.

The next Manifestation Mahā-Samkarsana is  
Comprising Vāsudeva, Samkarsana and Two more  
Pradyumna, Aniruddha—all Four Aspects of the One.  
From Mahāsamkarsana manifests Kāranārnavaśāyee  
Vishnu

And from Him proceeds the one known as  
Garbhodakashāyee Vishnu;  
Again, from this come the four Divine Descents.  
These manifest in India in four Ages and are called  
The Yugāvatāras which number, therefore, also  
only four.

**F**AR back in Satya-Yuga, which is called the Gold-  
en Age,

Hari the fair-complexioned, is the first Divine  
Descent.

The next appears in Tretā-Yuga or the Silver Age  
And the Divine Descent is Hayagriva—red of skin.  
The third great Age, Dwāpara-Yuga,  
Produces dark Shyāma's Form  
And in the Kali-Yuga—fourth and present Age of  
strife,

The Avatāra is Krishna, fair like the burning gold,  
Original Krishna is the Ultimate Svayam-Rupa  
Revealing not Himself on earth



In every third great Age.  
 From Mahāsamkarsana, as explained to thee above,  
 The Partial Revelations or the Amsāvatāras  
 Of Krishna the Primeval, are manifest on earth.

**W**HEN duties in society are never classified  
 According to the qualities and actions of the  
 soul,

No selfless Karma-Yoga can result,  
 Nor Jnāna either, nor Bhakti-Yoga,  
 The ultimate and highest goal of man.  
 That attitude devout among the lower grades of men  
 Is due to all My devotees and their special grace.  
 The duties of the castes are re-established not by Me  
 But by the Royal Sages, and the like, empowered  
 by Me.

Yet as a benediction to Mine own who long to see,  
 I come in Person to this world;  
 No lesser Incarnation can content the great devout.  
 When I, as Svayam-Rupa, make descent into this  
 world,

My Avatāras of every grade are also manifest,  
 For they are all in Me.

I spare My devotees the pangs  
 Of separation from Myself.

As Yugaavatāra I kill the non-religious who rebel  
 Like Rāvana and Kamsa and the others of that kind  
 And thereby indirectly bless them.



Two basic forms of service  
 Call Swa-Dharma I ordain.  
 By preaching, hearing, chanting and by other ways  
 Of unalloyed devotion  
 I found Swa-Dharma the eternal service  
 Which refers to flesh and blood of body  
 And the subtle form of mind.

**I**N other Ages I destroy the atheists who strive  
 Against Me or My devotees;  
 But in the present Age, Kali-Yuga  
 Or the Age of discord and of strife,  
 I do not even try to slay even the wickedest of these.  
 Their demon spirit I destroy  
 Embracing one and all, distributing  
 The fruits Divine of Transcendental Love  
 To right and left where ever they fall,  
 For they may be conveyed to all the world  
 By chanting first My Transcendental Name.  
 Hearken, Arjuna, to this truth :  
 I and My Name are One.

**H**E who conceives by true perspective  
 That I accept My birth  
 And I accept My deeds divine through My Indwel-  
 ling Power,  
 He is not chained from birth and death  
 Fettered no more to life.



Attains he for ever My service true  
Under My Power Ecstatic.

He, on the other hand, who thinks  
My Birth and Deeds and Self Divine  
Thuswise revealed on earth,  
Impermanent and temporal,  
Suffers the chain of births and deaths,  
Results of his ignorance.

Dense-minded folk are long confined to this material  
action.

Purest intelligence is not aroused in them, save by  
the grace of devotees.

Three motives lead the ignorant astray  
From concept true of My Divine Birth, Actions,  
Transcendental Form and Purity :

These are attachments to those things  
That are not Me or Mine, and fear and anger.

For those men whose minds are blunted by material  
thoughts

Cannot conceive that such a principle  
As Transcendence e'er can be.

**H**OLDING Nature to be highest truth,  
Some of these thinkers oft propound,

That matter is the cause of spirit.

Again, though some concede eternity  
To transcendental Facts,

They realise them not, for they attach



Too much importance to empirical attempts.  
Empiricists eliminate all attributes and matter  
And postulate a negative and attributeless God,  
Being the antithesis of Matter,  
And call it Brahman.  
This Neuter-God is only the negation of My Self  
As Positive Eternal Transcendental Lord of Love.  
Brahman not being My Eternal Form,  
Lest a material concept should prevail upon their  
thoughts  
And meditations of Me, they, the empiricists,  
Desist from meditating, out of fear,  
On My Personality Divine  
And Transcendental Occupations,  
And thereby are deprived of Me.

**O**THERS again, unable to transcend  
Beyond the bounds of time and space  
Decide, in anger, on :Nirvāna or the Void, as the  
final principle.  
Many there are most truly wise who,  
Free of these mental exploitations, fear and anger,  
And purified by true intelligence  
And having perfectly conceived My Form Divine,  
Take refuge in Me and behold  
My Real Existence in all things,  
Attaining to highest love for me.  
To such I offer all their fruits of worship



According to the faith reposed in Me.  
 O Pārtha ! all men follow more or less  
 My track in diverse ways.  
 Those who tread the path of service pure  
 And love for me, attain an everlasting haven  
 In my Abode of Bliss.

**T**HOSE who are pantheists and worship Me  
 As attributeless negative Brahman,  
 Are offered full absorption in My negative existence  
 By way of their salvation.  
 Through not acknowledging My Everlasting Beauteous  
 Form,  
 They are deprived of the conception of their own  
 eternal selves.  
 Those who advocate Nirvāna or cessation of  
 perception  
 Annihilate their consciousness, observing Me as  
 Void:  
 Those who are Nature-worshippers,  
 I place in the material world and they  
 Receive Me as the Universal Nature.  
 The elevationists do know Me  
 As the Giver of the fruits  
 Resulting from their action.  
 To the Yogins I am Self Supreme  
 And offer superhuman, mystic power  
 As fruits of their austerities.



**I**N this way, being Immanent,  
Men move along the diverse paths,  
Attaining Me according to the one they choose to  
tread.

But I, as Lord Sree Krishna, am the Ultimate  
And Highest Goal of every soul's endeavour.  
The worship of the Self Supreme,  
The path of meditating on the souls' Indweller,  
The knowledge of the Great Brahman—  
All these paths must lead to Me.  
Many are the paths that lead to Me,  
In microcosm and in macrocosm.  
Their End but differs in accordance with their motive  
And degree of their surrender unto Me.  
The truly wise acknowledge all these paths  
As divers "means", and not an "end".  
My Personality Divine of Love,  
All-Majesties and Beauty  
Is the final End of all.  
Those who employ the 'means', described above,  
And are attached to the specific ends associated with  
those paths  
Cannot progress to the Supreme and final End in Me.

**T**HE sensuous who tread the path  
Of Karma, for immediate results,  
Forsake the path of love and service to Me.  
I have already told thee, O Arjuna,



To understand the principle of Karma  
 Is to rid thee of its bondage.  
 Shun thou Vikarma and Akarma.  
 Better than these is gift-desired Karma.  
 For the success of their action  
 And to gain desired ends without delay  
 Such folk are blended by a joyous mood  
 And thus become polytheists.

**T**O soothe the mental and physical conditions  
 Of this impermanent material world,  
 The work done by the men who seek reward  
 Gives satisfaction to the fruit-giving gods  
 Who grant them their desires with ease.  
 Who these gods are will be announced in later words.  
 I am the Founder of the respective duties  
 Of the four castes, according to their qualities and  
 actions.  
 I am the only Agent and the Author  
 Of the system of the caste.  
 Know Me howe'er to be Non-director, Indeclinable,  
 For I am not identified with earth's affairs.  
 My Māyā Energy is the directing cause  
 Of this caste system, owing to the fate  
 And negligence of fallen souls.  
 I am in reality the Lord of My Indwelling Power.  
 I am concerned with Her in Realm of pure trans-  
 cendence.



It matters not to Me to form  
 The path of Karma through My Māyā-potency.  
 The Soul's abuse of free will  
 Is responsible for it.  
 The castes have thus been classified  
 To indicate man's work.

**T**O the Brāhmanas, the priestly caste,  
 Whose mundane normal tendency  
 Is Sāttvika or good  
 Are assigned the duties of Sama and Dama,  
 Practice in controlling all senses,  
 Both the internal and the external.  
 For them alone the study of the Vedas is ordained,  
 Teaching the Scriptures to the rest of mankind day  
 by day.  
 Theirs is the noble duty of the sacrificial rites,  
 Performed in person and as priests,  
 As donors and recipients.  
 The second is warrior caste who govern  
 The State, and fight courageously in war  
 As brave Kshatriyas.  
 They, too, protect society,  
 Collecting revenues from tenants and house-holders,  
 Passion and goodness interblent their tendency  
 defines  
 And Rājas-Sāttvika is the keynote of their kind,  
 The third caste are Vaisyas who are



Normally inclined to Tāmas-Rājas—  
 All the grossest feelings fired by passion.  
 These are assigned the duties  
 Of the agriculturists, and every grade  
 Of Commerce passes through their earthly hands.  
 The Sudras prone to Tāmas are  
 To serve the other castes  
 And thus perform the humblest menial duties known  
 to man.

This system being mundane,  
 Its prime material cause  
 Is my External Potency.  
 Myself as Lord of all  
 Become of every happening  
 The first Efficient Cause.

**T**HOU art a warrior born, and must  
 Unflinchingly perform thy duty in this life  
 As befits a schion of Kshatriya Caste.  
 But I am not involved in Karma's system,  
 Introduced by My External Potency  
 Nor do I cherish e'er the least desire  
 To enjoy the fruits that Karma yields.  
 One who does know Me in this way  
 Is never bound by chains of Karma  
 They that fetter souls to earth.  
 I am the Lord Supreme  
 Possessed of All-majesty, All-glory,



All-supremacy and All-might,  
 All-beauty and All-wisdom;  
 Thus the worthless fruits of Karma  
 Which My External Deluding Potency creates  
 Due to the Jiva-souls' abuse of free will,  
 Have no attraction for Me.  
 I am All-bliss. Perform I duties  
 But to set example to the souls  
 Who are within the walls of Karma.  
 He who understands My Freedom  
 And the worldly bondage of the fallen,  
 Never gets enmeshed in Karma;  
 He is unconcerned with it  
 Attaining Me by following the path  
 Of pure devotion  
 Of service and love for Me.  
 Knowing Me as such, dost thou thy duty  
 Without hope of loss or gain  
 Following in the wake of blessed  
 Jñānins, saints of yore,  
 Who worked for human good.  
 They realised My unconcern  
 With all mundane affairs,  
 These wiser saints who in the past  
 Gave up fruitive acts,  
 Performed selfless Karma  
 And they offered the results to Me alone  
 Thou also, therefore, follow now



The great souls like Janaka  
And all the saints of olden times;  
Adopt thou selfless Karma.

**E**VEN the wise are at a loss  
To ascertain what Karma is  
And what is Akarma.  
Now I shall tell thee which is which,  
And knowing that, thou shalt be free  
From all their earthly bondage.  
It is imperative to understand  
The ends distinctive of these three ;  
Karma, Vikarma and Akarma.  
Inscrutable are Karma's ways.  
Duty fulfilled is Karma;  
Selfless Karma-Yoga is a higher step beyond it.  
Performance of forbidden deeds is known as Vikrama;  
Thus gift-desired Kāmya-Karma  
Comes within this sphere  
And misery is consequent upon it.  
Akarma is omission of the duties.  
Thou shouldst beware of that which is attained  
By Karma-sannyāsins,  
They who desist from every action;  
And know what evil consequence befalls  
Those who incline to Karma but follow Akarma.

**H**E is wise, and therefore fit  
For perfect Karma among men



Who understands non-Karma within Karma  
 And Karma in non-Karma.  
 The meaning is that one adopting  
 Selfless Karma-Yoga who offers God  
 The result of all his actions,  
 Approaches perfect comprehension  
 Of his true self, and is not whirled  
 Upon the wheel of Karma.  
 His heart is purified with the awakening  
 Of gradual sublime intelligence  
 And cannot therefore be a Karmin pure and simple.  
 For he sees Karma as non-Karma,  
 Because his every act is perfectly unselfish.  
 Where as a Karma-sannyāsin,  
 One who refrains from action,  
 Must suffer through his impure heart,  
 In spite of being versed in all the Scriptures,  
 Because he shirked performance of his duty.

**H**E who has adopted perfect selfless Karma  
 Is called a "Pandit" by the wise—  
 One whose intelligence is heightened  
 By his knowledge of the Vedas,  
 Because his primal tendency to mere Karma  
 Is burnt up by the fire of Jñāna  
 Which is pure intelligence;  
 His Karma-Yoga changes then to Jñāna-Yoga.  
 He who is self-content and yet



Indifferent to Yoga—that is :  
 Searches after objects unattained  
 Aimed at by the elevationists  
 And takes care to preserve such when obtained  
 By being non-attached to fruits of Karma,  
 Will not be yoked to it, although  
 He apparently engages in Karma-Yoga.

**H**E adopts Karma as a means of livelihood.  
 Guiding mind and body by intelligence  
 Nor hankers after fruits of any action  
 With no attachment for results;  
 Therefore he frees himself from vice  
 Or virtue associated with his Karma.  
 He is content with what he gets with ease ;  
 He is not prone to pleasure or to pain,  
 To love or hatred ;  
 He is above malice, beyond jealousy ;  
 Equitable in failure or success.  
 Whatsoe'er he does, can never fetter him.  
 No more is he attached to any object;  
 His is the glorious freedom,  
 Equipoised in pure intelligence.  
 Whate'er he does for Yajna's sake  
 Completely ends with it :  
 The fruits of his Karma he offers  
 To the Lord of Yajna, and therefore  
 He is himself unbound from chains of Karma.



**L**IST now to how the sacrificial Karma  
 Does beget intelligence :  
 All transcendental truths are utterly distinct  
 From tangible phenomena.  
 It is a truth that fallen souls  
 Are bound to work to keep  
 Their body and soul together.  
 By means of Yajna they may faithfully  
 Discharge their duties, actuated  
 By the consciousness of their true selves.  
 When the cognition that transcends  
 Is manifest in Matter,  
 This is called Brahman.  
 This Brahman is the outmost Effulgence  
 Of My Transcendental Self.  
 Offering, sacrificial ghee or ceremonial Oil,  
 Fire, sacrificial priesthood and the fruits of action—  
 These five do form constituents of Yajna;  
 And as these are presided o'er by Brahman,  
 We call it perfect Yajna.  
 One who directs his Karma to Brahman  
 By firmly concentrating on profoundest meditation,  
 May thus perform all Karma as Yajna.  
 His offerings, his sacrificial ghee,  
 The fire, the priesthood of his self-existence  
 And the results of Yajna  
 Are all addressed to Brāhman—  
 The Outward Effulgence of My Personality Supreme.



**H**E who is initiated  
In such Yajna, is a Yogin.

There are as many Yajnas as there are groups of  
Yogins.

Yet are they classified into but two main divisions :  
The Karma-Yogins and the Jnāna-Yogins.

The ones do make their sacrificial offerings to  
minor gods,

Who are but scarce a step above the average,

Being empowered by My Māyā

With particular and special capabilities,

And thereby attain to selfless Karma gradually;

The others offer their own selves as ghee

To Brahman Fire,

Uttering the lofty Vedic Dictum;

"Thou art He."

**T**HE life-long celibates, called Brahmachārins,

Offer their senses as sacrificial ghee

To the fire of self-control,

Whereas the house-holders offer their sense-  
perceptions,

Such as sound, taste, smell, touch, beauty

To the fire of senses.

The seekers of the individual soul, like Patanjali,

Offer the activities of their ten senses

Of their eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch,

Voice, hands, legs, anus and penis and of



The half-score vital airs : Prān, Apān,  
 Samān, Udān, Vyān, Nāga, Kurma,  
 Krikara and Devadatta and  
 Dhananjaya as sacrificial ghee  
 To the fire of the pure individual soul.  
 The Kaivalya Philosophy of Patanjali  
 Holds that there is no such thing as mind.  
 The soul or ātmā is the only  
 Existing entity, according to this School,  
 And when the soul inclines towards phenomena,  
 It is called Parāg-ātmā,  
 And when it is indifferent to all phenomena,  
 And turns towards its own sublime existence  
 It is called Pratyag-ātmā.

**T**HE Yajnas may be classified into four sections:  
 Dravya-Yajna, Tapa-Yajna,  
 Yoga-Yajna and Swadhyāya (Jnāna)-Yajna;  
 Those who perform these fourfold Yajnas  
 Are ascetics of severe vows.  
 When the five sacrifices as explained above,  
 Are actually offered in the fire of Yajna,  
 It is called Dravya-Yajna ;  
 Severe austerities like Chandrāyana or Chātur-māsya  
 Are practised in the Tapa-Yajna;  
 The eight processes of mental concentration  
 Form the Yoga-Yajna;  
 Discussions on the Spirit and on Matter



That are based upon an interpretation of the Vedas,  
Mark the character of Jnāna-Yajna.

**B**ESIDES, mention is also made of Hatha-Yoga  
And sundry other austerities in the Tantras  
According to the time and circumstance.  
The advocates of Hatha-Yoga practise Prānāyāma  
Which is the act of withholding the breath  
As an accessory to meditation  
And stop the flow of Prāna the first vital air, in  
Apāna, flatulence,  
And then suspend Apāna in the Prāna,  
And gradually stay both motions in Kumbhaka,  
Which signifies withholding all the breath  
By closing the nostrils and the mouth.  
Some, willing to control their senses,  
Take to moderation in their food and drink,  
And offer Prānas to the fire of Prānas only :  
They draw all the ten varieties of Prānas  
From diverse parts to one place at the navel,  
And then direct them all towards the crown of the  
head.  
These men are all well versed in the principle of  
Yajna  
And thereby become sinless and finally attain  
Brahman  
By accepting the residuary sweets of Yajna :  
Wealth, supremacy and grandeur and all psychic  
powers.



O Thou Glory of the Line !

What canst thou say about the next world,  
When even this world is debarred to those  
Who do not here conform to Yajna ?

Yajna is bounden duty.

The caste rules, as observed by henotheists,  
Āstānga-Yoga and the Vedic sacrifices  
All come within the scope of Yajna.

There can be no true Karma in this world without  
Yajna ;

Anything else but this is either Akarma or Vikarma.

SUCH Yajnas are mentioned in the Vedas  
Or in the Shāstras alluding to the Vedas.

Their practices refer to the body, mind and speech,  
And therefore they are born of Karma.

Discrimination in such principles of Karma  
Rids men of all its bondage.

Though the performance of these Yajnas  
Lead man from gradual knowledge unto peace  
And from peace unto My devotion,

There is yet a graduation in them  
According to the aptitude of each.

Jñāna-Yajna is by far superior to Dravya-Yajna.

O Parantapa ! all Karmas culminate in Jñāna  
Which is transcendental Knowledge.

Yajnas that lack spirituality

Become Dravya-Yajna or mere Karma-Yajna,



Otherwise Karma-Kānda or the ceremonial acts and  
sacrificial rites;

When they are suffused with glowing spirit,  
They then become philosophy in practice.

**I**N order to acquire the knowledge  
That will enable thee to differentiate between  
the two,

Approach with honest purpose thy preceptor,  
Who is well qualified to teach, and realizes all these  
principles,

He will instruct thee in that lore.

O Pāndava ! thou art prepared at present  
To abandon all thy normal duty as a warrior  
Out of infatuation, which thou wilt shun  
As soon as knowledge true enlightens thee.

Then thou shalt know that all beings

Are essentially spiritual entities,

Possessing diverse forms and attributes and actions  
in this world

Due to their ignorance,

And that they all exist in Me

Who am the Fountain-head of all the potencies

And that they derive all from My Deluding Energy.

**T**HOUGH thou wert the worst of sinners

Killing thy friends and relatives in battle,

Yet shalt thou traverse this sea of sorrow

Upon the ship of wisdom which is Jnāna.



Just as blazing fire reduces fuel unto ashes,  
So does this flame of knowledge, O Arjuna !  
Burn away offences born of Karma.  
Naught in the world is near so pure  
As transcendental knowledge.  
In time shalt thou attain that knowledge  
As result of selfless Karma-Yoga.  
By this is meant that "Bliss Eternal"  
Is the end of transcendental knowledge.  
Knowledge is not the end,  
But Bliss Divine is the highest good,  
Love of Godhead is Real Bliss.  
He who possesses firm faith and attachment  
To selfless Karma-Yoga, and who is self-controlled,  
Acquires perfect knowledge.  
He who has no confidence in selfless Karma-Yoga  
Cannot attain this knowledge.  
But by gaining all such knowledge,  
Ere long he does attain eternal and highest Bliss.

**H**E who is ignorant and sceptical is ruined !  
He can realise no happiness or peace in this  
world or the next,  
For his affliction in the form of doubt and disbelief  
Eats into his very heart.  
He is ignorant because he is devoid of wisdom  
Like the lower animals;  
He is a disbeliever



For his partial knowledge of the Scriptures  
Thwarts him regarding the divergent views  
Anent the ethics of the world.

He is dubious or sceptical because he wonders  
If the principle he has adopted will lead him to its  
end.

He, therefore, finds peace nowhere.

So, Dhananjaya, conqueror of wealth immense—

By killing thy host of enemies,

Conquer now that wealth of concentration

By controlling well thy mind.

One who abstains from fruitive actions

By adopting selfless Karma-Yoga,

And who destorys his scepticism

With the perfect concept of his true and normal self,

Is free for ever from the bondage of all Karma.

Thy doubt as to the principle of selfless Karma

Is due to thy own ignorance.

Slay thou that doubt within thy mind

With thine own sword of knowledge

And pursue thou selfless Karma-Yoga.

Rise, therefore, O Bhārata ! and fight the battle.

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## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### ***NON-ATTACHMENT TO MATTER***



## CHAPTER FIVE

### NON-ATTACHMENT TO MATTER

**A**RJUNA said : "O Krishna ! at one time  
Thou praised the Karma-sannyāsa—  
Cessation of fruitive acts by following  
Selfless Karma-Yoga, — and another time  
Thou hast asked me to adopt  
Selfless Karma-Yoga, by destroying all doubt and  
scepticism  
With the sword of knowledge.  
Tell me plainly which of these two is better now for  
me.  
I understand that Karma-Sannyāsa means to cease  
from all  
Furtive acts while Karma-Yoga means  
That I must follow every act  
And dedicate the fruits to Thee, O Lord Supreme !"  
Said Bhagavān : "Both Karma-sannyāsa and  
Karma-Yogā  
Are beneficial and conduct to bliss;  
But of the two, the Karma-Yoga is the better.  
Renouncing all attachment for Karma  
Is what Karma-Sannyāsa means,  
And not a literal cessation from all actions.  
Karma-Yoga also is selfless performance of thy  
duties,



But with more explicit comprehension of the act  
 Of consecrating their results to God  
 Which would ensure for thee the heart's purification  
 By that pure knowledge which destroys all doubt ;  
 So that in point of fact,  
 Karma-Sannyāsa and Karma-Yoga mean very much  
 the same.

**O** Mighty-armed ! he who is not malicious  
 Nor desirous of the fruits of Karma  
 And who is firm and steady when confronted  
 By earth's relative temptations,  
 Is truly a Karma-sannyāsin, renouncer of fruitive  
 acts.

He is easily released from bonds of action.  
 Salvation may not be attained by disregarding  
 Karma-sannyāsa ;  
 A Karmin, who has no attachment for Karma  
 But whose heart is purified in fires of knowledge,  
 Is a valiant sannyāsin, competent to conquer in the  
 Realm of Freedom.

**I**T is the ignorant discernor — not the wise—  
 Who draws distinctions.  
 He it is who differentiates between Sāṅkhya-Yoga  
 Which is Karma-Sannyāsa and the Karma-Yoga.  
 Either of these, when rightly followed,  
 Will husband the fruits of both.



Both principles of Karma-Sannyāsa and of  
Karma-Yoga

Are essentially the same,

Though there be differences of degree

In thine adherence to attachment or to non-attach-  
ment.

What is attained by Karma-sannyāsa in pursuing  
knowledge

Is also attainable by Karma-Yoga : the name alone  
is different.

He who identifies the one fact with the other is  
truly enlightened.

**O** Mighty-armed ! renouncement of thy Karma as  
abstraction

Without selfless Karma-Yoga is by itself a misery.

He who accomplishes his selfless Karma-Yoga

And dedicates the fruits thereof to Me

Attains Brahman more speedily by his adoption

Of the Karma-sannyāsa.

Jñānins who devote themselves to selfless Karma-  
Yoga

Are classified into four groups.

According to their purity of mind, of heart and  
sense-control.

Each is respectively superior to the other.

Being objects of universal love and adoration,

They are not involved in actions,

Though they perform them all.



A selfless Karma-Yogin, who has purified his mind  
 And heart, with fires of knowledge  
 And understands the principles of Karma-Yoga  
 And of Karma-Sannyāsa,  
 Though he performs the functions of his senses,  
 Namely : seeing, touching, smelling,  
 Eating, moving, sleeping, breathing,  
 Thinks in his pure intelligence like this :  
 "I have done nothing."

While in the act of taking part in talks,  
 Accepting and rejecting certain things,  
 In the opening and closing of his eyes,  
 He recollects:

"Now am I shackled in material bodies.  
 Not I the true, but my constricted ego, does all this.  
 That ego only is engaging the attention  
 Of the senses to their objects.  
 In my freed and pure self,  
 I have no concern with earth's phenomena."

**A**S the leaf of a lotus, though in water,  
 Is not submerged by water,  
 So also one who resorts to Karma,  
 Offering its fruits to God,  
 Is not entangled in the vice or virtue  
 That accrue from Karma.  
 That they may purify their minds,  
 The Karma-Yogins do their duties,



Abandoning attachment to results,  
 With body, mind, intelligence and with their senses  
 purified.  
 By giving up desire for fruition,  
 A balanced Yogin does attain undeviated peace,  
 A freedom from the hamperings of Karma,  
 While the non-balanced seeker after fruits  
 Becomes entangled in his Karma,  
 Through his lustful hankerings.  
 Although this individual  
 Apparently accomplishes his duties,  
 He is essentially non-attached to what he does  
 By following the mental process just explained.  
 He may live happily at home!  
 Within his fleshly body,  
 Consisting of nine doors or vents or outlets,  
 But truly speaking, neither he himself does aught  
 Nor can he make another do a thing.

**T**HE soul, who is the master of his body and  
 material mind  
 Takes no initiative in doing aught  
 Or causing actions to be done  
 And thus does not connect himself with the results.  
 When it is said that souls proper  
 Have no prerogative anent their actions,  
 It does not mean that such prerogative should be  
 ascribed to God,



For then Divinity might be accused of grave-injustice.

Man's egotism, Karma and its fruits  
Are not of God's creation, but of man's,  
Whose nescient nature is responsible for such;  
For ignorance induces him to egotism.  
If neither good, or evil are caused by God,  
He cannot be responsible for their results.  
He does not enjoy the vices or virtues of mankind.  
Pure knowledge is the normal nature of all souls,  
But is now in a conditioned state  
Enveloped by the Māyā Potency of God,  
For they forget their real nature  
And misidentify themselves with body and with  
mind,  
And this has given rise to egotism.

**K**NOWLEDGE is two-fold—of the world and  
transcendental.

Knowledge that has been garnered from the world  
By application of the human senses and experience  
to phenomena,  
Is in its essence the unwisdom of the fallen souls;  
Whereas transcendental knowledge is the wisdom  
of the pure souls.

To those whose ignorance is dissipated by the  
awakening  
Of transcendental knowledge of their nature,



The Lord Supreme reveals Himself  
 As the diffusing radiance of the rising sun  
 Dispels the darkness of the previous night.  
 Just as the sun's effulgence does reveal  
 The sun itself and everything around,  
 So the true knowledge of the Lord and of man's self  
 Removes the ignorance of a conditioned state,  
 Revealing the eternal nature of the freed soul  
 And of the godly Fountain-head of all intelligence.  
 But when this innate self-realisation  
 Is shrouded by the mist of ignorance,  
 An individual is chained to all the consequences of  
 his acts.

Māyā, the Deluding Potency of the Supreme,  
 Causes the material bondage of a soul,  
 While the Efficient Cause is the Indwelling Master  
 Who wakens such a soul from worldly stupor.

**T**HE dormant nature of a fallen soul or ātmā  
 Is wakened by a knowledge of his real self,  
 But a true conception of the Soul Supreme, the  
 Paramātmā,  
 Is not conceded save to the devout.  
 Thus devotional activities are indispensable for  
 knowing God.  
 Those who have dedicated their devotion,  
 Intelligence and mind and body  
 To the service of the Lord, and I am He,



Attain eternal freedom from their ignorance  
 By garnering Truth Immortal.  
 Those who are attached to Me alone,  
 Are free for ever from lust and earthly hankerings.  
 Then they rejoice in chanting forth My Name  
 And in discoursing on My Form and Attributes,  
 My Occupations and Entourage.  
 Only by attachment and devotedness to Me  
 Can any soul attain a true conception of My Self.  
 Then he may enter My Abode of Bliss  
 And render everlasting service to My Glory.

**I**N this world, things are classified into three  
 main divisions

According to the triple qualities of Māyā.  
 But those imbued with qualities transcendent,  
 Are not concerned with thoughts disturbing,  
 Which are concomitants of earthly attributes.  
 The Pandit regards all forms of life with glance-  
 serene :  
 Equally he gazes on a Brāhmana possessed of  
 wisdom and tranquility,  
 Or upon a cow or elephant or dog,  
 Or one who lives on dog's flesh.  
 Knowest thou the Brāhmana and the cow belong to  
 the superior class  
 In whom the quality of Sattva is all-prominant;



The elephant belongs to where the Rajas dominates:  
the second group,  
While dogs and out-castes come within the lowest  
class,  
Possessing the mentality of Tamas.  
But one in whom true knowledge is awakened,  
Looks far beyond these cosmic relativities  
And realises the existance of the Lord,  
Who doth transcend all earthly relations, in every  
entity.

**T**HOSE who are endowed with the tranquility  
And equanimity of mind,  
Can conquer all the world.  
They grow unblemished as they incorporate the  
nature of Brahman,  
Whorefore their very life is in the life of Brahman.  
A knower of Brahman has his existence in Brahman  
And is not adicted to mundane sense-perceptions  
But is firm of purpose.  
He is not elated or dejected by the world's events,  
Whether they be pleasant or unpleasant.  
The knower of Brahman does not confine his joys  
to earth's phenomena.  
He savours transcendental joy  
In the knowledge of his own true self  
And gains eternal bliss



By steadfast consecration on Brahman,  
So that in course of time he feels  
A natural aversion to all sensual pleasures.  
Such an one whose truest nature is awakened  
Never yields to sensuality  
Which does beget but misery;  
These joys are born of relative associations  
And have their beginning and their end;  
They are not therefore everlasting.  
O Son of Kunti ! such a sane man  
Feels no liking for these transient pleasures.  
He accepts his selfless Karma in relation to them  
For the bare necessities of life  
Though he is not attached to them.

**H**APPY is he in reality  
And equanimity he has attained,  
Who can withstand with patience until death  
The impulse of desire and anger  
By following the selfless Karma-Yoga  
Whilst knowing that he has to mingle with objects  
of the world.  
This dealing with phenomena is indispensable  
So long as there is life in mortal man;  
But fortunate is he who deals with them  
Without becoming in the least involved.



**H**E who is not addicted to the pleasures  
And instruction and the comforts of this  
world

But honestly aspires to inner happiness and comfort  
And enlightenment in touch with Brahman,  
Is a real Yogin gaining spiritual liberation.  
Brahma-Nirvāna, the Transcendental Bliss  
Or spiritual liberation, may be attained  
By sages who are free from sin and doubt,  
Who are intent on the eternal welfare of all souls  
And have achieved a perfect self-control.  
Those sages now bereft of all desires and anger,  
Completely self-restrained,  
Well versed in all the lore of the soul and Oversoul  
Ere long attain the transcendental Bliss in all  
perfection.

**A** selfless Karma-Yogin in this world,  
After distinguishing between the truth and  
non-truth,  
Realises that Brahman is beyond  
The scope of earthly time and space ;  
And thus realising this,  
He finds his own existence is in Him;  
Thus is extinguished the burning fire of earthly  
weal and woe,  
By what is called Brahma-Nirvāna.



The heart is purified by Karma-Yoga  
 The fruits of which are offered unto God;  
 Purification of the heart begets true self-determina-  
 tion  
 And this pure knowledge which is all untinged by  
 worldly attributes,  
 Reveals a true conception of Brahman;  
 This leads man to steadfast dedication to Brahman's  
 Divinity;  
 From this attachment is awakened active loving  
 service unto Him;  
 And this is what we know as Bhakti.

**N**OW the process of Astānga-Yoga,  
 Which is control of the eight limbs, is described.  
 Drive out all contact with external sense-perceptions  
 Of sound, sight, touch, taste, smell, and others, from  
 the mind,  
 Withdrawing all these senses and retracting them  
 within.  
 The gaze should be fixed upon the tip of the nose  
 With glance cast through the space between the eye-  
 brows;  
 It should be done so that the eyes be neither fully  
 closed,  
 Lest they should lull thee to sleep,  
 Nor fully open, lest outward objects should distract;



The breathing through the nostrils should be so regulated

That the in-going air or Prāna and the out-going air or Apāna

Should be equalised, and finally their upward and downward motions

Should be withheld at equilibrium at the navel,

Thus seated, the sage who has complete control

Over his senses, mind, intelligence

Being free from anger and from fear

Practises his realisation of Brahman.

And with the aim of final liberation

He can attain immunity from earthly attributes.

There this Astānga-Yoga can be said to be

A part and parcel of selfless Karma-Yoga.

Such Karma-Yogins know Me to be

The Presiding Deity of all sacrificial rites—

The Lord Supreme of all the worlds—

The Friend of every entity.

**A**ND ultimately they attain the final liberation  
In blissful comprehension of My Form Divine.  
By cultivating unalloyed devotion  
In association with My devotees.

I am the Recipient of the Yajna performed by  
all the Karmins;

I am the Protector of the Jnānins who practise these  
austerities;



I am the best Friend of all souls  
For I alone assist them for their good  
Through the advice of My devotees;  
I am the Paramātmā—the Indweller  
Whom the Yogins meditate upon ;  
I in My own true Nature  
Am the only Object of love and service  
To be attained by pure devotion only ;  
I am the Lord Supreme of the the worlds ;  
Final beatitude awaits the Yogin who realises Me  
as such.

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## **CHAPTER SIX**

# **CONCENTRATION**



## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCENTRATION

**S**AID Bhagavān: "By merely refraining  
From the performance of Karma like  
Agni-hotra,

Man does not become a Sannyāsin;  
The merely sitting with the eyes half-opened,  
Neglecting all the physical activities  
Does not make man one whit a true Yogin.  
But he is both a sannyāsin and a Yogin  
Who performs his duties selflessly without desiring  
reward.

According to the Scriptures,  
An ordinary sannyāsin, who does refrain from  
Karma,

Is known as 'niragni', he who must no longer  
handle fire

Or perform religious rites  
In which a light perpetual must be maintained.  
Again, a Yogi is supposed to stay all physical  
activities

And undergo severe austerities  
While steadying his glance  
At the tip of the nose with half-closed eyes.



But to the Supreme Lord all these are but exterior  
forms

And no essential sign of true renunciation  
Or of genuine self-restraint.

Conversely one who performs unselfish Karma-  
Yoga

Is both a sannyāsin and a Yogi.

**O** Pāṇḍava ! that which is called sannyāsa is  
also known as Yoga.

Verily he is not a Yogi

Who does not abandon his desires for fruits of  
action.

I have already taught thee to identify

Sāṅkhya-Yoga with Karma-Yoga, and now I shall  
explain to thee

How Karma-Yoga and Astāṅga-Yoga are really one.

Indeed, in all these three Yogas : Sāṅkhya, Karma  
and Astāṅga

Are not distinctive principles;

The ignorant imagine them to be so.

**Y**OGA is like a flight of steps.

Many are the steps or means,

Beginning with the lowest rung of abject worldliness

To the highest realisation of the purest state.

Each of these rising steps possesses a distinctive  
name.



But Yoga is the name in common  
 For the whole flight of steps.  
 There are two main divisions of the Yogins ;  
 Those who have just begun to mount the steps—  
 Karma or selfless action  
 Is their only aim, to purify the heart ;  
 Secondly come those who have already reached the  
 top rung of the ladder—  
 Tranquility, complete restraint of passions is their  
 aim.  
 When man has outlived his attachment  
 For every sensual joy, and has renounced  
 Avowals to perform religious rites,  
 Yogāruddha he is called—  
 One who has reached the topmost step of Yoga's  
 ladder.

**A** soul that falls into the sink of abject worldliness  
 May be redeemed but by a mind which is  
 detached  
 Completely from the senses' pleasures.  
 The soul must never be submerged by worldly  
 appetites.  
 Mind is both a friend and foe  
 To the soul, according to the circumstances.  
 Mind is a friend to that soul  
 Who has full control of it,  
 And is a foe to him when uncontrolled.



These are the characteristics of a Yogāruddha :  
 He has controlled his mind,  
 Is unperturbed by worldly love and hate,  
 Or heat and cold, pleasures and pains, honour and  
 disgrace.

Steadfast is he in deep meditation;  
 Satisfied with the knowledge that he has acquired  
 From the preceptors and the Scriptures, and the  
 Transcendental knowledge which he has achieved.  
 He is always steadily unshaken  
 In the normal nature of his true self;  
 He is self-controlled and is conversant with the  
 truth

That mundane objects, such as earth  
 And stone and gold are all of equal values;  
 That is, they are diverse forms of Matter,  
 And therefore must they perish.

He has acquired equanimity,  
 Freedom from love and hate  
 Regarding all those who are either friends or foes  
 Or relatives or those who are indifferent to him,  
 Or wish him well, or those who are detestable or  
 neutral, pious or vicious.

**A** Yogāruddha is engaged in deepest meditation in  
 seclusion,

Whatever he may do for maintenance of body



'Should be entirely free from wicked or profane  
associations

As well as from all selfishness.

'Learn thou the rules set forth for Yoga-practice:

'The Yogi must select a spotless place

'That neither is too high nor yet too low,

'On Kusha-grass spread with a deer's skin and a cloth  
thereon,

And seated there, he should begin

To practise Yoga for the heart's purification,

By concentrating all his mind

And regulating his attention, senses and his actions.

Holding his body, head and neck erect and still,

And fixing his gaze upon the tip of his nose

In order to avoid deflection,

And being serene and fearless,

Firm in the vow of chastity

And holding his mind away from earthly matters,

He meditates upon My Personality Divine

Being attached to Me.

**B**Y such practices his mind is steadied,

And if he be not lacking in devotion

Gradually attains to peace in Me,

Blissful Nirvāna which is freedom from his worldly  
bondage,

And understanding of his own true self.

'O Arjuna ! Yoga is not possible to him



Who either eats or fasts too much,  
Nor is it possible to him who sleeps too much or  
not enough.

Yoga by degrees destroys all worldly miseries  
For him who is moderate in food and recreation,  
Regulated in activities, in sleeping and in waking.

**W**HEN the attention of an individual mind is  
concentrated,

Or when the heart is free from worldly shackles  
And is well established in transcendence,

Then man escapes all hankering after wordly aims  
And is said to be *Yukta* or well-balanced.

As a lamp that glows within a closed room does not  
flicker,

So the thoughts of a Yogin, centred in the *Ātman*,  
Are not disturbed by outside objects.

By such practices of Yoga,

The mind can concentrate its powers,

Restrain its senses from their corresponding sense-  
perceptions

And gradually reach the stage of *samādhi*.

In that stage, he enjoys unmeasured spiritual bliss

By realising *Paramātmā* in his pure self

On the transcendental plane.

Failing to realise the true significance of Patanjali's  
Yoga-system,

His critics thus explain it to the world.



They say that the attainment of immortal bliss  
 In Moksha or the human soul's salvation  
 By its union with the Over-soul—  
 As explained by the Vedānta-school—is inconsistent;  
 For, if such blissful comprehension be accepted,  
 Then the dual existence of perceiver and perception  
 Would be a contradiction  
 Of the very contention of Kaivalya  
 Or the oneness of the Over-soul with the jiva-souls.  
 But Patanjali does not hold this view as stated by  
 his commentators.  
 He has explained it in his last aphorisms thus:  
 When man is freed from all the four  
 Earthly qualitative objects of human life—  
 Virtue, wealth, desire, moksha or salvation,  
 His pure self is then released from the fluctuating  
 shackles  
 And is installed in his true nature,  
 Identical with Over-Self.  
 This is called Chit-Shakti.

**K**AIVALYA denotes this unity of qualitative  
 transcendental natures,  
 Free from the mundane attributes that co-exist  
 Between a human soul and the Divine Self.  
 By scrutinizing Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy,  
 It will be seen he did not mean to nullify  
 The attributes of self in the Kaivalya stage.



He signified an ultimate beatitude of self  
 Which is devoid of earthly qualities.  
 The real nature of self is awakened  
 When it is completely free from Māyā's triple-  
 qualities  
 With which the fallen self has come in contact.  
 Patanjali did not say that with release from the  
 conditioned state  
 The normal nature of the self, which is Ānanda,  
 Is also liberated.  
 He holds, that perfect bliss which is Ānanda,  
 Is eternal and transcendental  
 And realisable when freed from mundane qualities.  
 Ānanda is true bliss: the summum bonum of Yoga.  
 That Bhakti is this highest end of Yoga  
 Will afterwards be shown.

**S**AMĀDHI is of two kinds: the first is Samprajnāta.  
 And the next, Asamprajnāta.

In the first are manifold distinctions  
 Drawn according to their argument and inference,  
 The second standing by itself.  
 In this state of Samādhi, intensest ecstasy  
 Which is beyond all physical and mental senses  
 Is apprehended by the Buddhi  
 Or pure intelligence of the emancipated soul;  
 Once it is realised in its true aspect,  
 The mind does not deflect from it.



If this intensely blissful state be not attained,  
Astānga-Yoga is of no lasting use to man ;  
For if the Yogi be allured by supernatural results  
That are associated with it,  
His mind will be diverted from the final aim of Yoga,  
Which is the understanding of eternal and ecstatic  
bliss.

Such obstacles can easily dissuade a Yogin from the  
goal

During the stage of practice.

Such dangers do not stand howe'er in the way of  
Bhakti.

**N**O other bliss considers he superior  
To what he realises in Samādhi.

Secure in bliss, never again can troubles sway him.  
He finds Sumādhi free from all additions and  
subtractions of miseries.

With patience, presverance and certitude

He vigorously clings to Yoga.

All pleasures personal are insignificant

To a Yogin who enjoys bliss in Samādhi,

Which he does not like to part with

Even at the sacrifice of life,

Not to speak of worldly sufferings.

Relinquishing all objects of enjoyment,

He regulates his senses by his bridled mind

And gradually learns cessation of enjoyment



By pure intelligence, and ultimately realises  
 The real nature of his own true self  
 By regulating mind with meditation,  
 Steady abstraction and retraction.  
 He does not lose his steadfastness in practice  
 Even when gravest obstacles are met with face to  
 face,  
 Nor does he grow impatient at delay in his success.  
 He is resolute, forbearing and persevering  
 Until he reaches Yoga's goal.  
 The first thing for a neophyte in Yoga  
 Is fully to regulate his senses by the mind,  
 After dismissing all material desires.  
 This he can do by practising control  
 Over his sensual appetites,  
 Observing special vows for mind-restraint,  
 And various ways of squating whilst in contem-  
 plation,  
 Withholding breath as a religious penance  
 And extirpating all desires for powers supernatural.

**N**EXT is Dhyāna or concentration of the mental  
 powers;

Then comes Dhāranā or steady abstraction of the  
 mind;

Next to it is Pratyāhāra or withdrawal,

And lastly follows ātmaśamādhi,

Resulting from this gradual regulation of the mind.



At this stage, mundane thoughts and such affinities must cease.

The mind is naturally fickle and unsteady;  
When it vacillates, it should be curbed  
And brought beneath the domination of the soul.  
Verily the bliss described comes to that Yogin  
Who by such practices as these,  
Has overcome all obstacles;  
And whose mind is tranquil, undisturbed by love  
and hate,  
And is in touch with Brahman, the Supreme;  
Whose passions born of Māyā's triple qualities  
Are quited, and is without tinge of sin.  
Such a Yogin when devoid of sin, enjoys great bliss  
From being in contact with Brahman, the Great.  
That is to say, he realises transcendental ecstasy  
In cultivating truth anent the Lord Supreme.  
This is Bhakti.

**N**OW the nature of that bliss  
In realising Brahman, the Great,  
Is here described.  
A Yogi in his state of Samādhi has now two  
different moods:  
His feeling and his action.\*  
In the mood of feeling, his state of mind is thus :

---

\* The following two slokas explain further the 'feelings',  
and the next sloka explains the 'actions' of a Yogi.



He senses the existence of the Over-soul in everything.

This is his microscopic vision.

He realises that it is the Over-soul's prerogative  
To enter into the minutest atom.

He also realises that all beings must exist in Him.

This is the macroscopic vision,

When the Over-soul is seen as Brahman, the  
Supreme.

Secondly his action is that when his mind becomes  
steadfast in Yoga,

He sees the same eternal, knowing, blissful nature  
in all beings.

**H**E who sees Me everywhere and all objects  
within Me,

I do not forsake: he becomes Mine and I become  
his.\*

When his kinship of eternal and reciprocated love  
is wakened in him,

No more do I deceive him

With dry Nirvāna or self-annihilation,

But I bless him with instinctive love

---

\*In the previous sloka, the vision of a Yogi is confined to the realisation of the All-pervading Brahman and no relationship is felt. But when he crosses the threshold of Shānta-rati, he feels an eternal loving kinship between him and the Lord, i.e. he feels like this; 'I am His and He is mine.'



By which he serves Me in the Blissful Realm of:  
Love Divine.

When a Yogi transcends Brahman,  
He realises an eternal link of My loving service  
Which is called Bhakti.

**T**HE meditation on the Four-armed Vishnu  
In the beginning of the Yoga-practice,  
Culminates in the identification of Vishnu  
With the Normal-sized, Two-armed  
And Most Perfectly Beautiful Person  
Of Sree Krishna, at a stage of Samādhi  
When the Yogi no longer sees any difference  
Of time and distinction between  
Sādhana or practice of the means,  
And Siddhi or realisation of the end.  
The Yogi who serves Sree Krishna  
Who exists in all things,  
By means of listening to and chanting His Name,  
Form, Attributes and Entourage,  
Ever lives in His Association  
Though he may perform Karma in his active life  
Or cultivate Jnāna while developing discrimination.  
Or, be in deep Samādhi, absorbed meditation, in Yoga.  
By lovingly clinging to the contemplation of the,  
Form Divine,  
Of Sree Krishna Who is e'er beyond earthly time  
and space.



Ecstatic bliss is felt from being in touch with Para-Brahman—

The All-pervading Aspect of Sree Krishna.

Devotion or Bhakti to Krishna is the acme of Yoga-Samādhi.

**N**OW listen, Arjuna ! said Sree Krishna,  
 “While I describe the nature of a Yogi’s action.  
 A Yogi great is he who has calm and tranquil vision  
 And looks upon all beings on an equal level.  
 All beings are as dear to him as his own self,  
 Who knows and feels another’s happiness and sorrow  
 as his own.  
 Always does he wish their happiness,  
 And acts accordingly.”

“I see not, Madhusudana !” said Arjuna,  
 “How such perfect equilibrium  
 As Thou hast just instructed me, can be maintained,  
 Owing to the fickleness of the mind.\*

---

\*The mind is characterised as :

**CHANCHALAM** : shaky, unsteady, fickle and ever-changing in its views.

**PRAMĀTHI** : can disturb even the discriminating intelligence.

**VALAWAT** : just as disease sometimes defies even the powerful specific, similarly, mind defies even the steady intelligence which is its own specific.

**DRIDDHAM** : so stern and unbending is mind that it is almost impossible for even the subtlest intelligence to curb it as though a needle were to attempt to break an iron rod.

**SUDUSKARAM** : just as it is very difficult to suspend air in the sky by inhaling by an Astānga-Yogi in his practice of Kumbhaka, so also is mind difficult completely to subdue.



This may be possible for some few days  
 Irrespective of enemies and allies.  
 But that it is feasible in life, I cannot understand.  
 O Krishna ! Thou hast said the fickle mind  
 Is to be bridled by a discriminating wisdom ;  
 But I notice that the mind,  
 Being normally unsteady,  
 Though powerful and unbending,  
 Is strong enough to shake even that intelligence.  
 Hence, to restrain that fickle mind  
 Is as difficult to me as to control the air.  
 The body may be compared with a chariot  
 Drawn by mind, the mighty horse  
 And bridle in the hands of keen intelligence, the  
 charioteer.  
 But the charioteer is too weak to control the running  
 steed  
 And the chariot is therefore at the mercy of the  
 horse !”

**S**REE Bhagavān replied:

“All that thou hast said, O Mighty-armed !  
 Is no doubt true ;  
 But the Yoga-system lays special stress upon the fact  
 That this invisible but fickle mind can be,  
 O Son of Kunti ! well subdued by practice and  
 asceticism.  
 By practice is meant the cultivation of incessant  
 recollection



Of Vishnu, the Lord of all,  
 In obedience to directions given by the Spiritual  
 Preceptor;  
 Asceticism lies more in detachment from the world's  
 affairs  
 Than in acceptance or abnegation regarding worldly  
 objects."

**B**Y addressing Arjuna as 'Mighty - armed',  
 Sree Krishna means to say :

"Arjuna ! thou hast propitiated the great Yogi,  
 Mahādeva,

What wonder then, that thou wilt succeed  
 Easily in mastering the fickle mind ?

What doubt is there that thou wilt conquer  
 Even the bravest warriors in this battle

When thou wert powerful enough to overcome  
 Great Mahādeva in a contest with him !"

By addressing him as 'Son of Kunti'

Sree Krishna assures Arjuna of His help.

Arjuna is the son of the sister of Krishna's father;  
 And therefore even if he himself is not strong  
 enough to fight

His enemy 'mind', in one sense, the Kauravas in  
 other,

He will come out victorious in either case

Through Krishna's Divine help

As a friend and relative.



**T**HE Yoga-system is of no avail to him,  
 Whose mind is not controlled  
 By practices and asceticism.  
 But adherence to the right path  
 Leads to success in mind-control.  
 He who practises selfless Karma-Yoga,  
 The fruits of which he dedicates to God,  
 And meditation as directed in Astānga-Yoga  
 In order to control the mind,  
 And at the same time keeps the body and the soul  
 together  
 By genuine asceticism, that is, acceptance  
 Of just the requisite necessities of life  
 Favourable to the service of God  
 And negation of all objects undevout  
 Gradually gains perfection in Yoga practice.

**A**RJUNA said: "O Krishna! Thou hast explained  
 That success in Yoga is attained  
 By strenuous and faithful practice and asceticism;  
 But those who have faith  
 In Thine instruction on this Yoga-system  
 And can make a little progress on the path  
 And yet cannot attain to its perfection  
 Being not whole-hearted Yogins, owing to their  
 brief attempts,  
 Are apt to be entangled in matters of the world—



Their mind being uncontrolled for want of steadfast  
practice

And genuine asceticism. Tell me please, what will  
become of them ?

Yoga is not possible without relinquishing fruitive  
acts.

Fruitive actions are best suited to the ignorant,  
Performing which they can attain to happiness  
In this world and the next.

Being engaged in practices of Yoga,  
These other people are deprived of such fruitive  
Karma

And hence cannot enjoy in this world or the next;  
While on the other hand, they fail to reach the goal  
of Yoga

Owing to the reasons given here.

Their condition thus is like a cloud,  
Severed from one mass

And dissolved half-way before it merges in another.  
In this world, what a miserable plight a neophyte in  
Yoga knows,

When being indifferent to fruitive acts

As he intends to practise Yoga, wherein he subse-  
quently fails,

He receives a set-back for want of genuine asceticism.  
In the next world, his hope for heavenly enjoyment  
is at stake,

Due to his unskilful Karma-sannyāsa;



Salvation he may not attain, as is incompetent to  
follow Yoga

Which is a means to it.

Thus bewildered and insecure in both the worlds,  
Is he doomed, O Mighty-armed ! then to destruction ?  
The authors of the Scriptures are not all-wise.  
But thou art the Lord Supreme and therefore art  
Omniscient.

None else but Thee, O Krishna !

Can sunder the very root of this my doubt."

**S**REE Bhagavān then replied:

"Pārtha ! no genuine adherent of Yoga,  
Incurs damnation either in this world or in the next;  
No misery attends the fate of one  
Whose aims are good in practising his Yoga.  
The truth is this : Mankind is divided into classes—  
The non-regulated and the regulated.  
Those who are sensuous and do not conform  
To social or religious laws  
Are the non-regulated and unrighteous.  
Civilized or savage, learned or ignorant,  
Strong or weak—  
Their conduct is no better than that of beasts.  
No good result can be expected from their activities.  
Those who abide by the injunctions of the Scriptures  
Are the regulated righteous ones  
And these are chiefly classified into three groups:



The Karmins, Jnānins and the Bhaktas.

The Karmins are again divided into Sakāma the selfish,

And Niskāma the selfless.

The Sakāma are seekers after transient and very trifling pleasures;

They strive for worldly benefits and heavenly enjoyment

Which, even when attained, are transitory and trivial.

And thus the real end of human life is far beyond their reach.

Freedom from physico-mental bondage

And realisation of eternal, perfect bliss

Is the real end of an individual soul.

Any field of life which is bereft

Of this final and eternal bliss

Is not worth any thing.

**W**HEN Karma aims at this eternal bliss,  
It is called Karma-Yoga.

Karma-Yoga purifies the heart

Then leads to Jnāna or knowledge true.

The next stage is Dhyāna-Yoga,

Which is to meditate and concentrate;

And the highest end is Bhakti-Yoga.

If a Sakāma Karmin will deny himself

All personal enjoyments, and endure all obstacles



'In the performance of his Karma  
 Then he may be designated an 'ascetic'.  
 However sever asceticism or its penances may be,  
 Its end is nothing else but sensual enjoyment  
 Either in a gross or in a subtle form.  
 The demons and atheists also perform  
 Austerities, receiving sensual enjoyment as their  
 fruits.

Beyond the boundaries of sensual enjoyments,  
 There is Niskāma or selfless Karma  
 Which purposes the real aim of life.  
 Dhyāna-Yoga or Jnāna-Yoga,  
 Based on this selfless Karma-Yoga  
 Is superior to Karma proper  
 Inasmuch as this approaches closer to the final  
 goal.  
 Results accruing from Astānga-Yoga  
 Are better far in any circumstance than Sakāma  
 Karma.

**T**HE defaulters in Astānga-Yoga  
 Belong to groups, according to their length of  
 practice.

He who has fallen off this path of Yoga  
 After short practice,  
 First of all enjoys for long celestial pleasures  
 Merited by virtues of Sakāma-Karma,  
 And then is either born into the house



Of prosperous and wealthy merchants,  
 Or of Princes or of Kings.  
 He who left the path of Yoga  
 Even after lengthy practice  
 Is born again into the family of a Jnāna-Yogin.  
 Know thou such birth in this world to be rare  
 And covetable, for this holy connection  
 Accelerates more highly his development from  
 childhood.

O Son of Kunti !  
 Born in such a family of Jnāna-Yogin,  
 He swiftly recollects his Yoga,  
 Regains the knowledge which he had acquired in  
 previous births;  
 And, out of innate aptitude,  
 Again strives to attain the end of Yoga.

**N**ATURALLY, therefore, on the score of former  
 practices in Yoga,

He, with his renewed endeavour, soon surpasses  
 All the fruits of Sakāma-Karma-Yoga, as mentioned  
 in the Vedas;

He attains superior results to those deserved  
 By the performance of fruit-seeking Karma-Yoga.

Then he continues to practise Yoga

With greater assiduity and fervour—

The nearer he approaches to perfection

The greater the elimination of offence and guilt.



He practises his Yoga constantly for many births  
Until he reaches ultimate beatitude. free from all  
sins.

**O** Arjuna ! consider thoroughly and understand:  
A selfless Karma-Yogin is better than a  
selfish Karmin

Even though the latter practises severe austerities;  
A Jnāna-Yogin, striving to realise the Absotute,  
The attributeless Brahman— the Great—  
The Negative Aspect of Lord Supreme—  
Is better than a selfless Karma-Yogin,  
But superior to all, is he who worships Paramātmā  
The Lord Supreme Himself.

A Yogin is superior in every way  
To any Karmin seeking for reward.  
Among the various grades of Yogins,  
The one who practises the cult of pure devotion  
Stands foremost in My sight. He who serves Me  
With all faith and pure attachment,  
I consider the devoutest Yogin.  
Of those who practise rituals—  
The fruit-seeker or Sakāma-Karmin, cannot be  
called a Yogin.

The selfless Karmins, Jnānins,  
Astānga-Yogins and Bhakti-Yogins are all Yogins.

**Y**OGA is only one. It is a ladder  
Consisting of graded steps.



Leading an individual soul to God.

Selfless Karma-Yoga is the ladder's lowest step;

When knowledge and non-attachment to worldly  
objects

Are added to selfless action,

It is called Jñāna-Yoga—the second higher step;

When concentration of the mind

And contemplation of God are further added,

It becomes Astānga-Yoga—the third superior step;

And when service to, and love of God,\* are further  
added,

It becomes Bhakti-Yoga—the fourth stage of  
attainment.

Yoga is, then, nothing but a great celestial staircase  
Composed of steps in which are mentioned various  
grades

For the clearer understanding of the Yoga proper.

**T**HOSE who aim at real and eternal good

Do practise Yoga; but in the gradual progress,

Man must first practise one stage of Yoga with firm  
reliance,

And, having reached its end, must no longer cling  
to it

But make a forward march towards a higher Yoga.

And lose attachment for the former.

He who clings to a particular step,

Can make no progress in his spiritual march,



**And then is known according to the name  
Of that step in the scale of Yoga.**

**On this account, some are designated Karma-Yogins,  
Others Jñāna-Yogins, Astānga-Yogins or Bhakti-  
Yogins.**

**Hence, Pārtha ! he whose final aim it is to be  
Most lovingly attached to Me, and to My reverential  
service**

**With all energy of body, mind and soul,  
Is far above the other three,  
Who may be classed as Yogins.  
Be thou a Bhakti-Yogin, above all.**

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**CHAPTER SEVEN**

**GOD'S GRACE & BEAUTY**



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### GOD'S GRACE & BEAUTY

**S**REE Bhagavān said : 'I have told thee  
About Jñāna and Yoga leading to salvation  
Which depends upon the practice of selfless Karma-  
Yoga

That purifies thy heart.

Now I shall deal with Bhakti.

Hearken to Me, Pārtha ! thou shalt acquire  
Full knowledge concerning Me, My Attributes and  
Entourage.

I shall leave thee no room for doubt

That I am the Most Supreme,

Being exclusively attached to Me

Within the deepest core of thy heart

Or thy mind profoundly revelling on My thoughts.

Due to exclusive attachment to Me,

After thou takest refuge in Me."

**T**HE knowledge of Brahman is not complete

As it is devoid of the positive attributes of the  
Absolute.

The conception of Brahman is but the sum of the  
negation

Of all earthly bounded qualities



And thus is the negative aspect of the Positive  
Whole,

Who is possessed of all transcendental qualities  
As distinct from the triple qualities of Māyā.

But this negative description of Brahman is not  
Nirguna,

It is Sāttvik-Jnāna,

Irrespective of comprehension by mind or body.

Bhakti is beyond all physical and mental qualities

And is a purely spiritual attribute of the pure soul.

God's Form Divine can only be seen

With the eyes of transcendental love.

Just as sweetmeats are tasted by the tongue,

And not by ears or eyes,

So the Supreme Being Sree Krishna may be seen

Only with the eyes of pure devotion,

Which is the normal and eternal function of the  
soul,

And not by any sāttvika Jnānā or Yoga,

However extra-mundane it may be.

A tongue which is embittered by the bile of ignorance

Tastes not the sweetness in the chanting of the  
Lord's Name.

While there the bile of Karma, Jnāna or of Yoga  
continues,

A person finds no relish in the service of Sree  
Krishna,

Which is Bhakti.



**T**HE knowledge," the Lord said,  
 "Which My devotees acquire about Myself  
 Before they grow devoted unto Me,  
 Is that relating to My lordliness and splendour.  
 Now I shall give thee knowledge  
 Regarding My supernal Grace and Beauty,  
 That which cannot be realised until  
 A firm devotion and loving attachment is extended  
 unto Me.  
 When thou dost know this, thy thirst for any other  
 knowledge ceases  
 And nothing else remains for thee to know."  
 The Jnānins and the Yogins mentioned  
 May easily attain to Brahma-Jnāna—  
 Non-differentiated Knowledge—  
 By their empiric line of thought;  
 But transcendental knowledge of the Lord Supreme  
 Which is distinct from knowledge about Brahman,  
 Lies yet beyond their ken.  
 "Man is scarce among the sentient beings;  
 Very few among their countless thousands  
 Strive for their eternal welfare,  
 And infinitely few among the perfect souls  
 Do know Me as the Lord Supreme,  
 Who am the Acme of All-beauty  
 Possessed of an All-loving and Two-armed Eternal  
 Form.  
 In very truth, there is a rarity among My devotees.



Who grasp the super-excellence of My most blissful  
 Personality  
 Distinct from the Impersonal Brahman  
 Who is only a Negative Manifestation of My Own  
 Form."

**K**NOWLEDGE concerning the Supreme and His  
 Eternal Nature

Is called transcendental knowledge.

Sree Krishna says here: "I have an eternal Form.  
 I and My Form are one.

I am endowed with potencies;

Brahman is but an attributeless aspect

Of a particular potentiality of My Form,

Brahman has no form Himself

Existing only in a negative relation

To worldly attributes and things.

Paramātman is the Aspect of Mine Immanence

That manifests upon the earthly plane,

**T**HAT which I call the External Potency

Is known as My Deluding Energy or Māyā,  
 From which arises all this ever-changing chain of  
 worlds.

She is also called Aparā or Inferior Prakriti

In her relation to the Universe consisting of five  
 elements:

The earth, water, fire, air, and ether



And their five corresponding properties—  
 Smell, taste, sight, touch and sound.  
 Besides these, there are three more subtle principles:  
 Perverted ego and intelligence and mind.  
 The perverted ego works with the assistance of  
 eleven senses.  
 Intelligence and mind, though diverse in their subtle  
 functions  
 Are in their broader aspect much the same.  
 "Intelligence" refers to Mahat,  
 And mind doth signify Pradhān.  
 All these eight principles and their concomitants—  
 An aggregate of twenty-four—  
 Arise from My External Potency, Māyā.

**B**ESIDES this Inferior Potency—  
 She is inferior through her concern with  
 earthly matter—  
 There is another Potency known as Tatasthā  
 Or the Boarder-line Potency.  
 The superiority of this Parā or Tatasthā Potency  
 Lies in the fact that she is spiritual  
 And from this Potency all beings emanate.  
 Thus emanated, the countless jivas or souls  
 Have, O mighty-armed ! accepted this material  
 universe  
 As their objective for enjoyment.



The transcendental Realm is ever manifest from My  
Internal Potency,  
And the material Universe is a result of My External  
Potency:

Whereas the Jiva-potency can well be influenced  
From either side, for she is in bewteen.  
Hence she is called Tatasthā-potency.  
She is superior to the External or Aparā-potency  
As she may exercise initiative  
And utilise phenomena for her own service.

**B**OTH the sentient and insentient worlds  
Have come into existence through these  
Potencies.

Know thou, Arjuna. then, that these two Potencies  
Are the material causes of all things—  
Animate and inanimate.

I am the Lord of all these Potencies  
And they belong to Me.

Therefore am I the Efficient Cause of all creation  
And of the destruction of these many worlds.

O Dhananjaya !

I am the Primal Cause of every object.  
Pervade I every atom.

Without Mine Own Existence nothing could exist.  
Thus I am the fluid sap in water;  
I am the light of the sun and moon;



I am the Pranab or transcendental Sound within the  
Vedas,  
And I am the virility in man.

**O** Son of Kunti ! none else is superior to Me.  
I am the Cause of all causes.  
The whole universe exists within Me  
Interwoven as the pearls upon a garland string.  
I am the fragrance in the earth;  
I am the heat and brilliance in the fire,  
Capable of burning objects and illuminating darkness  
I am the life in all things living;  
And the endurance in austere ascetics.  
Know Me, O Pārtha ! the eternal seed of every  
element;  
I am the discerning light of the intelligent,  
The noble prowess of the brave.  
I am the strength of the energetic,  
Devoid of passion and of anger;  
I am the desire in all male beings  
For procreating children, O lord of the Bharatas !  
Unopposed to sacrament religious.

**A**LL manifestations of Sattva, Rajas and of Tamas  
Are the qualities and actions of My Cosmic  
Energy.

I am independent of such attributes and actions  
Which are all subordinate,



Dependent on My Potency.

Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the qualities of cosmic  
potency

By which the whole world is infatuated.

People, therefore, in their ignorance can never  
know Me

As immutable and distinct from them.

The Māyā or Deluding Potency belongs to Me alone;  
She is therefore normally insuperable by weak and  
fallen souls.

Those who sincerely shelter in Me,

Alone may cross the ocean of Māyā.

They are unfettered by the shackles of Māyā.

Not by any other means—

Either by following the path of Karma

Or adhearing to empiric path of Jnāna,

Or submitting to the minor gods—

Or any suchlike means can any individual

Surmount the barriers of Māyā.

It is by unconditional submission and surrender

To the service of My transcendental blissful and  
loving Self alone,

That man is capable of being free from Māyā's  
bondage,

By which the fallen souls are tied to transitory  
worldliness

And rendered thus averse to Me,

The Lord Supreme of all.



**O**WING to their demoniacal or non-religious character,

'The wretched', 'the deluded', 'the worst among mankind'

And 'those who are deprived of knowledge of Me by My Māyā',

The Deluding Energy, do not take refuge in Me.

The 'wretched' are the moral lepers or immoral atheists;

The 'deluded', they who are too much attached to worldliness

And strive for earth's amelioration.

They cannot conceive of Absolute Reality

And therefore are devoted to the fleeting realism

Of earthly relativities.

They may be classified as moral atheists;

They cannot realise that I am Lord of all the Ethics

And not bound Myself by any law whatever.

**T**HE 'worst among mankind' are those who flaunt vain gloriously

The vanities of lineage, vast erudition,

Wealth and youthful beauties.

Too blunt they are to understand the higher principles of life.

'Deprived by Māyā of the knowledge of Me'



Are the agnostics, pantheists and atheists  
And others, who, though they believe in a spiritual  
existence,

Accept not the ideal of Bhakti  
Or pure loving service unto Me,  
Being allured to the danger of salvation or  
annihilation

By the temptations of deluding Māyā.  
Even though these pedants study the Vedānta,  
They remain benighted as to the pure conception  
Of My Form Divine, akin to human form,  
About the eternal spiritual life of individual souls;  
That their relation to material objects  
Like the mind and body, and associated objects,  
Is but transitory;

And that their services to Me  
Form their eternal kindredship to Me.  
Those who remain intoxicated  
By the sensual enjoyments of the world,  
Steeped in the depth of vanities and selfishness  
And who regard My devotees as though inferior,  
Are people of character demoniac.  
Briefly all are wretched,  
Who live not in association with My honest devotees.

**T**HOSE pedants who are steeped in ignorance  
About My Nature, do not resort to Me.  
They may be classified into four groups:



First, the Karmins who are hedonistic in life;  
 Secondly, those who accept devotion as a means in  
 the beginning,  
 But finally abandon it from egotism;  
 Thirdly, those scholars who, though well versed in  
 the Scriptures,  
 Heed not My Divine Descents  
 And fancy My eternal Form that is akin to human,  
 To be but mortal, owing to their own infatuation  
 With My deluding potency or Māyā;  
 And lastly, those who, demoniacal or atheistic in  
 their nature,  
 Cast aspersions on My Transcendental Form,  
 Which, though akin to human form,  
 Is not of this world but is spiritual.  
 They even would advance in adverse criticism  
 Of My eternal Form Divine in My Own Spiritual  
 Realm,  
 Distorting the Scriptures' real meaning  
 Through their contentious nature  
 Born of egotism misidentified.

**O** Arjuna! the distressed. the enquirers after  
 Truth,

The seekers of favours and the wise:  
 When these four groups of people, O Bharatarsabha,  
 By My Grace or through the grace of My devotees



Are blessed with godly fortune,  
 Freed from the distressing, pleasure-seeking,  
 Wisdom hankering inquisitive defects  
 Of their condition, they follow in My service.  
 Very rarely do the evil-doers serve Me  
 For they attain a meagre minimum of spiritual  
 progress.  
 Only by a stroke of fortune have they realised Me  
 and My service.  
 The four classes of the spiritually blessed  
 Conforming to a regulated life as ordained by the  
 Scriptures  
 Are fit to worship and to serve Me.

**T**HOSE who are engaged in selfish Karma  
 Desirous of the fruits of actions  
 Suffer from the frustration of material desires;  
 But thus afflicted, their hearts are subsequently  
 purified  
 By fires of sorrow, and they remember Me:  
 These are the distressed.  
 The atheists aforesaid, who, ethical yet ignorant,  
 Begin to search for real truth and feel the need  
 Of God's existence, begin to think of Me.  
 Again the wretched pendants who,  
 Dissatisfied with limited conceptions of Me



As Lord Supreme of all ethics and religion,  
 Turn out to be My ritualistic devotees  
 And keep Me in memory by such performances.  
 When the Jñānins, who have the macroscopic  
 knowledge of Brahman, the Great,  
 And the Yogins who possess the microscopic  
 knowledge of the Paramātmā,  
 The Indwelling Over-soul, realise that such is only  
 partial knowledge  
 And when they take recourse to perfect knowledge  
 Of My transcendental Loving Self,  
 The veil of ignorance brought into being by Māyā  
 is removed.  
 Then only they resort to refuge in Me,  
 Conceiving of themselves as My eternal servants.

**I**NDEED, 'tis only when the desires of the distressed  
 And the distorted notion of a God of Ethics  
 Presented by enquirers after truth,  
 And when the stain of interested heavenly enjoy-  
 ments  
 Of the pleasure-seekers; and when the slur of  
 misconception  
 Anent My Transcendental Personality  
 And the untenable theory as to at-oneness-with-  
 Brahman, of the Jñānins—  
 When all these are removed, the diverse classes  
 Lead a life of true devotion.



Devotion is not pure so long as it is sullied  
 By any motives other than the love of God;  
 While if the slightest tinge of either Karma or  
 Jñāna does exist

Or desires other than the service of the Godhead,  
 Devotion is alloyed with either Karma or the Jñāna.  
 But when it is absolutely free from such admixture,  
 It is known as Kevalā, Akinchanā or Uttamā  
 Bhakti.

Or

**T**HOSE who strictly adhere to their particular  
 profession

And to their station in life  
 According to their individual qualification  
 And their actions, worship Me.

They are classified into four groups:

The distressed, who are most anxious for relief  
 From their impending troubles, such as poverty and  
 illness.

Secondly, enquirers after truth,  
 That is the knowledge of self  
 Or of secular religious Scriptures.

Thirdly, the seekers after worldly joy,  
 Such as wealth, fame, woman and celestial  
 pleasures.

These three being fruit-desiring Karmi citizens



Resort to mixed devotion, in which Karma predominates.

Lastly, the Jnānins, who are the sannyāsins  
Who have renounced all worldly pleasures.

Free are they from selfish Karma,  
But their devotion is also mixed,  
And hence the Jnāna does predominate.

**D**EVOTION in which there is a spirit of Karma,  
Jnāna or Yoga, cannot be pure devotion.

When that devotion in which fruit-seeking Karma  
plays a foremost part,

Becomes at length free from interested motives,  
It can be said to be devotion alloyed with Jnāna,  
But when Bhakti or devotion is absolutely free  
From Karma, Jnāna or Yoga,

It is known as Unalloyed Devotion  
Expressed as Serventhood and Friendship,  
Parenthood and Consortship  
In relation to the Lord Supreme, Sree Krishna.

**W**HEN the distressed, the enquirers after truth,  
The seekers of wealth, and the wise—  
Become unsullied by any worldly motives and  
incline to Me alone,

They turn out to be devotees.

Among them, when the Jnānins, the wise,  
Relinquish all things of base contamination



And material knowledge, and acquire a perfect  
knowledge as to Me,

They stand above the other three divisions of My  
devotees.

The purer conception of the real nature of an  
individual

Which can be cultivated by meditating on the inner  
self,

Cannot equally be realised by a Karmin,  
However perfect his duties be performed.

In the association of true devotees,  
All are entitled to have real knowledge of them-  
selves.

In the nascent stage of their devotion

The wise who are more steadfast and devoted to My  
service

Are dearer to Me, and I am also very dear to them.\*

**W**HEN the above four classes of My devotees  
Resort to one devotion only,

Munificent they grow;

No longer do they hanker after any of the objects of  
man's pursuits.

But the Jñāna-bhaktas, having more steadfast  
attachment

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\*The awakening of divine knowledge in Sukadeva Goswami is an example of this class. In the incipient stage, the devotees who render pure service to the Lord do so from divine knowledge untouched by world-contacts.



To the conscious self, do realise Me  
As the summum bonum of all pure and sentient  
beings.

They are very dear to Me,  
For I am greatly influenced by their love for Me.  
The jivas attain true knowledge of their pure self  
Only after many births of spiritual practices.  
With this awakening  
Of the qualitative aspect of their real nature,  
They understand themselves to be distinct  
From earthly entities, and prone to indentify them-  
selves

At this stage with the Neuter-God, Brahman,  
Due to the qualitative affinities  
Between themselves and Brahman,  
The quantitative difference being immaterial.  
Indifference to these diversities may run to the  
extreme,  
Thereby causing them to disregard  
The transcendental Manifestations of the Spiritual  
Form and Attributes  
And Occupations and Entourage of the Lord  
Supreme—the He-God.

**B**UT, when they are established for a while  
Upon the plane of transcendental knowledge,  
They realise divine diversities,



Distinct from gross or subtle mundane variegated  
ness,

In My transcendental Self,

And thus become attached to Me and shelter in Me.

They then think: these phenomena

Are not dissociated from the Lord

But do result from the reflection of the Potency—

Called Chit—of Vāsudeva;

The Universe has multifarious contact with  
Vāsudeva, the Pervading.

The devotees who have such a mentality

Are very rare and wondrous souls.

A Jnāni-bhakta sees Me, Vāsudeva,

In all things, and everything in Me.

Only after many births does he take refuge absolute  
in Me.

Such a devotee is rare;

But an Aikāntika—single-minded devotee is the  
rarest of all.

**T**HE interested devotees unblemished,

Since they worship Me

Are also blessed to take the way of pure devotion.

As long as their devotion be corrupted by desires,

They hesitate to worship Me.

Yet those who, though they seek rewards,

Resort to Me with heart and soul,

Within a short time I relieve them



From all their earthly moods and lusts.  
Wretched are they who worship Me reluctantly,  
For they deprive themselves of all true knowledge  
of the Absolute.

Steeped in worldly ignorance,  
Their wisdom encrusted by the dross of earthly joys,  
They worship the different presiding gods  
According to their various desires.

They do not love me,  
And have no confidence in My Divine Form.  
They are led astray by their respective  
Rājasika and Tāmasika natures  
To submit to other pleasure-giving gods  
And thus are thrown into the vortex  
Of unsatiated, endless yearnings.

They think that they can easily and quickly please  
Those minor gods by practising the ordinary rituals.  
Crippled are their propensities  
And thus enslaved,  
They are reluctant to abide with Me.

**A**S the Indweller of the hearts  
Of all the gods and individual souls,  
I give them faith unshaken in the minor gods  
That they may choose to worship  
According to their temporary predilection.  
These gods are not the Lord Indweller;



They are but superior souls with delegated special powers from Me.

The fallen souls repose great faith in them  
For their own selfish ends.

The oftener their lusts are satisfied,

The more their confidence in them increases.

No individual can claim to be attached to Me,

Who am the Lord Supreme of all the gods and souls,

Until their hearts are absolutely free from all desire.

**A**S the god is, so the worshipper

And the results of all such worship are but short-lived.

The worship of these transitory gods

Is mainly due to the indulgence

In mental speculation by the worshippers,

Who, after receiving their desired ends

Ultimately realise their transitory nature.

My devotees remember Me as the Eternal End.

**A**PART from the worshippers of minor gods,

Those who are well versed in the Vedas

Are often ignorant of My true nature.

For, says Brahmā in the Bhāgavatam:

He who is blessed with the best of favours from  
Thy Lotus-feet, O Lord !



Alone knows of Thy glorious Deeds and none else,  
 Though he may try to elucidate the truth about Thee  
 By means of his empiric lore.  
 Hence those who hold that I am Brahman,  
 The Attributeless and Impersonal,  
 And that I manifest in a specific Form,  
 For a special purpose,  
 That I become Impersonal again when I withdraw  
 Myself  
 From all this manifested world,  
 Are foolish to imagine this,  
 However erudite they be in the Vedānta.  
 They are benighted as to My super-excellent  
 Eternal, transcendental Form and Person.  
 They who are called impersonalists  
 Think that the eternal and extra-human Form of  
 the Supreme  
 Is the impersonal and attributeless Brahman  
 Which manifests Itself upon the worldly plane of  
 Vāsudeva.  
 They think this to be some illusion,  
 And when this is dispelled,  
 The Neutre-God or Brahman, then remains !  
 They do not realise that they themselves are the  
 illusioned  
 And cannot thus conceive the Ever-lasting He-God,  
 Whose transcendental Form Eternal  
 Is unlike any form of matter, and Who can,



Out of His Divine prerogative,  
Appear upon this earth ; and can withdraw Himself  
whenever He elects.

**T**HE illusioned know not My Shyāma-sundara  
Eternal Beauteous Form.

Do not believe that I was formerly non-manifest  
And now have manifested in this Form Shyāma-  
sundara,

For, this My Form,  
Whose Beauty is beyond conception,  
Existed ever like the self-effulgent sun,  
Within the Realm of Spirit  
And I am ever hidden from material eyes  
By screens of My Internal Potency, known as the  
Yoga-Māyā.

For that this is, the unwise cannot know  
That My Shyāma-sundara eternal Form  
Is e'er devoid of earthly form, birth, attributes and  
actions.

Just as the sun is never visible to human sight  
Through being intercepted by the heights of Sumeru,  
So am I too, unseen by people of the world  
Who have been screened by Yoga-Māyā.  
He who submits entirely to Me in Yoga-Māyā  
May know My real Nature by Her grace.  
The ignorant does not submit, through his fallacious  
egotism.



**M**Y Yoga-Māyā or Internal Potency  
 And My External Potency—Mahā-Māyā—  
 Belong to Me and I am Lord of both and of all  
 potencies;  
 Thus neither overpowers Me.  
 I am the Lord Supreme, All-existent,  
 All-knowing, and All-blissful.  
 I know the past, the present and the future.  
 But even those, Arjuna, who know Brahman and  
 Paramātmā  
 As My Negative and Partial Aspects,  
 Do not know My Eternal Exquisite Shyāma-sundara-  
 -Form.  
 In Aryan theology are three notions of the Absolute:  
 The Negative Brahman, the Great One of the  
 Pantheists;  
 The All-pervading Paramātmā of the Yoga-school;  
 And Bhagavān, the Beauteous, of the true Theistic  
 School.

**W**HEN jivas realise their innate nature  
 Through unalloyed devotion,  
 I then reveal My Form All-beautiful  
 Unto their spiritual sight.  
 But when Bhārata ! they are hurled into this round  
 of births and deaths  
 Owing to their disregard of their eternal functions,



They are infatuated by the mundane relativities  
Of love and hatred, pleasure and pain,  
Happiness and sorrow, cold and heat,  
Honour and disgrace, male and female.  
All this is caused by My Deluding Potency, the  
Mahā-Māyā.

Thus their pure knowledge is enshrouded by their  
nescience.

Yet through the agency of My Chit-Potency, the  
Yoga-Māyā,

I have made this My Divine Descent in My  
Primordial Form

Into the plane of all this cosmic region  
Giving the fallen an opportunity to see Me  
Manifest before their eyes.

But they, infatuated by illusion,  
Are steeped in ignorance and thus do foolishly  
imagine

My Eternal Beauteous Form to be material and  
destructible.

Those who are either much attached to cold  
asceticism and renunciation,

Under the wrong impression

That the things of this world

Are not associated with the Lord,

Deprive themselves of treading on the path of pure  
devotion.



**L**ISTEN how thou may'st attain a knowledge  
Of My transcendental Personality.

The sinful and demoniac in character have no  
insight into My nature.

Those whose sins are finally atoned for a pious life

Lived in obedience to the Scriptural injunctions,

Follow the selfless Karma-Yoga,

Jñāna-Yoga of pure intelligence,

Dhyāna-Yoga of meditation,

And then become they conscious of their real self.

Only when this stage has been reached,

Do they engage in My eternal service

And thus they are enabled through the grace of  
Yoga-Māyā

To understand My transcendental beauteous Form  
of Shyāma-Sundara.

Thou must discern between the worldly gross or  
subtle sense-perception

And that which is transcendental.

Those who are blessed with this discernment

Become released from change and relativities and  
their antitheses,

And then devote themselves to Me with firm  
resolve.

**T**HE fleshly form is subject to decrepitude and  
death,

But not the everlasting spirit-body of the soul.



'Tis never for the soul to suffer births and deaths.  
Moksha or liberation is the attainment of Eternal  
Light

Which is naught but My eternal loving service  
With the soul's undying spirit-body.  
But those who, sense-controlled and following the  
path of mixed devotion  
Where Yoga does predominate,  
Seek only to liberate themselves from pangs of  
birth and death  
And care not for My service,  
Which is the end and aim of Moksha,  
Acquire a knowledge of Brahman,  
The ontology of Adhyātma and Karma in all its  
aspects.

**T**HEY who can realise My Self  
In their own unalloyed existence

As Lord of Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva and of Adhiyajna,  
Are privileged to know Me  
On the eve of their departure from this world.  
The devotees alone are fully cognisant  
Of My eternal beauteous Form and by My grace  
Can cross the Ocean of the World with perfect ease,  
For Māyā has no hold upon them.

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**CHAPTER EIGHT**

***THE WORD—THE SAVIOUR***



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE WORD—THE SAVIOUR

**I**N order to grasp the meaning of the seven ideas  
Implicitly conveyed by Lord Shree Krishna  
In the previous chapter, Arjuna said:  
"O Purushottama! Thou art the Being Most  
Supreme  
And therefore perfectly aware of everything,  
Tell me now, what dost Thou mean by Brahman,  
Adhyātma, Karma, Adhibhuta, Adhidaiva?  
Whom dost Thou refer to by Brahman?  
Is He the Para-Brahman?  
Dost Thou by Adhyātma mean the Oversoul or  
individual soul?

**B**Y Karma, am I to understand the Scriptural rites  
or social duties?  
Is the gross fleshly body meant by Adhibhuta?  
Whom shall I consider Adhidaiva—  
The gods or the Aggregate Great Being?  
Tell me, I pray, what dost Thou really mean by  
these?  
Who is the Adhiyajna in this body?



Is he Indra or Vishnu?  
 And in what form does he exist?  
 How do the self-restrained ones come to know Thee  
 at the time of death?  
 Tell me, O Madhusudana ! explicitly about these  
 things."

**S**REE Bhagavān then replied :

"The principle of the Divine Word  
 Is beyond all limited distinction.  
 It is unchangeable and attributeless.  
 It is *not* Para-Brahman, but Brahman.  
 By Para-Brahman thou art to understand Myself  
 alone,  
 Who am eternally Supreme and Absolute  
 Existing with My Transcendental Name, Form,  
 Attributes, Occupations and Equipment.  
 Para-Brahman should be differentiated  
 From the Non-designated Negative Brahman.  
 By Adhyātma thou must not conceive of the  
 ontology of conscious entities,  
 But soul, released from earth's associations.  
 From Karma, the chain that binds the individual  
 to the world,  
 Arises the worldly bondage of the soul  
 And all its gross and subtle bodies,  
 Composed of all the elements.



**A**DHIBHUTA refers to perishable objects  
Or the principle of change.

By Adhidaiva, thou must understand Virāta-Purusa  
Who is the Aggregate of all the minor gods,  
That is the Presiding Deity of all empiric knowledge.  
Adhiyajna is none other than Myself  
Who am the Knower and Indweller of the hearts  
of Jivas—  
The souls engaged in gross and subtle bodies.  
From deep within their hearts,  
I urge them to perform their sacrifice.

**H**E who forsaking mortal clay,  
Remembers Me alone at the last moment of  
his life,  
Becomes imbued with My divine emotions.  
One who recalls My memory when facing death  
Is blessed with devotional aptitude towards Me in  
the next world.  
There is no doubt of this.  
It should be noted here  
That his remembrance of the Lord  
At the last moment of death, is not meant to imply  
Merely a mental image of a fanciful man-created  
God;  
This remembrance must come to mind  
According to the true transcendental knowledge



And conception of the Godhead  
As prescribed by the unchallengeable Scriptures;  
Corroborated by a genuine spiritual master.

**T**HOSE who remember Me at death,  
Come to Me then

Or are reborn with My divine thoughts and ideas..  
On the other hand, he who leaves the body,  
Son of Kunti !

Thinking of other objects at the hour of death  
Reaches those objects and ideas,  
Which he did meditate upon.

Remember Me, Arjuna ! constantly under every  
circumstance,

And fight the battle as a duty  
Laid upon you by life as a Kshatriya.  
Dedicate all thy mentality and perseverance unto Me.  
And thou shalt find Me at the end.

By contemplation and remembrance of the Lord,  
With a determined will and practice and unflinching  
constancy of heart,

Thou shalt attain the Lord Divine  
And ne'er revert to perishable elements.

**I** am Omniscient, Eternal, the Regulator,  
Providence of all,  
Most subtle, inconceivable to human reasoning and  
understanding.



I am the quintessential Principle of human beauty  
Forever adolescent; self-effulgent like the sun,  
Luminous of complexion and beyond all earthly ken..  
He who by dint of previous practices in Yoga  
Fixes the Prāna or breath between the eye-brows  
at the time of death  
With an unshaken mind and true devotion  
Can yet attain Me the Most Divine.  
This Yoga is mentioned to thee  
So that thou mayst retain thine equanimity when  
facing death.

**N**OW I shall tell thee about Akshara,  
Object Supreme and most deserving End,  
Whom the dispassionate auster ascetics enter,  
And for whose sake the Brahmachārins observe  
their life-long chastity.  
In practising Yoga, he who controls all senses  
By non-attachment to his sense-perceptions,  
Confines the mind within the heart  
By dint of his reluctance to indulge in sensual  
pleasures,  
Fixes the vital life-breath in the centre of the head  
And, while constantly recalling Me,  
Utters the Vedic Word "OM,"  
Which is Brahman, and passes out,  
Leaving the body behind,  
Attains the End Supreme



By realising Mine Own Realm  
 Which is identical with Me in Nature.  
 This is unmixed devotion  
 In which Yoga is the predominating factor.

**S**O far I have told thee of that Bhakti  
 In which either Karma or Jñāna predominates,  
 While dilating on the arguments on the distressed,  
 The seekers after wealth and truth  
 And the Jñānins, until decrepitude is reached,  
 Then death and liberation;  
 And I have also dealt with Bhakti in which Yoga  
 plays a part  
 Hinting at intervals on the conception of unalloyed  
 devotion.  
 Now I shall explain to thee what steadfast, pure  
 devotion is.

**I** am accessible to My devotees, O Partha !  
 Who are ever attached to Me alone,  
 And who unceasingly yet lovingly remember Me  
 With single-minded aptitude for serving Me.  
 They are the highest devotees and greatest Yogins.  
 My purest devotees do not resort to any Yoga system  
 Which is not conducive to My service.  
 Their only Yoga or connection is with Me,  
 Supreme Lord of all.  
 The Bhakti-Yogins, having realised Me,



No longer pass through birth and death upon this plane.

They reach the culmination of their goal.

Steadfast attention and constant thought of Me

Is the criterion of Kevalā-Bhakti.

Leaving aside alluring practices and tempting fruits of Yoga

And of Jnāna, he who practises pure devotion

With unswerving love, has followed Kevalā-Bhakti.

Which alone can lead thee to complete realisation of My Self.

**A**LL the worlds, from the Brahma-Loka

To the seven lower regions, are but transitory.

Inhabitants of these worlds are apt,

O Arjuna, to be reborn,

But he who follows Me upon the path

Of pure devotion, meets not with rebirth.

That they are not reborn who follow Karma-

Jnāna-, and Astānga-Yoga

In practising their Bhakti-Yoga is true,

In so far as they follow these

And gradually turn exclusively to Bhakti-Yoga.

**I**N the scale of human time,

A thousand Four Ages make a day of Brahmā,

The Creator of the Universe;



Another thousand Four Ages make one night of  
Brahmā;

Three hundred and sixty such days and nights  
complete his year;

A hundred such years compose the span of his  
life-time,

At the close of which time Brahmā, the Creator,  
has his fall.

The Brahmā, who is devoted to the service of the  
Lord Supreme,

Is liberated; when such is the fate of Brahmā himself

What wonder that the Sannyāsins

Who live within his range,

Are liable to rebirths?

**T**HERE are Four Ages:

Satya, Tretā, Dwāpara and Kali.

The current Age is the Kali—

The Age of discord, difference, and warfare.

The Satya Age equals 17,28,000 years.

The Tretā Age equals 12,96,000 years.

The Dwāpara Age equals 8,64,000 years.

The Kali Age equals 4,32,000 years.

The Four Ages therefore are equivalent to  
43,20,000 years.

1000 times 43,20,000 years is 432,00,00,000,

Which equal one day of Brahmā.



432,00,00,000 years also equal one night of  
Brahmā.

Therefore 864,00,00,000, years  
Equal one day and one night of Brahmā.

360 times of 864,00,00,000 years =  
3,11,040,00,00,000 years

Which equal one long year of Brahmā,

The Creator of the Universe.

100 years is his life time,

Which means 31,10,40,000,00,00,000 years.

**O**NE thousand series of Four Ages equal 14  
Manwantaras,

So that one Manwantara equals 71 series of Four  
Ages,

That is, in each Manwantara the 4 Ages revolve  
71 times.

The present Kali Age is in its 28th revolution

In the 7th Manwantara, called the Vaivaswata  
Manwntara

Of the Sveta-Varāha-Kalpa.

One Kalpa is one day of Brahmā;

Creation takes place when a Kalpa begins

At the beginning of a day of Brahmā

And cataclysm occurs when

The Kalpa ends at the end of a night of Brahmā.

The Jivas are destined to births and deaths in each  
Kalpa



Until their final liberation.

The present year of the Kali Age is 5038,

Corresponding to A. D. 1937-1938, 1343-1344

Bengali Era;

1858-1859 of Saka Era, 1993-94 of the Sambat  
Era.

And 452 of the Chaitanya Era.

**T**HE gods, human beings, birds and beasts  
In the three worlds are still more precarious,

And their rebirths are more frequent than those  
Of the inhabitants of the region of Brahmā,  
Because, it is at the close of the Night of Brahmā  
When a new Brāhmic Day begins,

That the created Universe comes into existence  
Out of the Unmanifested;

And again with the approach of a Night of Brahmā  
When a Kalpa ends,  
Worldly manifestation is dissolved and cataclysm  
takes place.

The 'Unmanifested' is not to be confused here with  
Pradhāna,

As it only implies Brahmā's state of sleep.

**S**ENTIENT and insentient beings are born,  
Again and yet again, O Pārtha! during the Days  
of Brahmā,



While mighty cataclysms do occur  
At the approach of Brahmā's Nights.  
There is an eternal Unmanifested Principle,  
Existing irrespective of the night Brahmā sleeps  
And far superior to Brāhmic Night.  
This Principle prevails irrespective of all else  
Even after every creature shall have been destroyed  
At the time of universal dissolution.  
That eternal Unmanifested Principle is called  
"Akshara";  
This is the ultimate and highest End of all;  
Know this eternal unbounded Ocean  
Of Unmanifest Existence, to be My Spiritual Realm,  
From union with Which no soul returns.  
The Supreme Immortal person  
Who is Autocratic Lord of all that Realm  
Is to be attained by single-minded and unswerving  
love alone.  
O Pārtha! all sentient and insentient being exist in  
Him,  
And I am that Being Supreme  
Who enters into every object as the Indwelling  
Monitor!

**M**Y truest devotees can with facility approach My  
Feet;

But those who offer not exclusive loyalty to Me



And count upon their Karma and their Jnāna for  
coveted results

Have to encounter great obstacles upon the way to  
realizing Me.

Their progress and path are limited by time and  
space.

Let Me now tell thee, O Chief of the Bharatas!

About the time when Jnāna-Yogins die,

Never to return,

And of the time when the ignorant depart to be  
reborn.

**T**HOSE conversant with the knowledge of  
Brahman

Attain Brahman and have no return unto this  
world

If they die at a time when favourably influenced  
by Agni and Jyoti—

The presiding deities of light;

Ahah—the god of day;

Sukla—the presiding deity of the bright fortnight;

Uttarāyana—the summer solstice

When the sun moves to the north of the equator.

A Jnāna-Yogin attains Brahman at death

When his mind and senses are in a pleasing mood

Under the influence of the aforesaid time.

The Karma-Yogins who die when their senses



Are influenced by the presiding deities of smoke,  
 night, the dark fortnight  
 Or the six months of the southern solstice,  
 Go to the lunar region and therefore are reborn  
 When their heavenly joys have run their course.

**V**ERILY are these two bright and dark  
 Paths of the world deemed to be eternal.  
 When a Jiva follows the bright path,  
 He returns not to the world of death,  
 But rebirth is the fate of him  
 Who treads the sombre path.  
 The path of devotion transcends these other two.  
 Conceiving the difference in principle,  
 Between these courses of Karma-Yoga and Jñāna-  
 Yoga,  
 Those who follow with great avidity the pure path,  
 Bhakti-Yoga,  
 Are never entangled or illusioneed by sinister ways,  
 And adhere the more devoutly to their Yoga  
 Realising the evil consequence of both the others.  
 Follow this Bhakti-Yoga, O Arjuna! hence for all  
 time.

**T**HOU shalt not be deprived of any fruits  
 If thou pursuest with devotion thy Bhakti-Yoga.  
 Thou shalt know and gain not only all the possible  
 reward



**Of Jñāna and Karma, that may accrue from studying  
the Vedas,**

**Performing sacrifices, observances, harsh austerities.  
And offering of largesse, but thou wilt pass beyond  
all these**

**And come at last to My Most Blissful Transcendental  
Realm,**

**Which ne'er began and never ends.**

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**CHAPTER NINE**

***ESOTERIC LOVE DIVINE***



## CHAPTER NINE

### ESOTERIC LOVE DIVINE

**S**REE Bhagavān said;

“Now I shall tell thee who art free from malice  
The most secret truth about My transcendental  
Knowledge and Love Divine.

Listen to this, Arjuna ! and rid thyself of every ill.  
The knowledge pertaining to the soul  
And its elevation is naturally secret;  
But the devotional conception of My Sovereignty  
Supreme

Is infinitely higher and more esoteric,  
While the knowledge of Kevalā-Bhakti,  
Which I shall tell thee now  
Is the most secret and esoteric.  
He who knows this is freed for ever from the evils  
Of the triple qualities  
Which are impediment to pure devotion.

**T**HIS knowledge is called Rāja-Vidyā, the Prince  
of knowledge.

It is the most secret of all secret truths;  
Most holy is this in character;



It leads unto the veritable understanding  
 Of thine own true self as well as the Self Supreme.  
 By the performance of this Rāja-Vidyā  
 All other rites are fully practised;  
 It is the climax of all religions;  
 Easily accessible; free from the troubles due to  
 Karma and to Jñāna;  
 And it transcends the triple qualities of Māyā.  
 Faith is the fundamental basis of this knowledge;  
 Because the love and pure devotion which is  
 essentially this knowledge,  
 First awakens in the heart of fallen souls as faith  
 in Me.  
 O thou destroyer of thine enemies!  
 Those whose faith and confidence in Me—  
 Which is the first step in the ladder of religious life,  
 Has not begun to spread,  
 Are unable to acquire this knowledge  
 And therefore are deprived of true attachment for  
 Me  
 And subsequently enter the whirlpool of this world.

**I** have no mundane form.  
 My Reality is Transcendental and Eternal  
 Beyond the comprehension of the human mind.  
 Thus in My Unmanifest Existence I do pervade  
 the universe,



And all sentient and insentient beings exist in  
Me.

I dwell not in them as the clay lives in the pots  
Or gold in golden bracelets.

It is not true that this world is a transformation of  
My Self.

I am the Absolute Whole—

I am the Divinity possessed of all the potencies.

The world has emanated from Mine Own External  
Potency which is its working agent;

Thus I am not concerned directly with phenomena  
made manifest.

Though I am the Efficient Cause of all existences,  
I, as the Absolute, am independent of My world's  
concerns;

Albeit My universal Love and My Divine Compassion  
encompass all My creatures.

When I say: "All beings exist in Me"

I do not mean they dwell within My Real Self,

But they exist in My External Cosmic Potency.

This is incomprehensible to human understanding.

Know then it as My super-human godly Power  
Supreme.

Know also that the work of this My Potency is  
after all My work

For I am the background of all Potencies,

Through whose agency I work.



Know Me hence as the Supporter, Indweller and  
Preserver of all entities.

My real Self and My true Form are one  
And therefore dissociated from worldly things,  
though all-pervading.

**W**ORDLY analogy is far below the level of an  
explanation of such relativities.

They are beyond the present comprehension of all  
fallen souls.

But to allow thee a clearer conception approaching  
the truth

I tell thee here for thine own understanding.

The sky or ether is all-pervading;

In it the air, the minutest atoms and electrons are in  
motion.

Though the sky is the receptacle of every element:  
It is yet detached from all.

Likewise, though phenomena have all been caused  
by Māyā-Potency,

I am independent of them all,

As the sky is independent of the elements that  
move in it.

O son of Kunti ! when a Kalpa expires,

All beings enter into My External Potency of triple  
qualities,

And yet again when a new Kalpa dawns,



I bring them into being through the agency of that same Potency.

**T**HIS universe is subject to My External Potency.  
Under the influence of this, all beings are dependent

On the law of Karma, and therefore are subject to rebirths and deaths.

I am the Self-willed, and through My Māyik Potency Create them again and yet again.

But, O Dhananjaya ! those actions bind Me not.

I am detached from them and non-chalant.

Though unattached to earth's affairs

I am ever attached to spiritual bliss.

My Māyā—the External Potency

And the Jiva-Potency—the Marginal Potency,

Help Me in My blissful attachments

And to cause the creation of material phenomena and individual souls.

My Own Self is never thereby affected.

My Real Entity is transcendental.

Whatever is done within the sentient and insentient worlds

By Marginal and Māyā Potencies,

They thereby only help Me indirectly in My Spiritual Occupations.

My personal aloofness from the world's affairs is easily discernible.



**O** son of Kunti ! the Cosmic Energy belongs to  
Me;

Acts under My direction;

Palpable is My predominance o'er her and all her  
actions.

When I desire to manifest, My wishes I express  
By glancing at her, and in response  
She does create all mobile and immobile objects in  
the atmosphere.

For this reason, there are births and rebirths,  
And repeated cosmic changes,

My desires are carried out by my External Potency  
While My Spiritual Occupations are conducted  
By My Internal Ecstatic Energy.

Between the two, exists My Marginal or Jiva  
Potency

From whom all individual souls do emanate.

**F**ROM all that I have said, thou must conclude  
That My Real Self is the complete embodiment  
Of Sat-Chit-Ānanda—All-Existence, All-Knowledge  
and All-Bliss,

And that My Potencies work through My grace,  
While I am independent of such action.

That I am manifest and seen by people in the  
material world

Is also possible only by My grace and My prerogative.  
I am transcendental, hence above all mundane laws



Which do compel created beings.  
 I am by divine prerogative free to manifest My  
 Transcendental Self  
 Before the eyes of all the universe.  
 My coming thus unto the world  
 Would never make of Me an object of the cosmic  
 region.  
 I can and do maintain My Form Eternal and Divine  
 Both in the transcendental and the worldly planes.  
 It is but through Mine Own Exclusive Grace  
 That people of the world can see My Spiritual Form  
 Even in the worldly atmosphere  
 In special circumstances of Divine Descent.  
 To ascribe to Me that which is infinitesimal  
 Or the vastness of the non-manifest, is but confusion  
 Due to the crippled understanding of the fallen souls,  
 Bound by Māyā to the limitations of time and space.  
 My Nature Most Supreme is not in either of them.  
 On the other hand, My Real Form is transcendental  
 And for ever adolescent.

I am simultaneously greater than the greatest  
 In My All-comprising macroscopic Aspect,  
 And smaller than the smallest atom  
 In My All-pervading microscopic Aspect.  
 Comprehension of this My Real and Eternal Adoles-  
 cent Form  
 Is only possible by grace of My Ecstatic Potency,



Which otherwise is inconceivable to human minds.  
 The deluded ignorant can never understand how this  
 My godly Eternal Adolescent Figure can be mani-  
 fested in the world

Without being born like any human being  
 Influenced by the cosmic laws,  
 And they fallaciously imagine that I must accept  
 A human body in order to reveal Myself  
 In this world before the eyes of all.  
 They do not realise that I am the Supreme  
 Lord of all the macrocosm and the microcosm.  
 Thus infatuated by deceptive and empiric knowledge,  
 They impute a narrow view to My divine capacities  
 and Form,  
 Which the enlightened devotees regard and realise  
 to be Sat-Chit-Ānanda..

**I**F thou wouldst know whence originates  
 This wrong and perverted perception,  
 Listen then to what I say.  
 Allured by a demoniac nature and lust and malice,  
 The ignorant and fallen are frustrated in their high  
 hopes of salvation;  
 And their penances of Karma and laborious studies  
 of the Scriptures  
 In quest of Jñāna, bring them naught.  
 Their mind is then diverted into Karma in expecta-  
 tion of the fruits of pleasure's region;



They are thus debarred from purest knowledge  
 Owing to their fruitive acts.  
 When they are in search of knowledge,  
 The purity of knowledge is over-clouded  
 By mistaken theories of at-one-ness with Brahman,  
 the Great.  
 They then at this stage often think  
 That this My Transcendental Form is born of Māyā  
 That I am but Iswara, a god, and therefore inferior  
 to Brahman!—  
 And when the heart is purified by worship,  
 An individual attains to Brahman, the End Supreme!  
 The result of such delusion is that their mentality,  
 So lustful and malicious,  
 Intensifies the darkness of their ignorance.

**O** Pārtha ! Blessed are those, who are possessed  
 of transcendental knowledge.

Resort they to My Potency Divine,  
 And being indifferent to fruitive actions' rind  
 And to the seed of dry wisdom which aims at union  
 with the Absolute,  
 They serve with all attention My All-blissful Form,  
 In which I now appear before thee,  
 And know Me to be primordial and everlasting.  
 Those great souls who possess this transcendental  
 knowledge



Ever chant the glories of My Name, My Form, My  
Attributes,  
My Entourage and My Activities  
Which are indetical with one another.  
They do observe the nine methods of practices  
devotional  
By way of hearing, chanting, meditating,  
Serving the Divine Feet, worshipping and praying,  
Acting as servant, friend and being self-dedicating.  
In order to gain the blessed privilege of rendering  
eternal services  
Or unalloyed devotion to My Transcendental  
Personality,  
Perform they all their physical and mental,  
Social and moral obligations  
With steadfast dedication unto Me.  
That their mind may not be alienated  
From Me while performing these their worldly  
duties,  
Surrender they themselves to Me by following the  
path of Bhakti-Yoga.  
Just as a pauper calls at the doors of the opulent  
Begging for the wherewithal to live  
So My devotees keep constant company  
With saints forever freed for practices devotional.  
They learn from them with genuine intention  
The process of the chanting of My Name,



How to surrender to Me and to read the  
 Scriptures in their truest light.  
 Strictly do they adhere to spiritual practices,  
 Vows and devotional worship.  
 They love to chant My Name incessantly  
 With yearnings for My endless loving service.

**S**O far in diverse ways I have explained to thee  
 The greatness and superiority of truest devotees  
 Over those four classes who do worship Me when  
 in distress

Or for want of wealth or out of intellectual Jñāna-  
 interest.

Now I shall tell thee of three other classes  
 Who are inferior to the above.

The sages have designated them as Ahangrahopāsaka,  
 Pratikopāsaka and Viswarupopāsaka.

Of these, the first group is superior to the other two.  
 In this, man rates himself as Godhead;

This is also a sort of Yajna,

In which I am but indirectly worshipped as in the  
 Non-differentiated Brahman.

Next come the Pratikopāsaka,

Who realising they are different from Godhead,  
 Worship the minor gods Indra, Sun and others,  
 Knowing them to be superior entities

Qualified with glorious capacities from Me.



Worse than the Pratikopāsaka are the wretched  
 Viswarupopāsaka  
 Who worship the Aggregate Universe,  
 Fancying it to be the Body of the Godhead.  
 Such are the three classes who worship Me in  
 Jnāna-Yājna,  
 Either as Brahman, with Whom they misidentify  
 themselves,  
 Or as one among the minor gods,  
 Or as the Aggregate Universe.

**I** am the Kratu—the Vedic sacrifices  
 Such as Agnistoma

Which are offered to the Fire-god;  
 I am the Yajna—the sacrificial rites  
 Such as Vaiswadeva of the henotheists;  
 I am the Scriptural Word—Swadhā,  
 Uttered in offering oblations to the departed forbears;  
 I am the Medicinal Alleviation of all sickness;  
 I am the Incantation with which offerings are made  
 To the Presiding Deity of all Sacrifices;  
 I am Myself the sacrificial butter poured in the holy  
 fire of Yajna;  
 I Myself the Holy Fire of Yajna and likewise the  
 offering itself;  
 I am the Father of both the unit and of the aggregate  
 worlds;



**I am the Mother of the Universe for holding it  
within My bosom;**

**I am the Supporter of the Universe providing it  
with sustenance;**

**I am the Grandsire, being the Originator  
Of the Brahmā, Creator of the Universe;**

**I am the knowable Subject;**

**I am the sacred "OM" and the Vedas three :  
Rik, Sāma and Yajus;**

**I am the Highest End of all;**

**I am the Lord, Controller and Observer of all good  
and evil,**

**The Abode, the Saviour from all danger, the  
causeless Well-wisher;**

**I am the Origin, the Maintenance and Dissolution;**

**I am the Primal Cause eternal;**

**I am the Heat in summer and the Showers in the  
rainy seasons;**

**I hold back water and send forth rain;**

**I am the Nectar of salvation, and I am the Death;**

**Arjuna, I am the gross and the subtle.**

**Knowing thou that all these and many more are My  
Forms and My Names,**

**The third class of these worshippers yet worship Me  
As the Viswa-Rupa—the Godhead  
Whose Form is the Universe !**

**I F these three forms of worship are intinged with  
true devotion unto Me,**



Then those same worshippers by coming unto Me  
 as the Supreme Lord,  
 Can gradually grow more eligible for salvation  
 In the form of pure devotion,  
 Casting aside all stigma of their former impious  
 worship.  
 One who worships himself as the Godhead in  
 Ahangrahopāsaka  
 May rid himself of this grave wrong  
 And merit blessing by cultivating unalloyed devotion.  
 Though the henotheists and the polytheists  
 misidentify the other gods with Me,  
 These errors may be rectified; to understanding true  
 of My Supreme  
 And Transcendental Personality,  
 By their association with My truest devotees.  
 That woeful early misconception of the Immanent  
 God in Viswarupa-worship  
 May finally develop into a realisation  
 Of My Eternal Adolescent Transcendental Form  
 With their soul's awakening.  
 But if on the contrary these worshippers are more  
 inclined to Karma or to Jñāna,  
 They are deprived of pure devotion—  
 The limpid spring of human well-being.

**T**HE monists become entangled in the net of dry  
 polemic arguments  
 Of an illusory theory, owing to their errantry from  
 God-head.



The Pratika-worshippers become enmeshed within  
the bonds of Karma,  
Enjoined by the afore-said Vedas—  
Rik, Sāma and Yajus,  
And having acquired the knowledge of the Vedas,  
Are cleansed of sin  
By drinking the Soma as the residue of their offer-  
ings to diverse gods,  
Thinking them to be My only different forms;  
They worship Me thus inditrectly by making  
sacrifices  
And pray for the celestial pleasures  
Which they enjoy in Heaven after death—  
The realm of the gods,  
Attainable by dint of pious acts.

**A**FTER enjoying the wide range of celestial  
pleasures  
In the Kingdom of the gods, as a result of piety  
They must again return to this poor mortal world  
When Heaven's term expires.  
The seekers of reward of Karma,  
Enraptured by the nectar of the Vedas,  
Are hurled into the vortex of births and deaths  
time after time.

**D**O not believe, Arjuna! that the followers of the  
Vedas enjoy the pleasures,



And that My devotees do suffer pains.  
My devotees think ever of Me alone with firm  
fidelity;  
Accepting all those objects  
Which are not detrimental to their love of Me.  
Absolutely selfless these worshippers are,  
And offer all they have to Me alone.  
I therefore send them all that they may need  
And foster them with tender care.  
Though there is a similarity in the phenomenal  
acceptances of things  
Between My devotees and lesser Karmins,  
Yet a great gulf exists  
Between the fundamental objects of their aim in  
life.  
My devotees surrender all to Me,  
And since they do not ask for anything from Me,  
I grant them all without request and I maintain them.  
Despite their temporal enjoyments,  
My devotees are ultimately blessed with Bliss  
Enternal.  
The pious Karmins, on the contrary, though they  
experience celestial joys  
Must come again into this world of sorrow  
And have to move within the cycle of their Karma.  
They have no lasting happiness.  
Though I am aloof from all things,  
Yet I feel a great delight



In helping devotees out of My tender love for them,  
In thus accepting My relief  
They are not guilty of offence  
For they ask naught of Me.

**I** am indeed the Lord Supreme of All-Being,  
All-Intelligence, and All-Bliss.  
There is none else superior or equal to Me—  
No god is independent of Me.  
I am the Reality Eternal beyond the bounds of time  
and space.  
Some worship the Sun and other gods;  
In this cosmic region the fallen souls  
Worship My various forms of diverse and specific  
powers,  
Which reflected in the Māyā,  
Are thought to be forms of independent gods.  
But on deliberation it is found  
That those gods are My distant indirect manifesta-  
tions  
Of My different powers, reflected through the Māyā  
And are thus entirely dependent upon Me.  
Those who worship them as such  
With clear conception of their real nature  
As well as of My Transcendental and Supreme  
Reality  
Are on the right path, and are eligible  
To make great progress in their spiritual march;



But those who worship these gods ardently  
 Thinking them to be eternal and as independent of  
 Me,  
 Worship them without authority.  
 They are thus deprived of the eternal and the  
 highest End.

**I** am the sole Enjoyer and Lord of all the sacrifices.  
 Those who worship other gods as independent of  
 Me  
 Are called polytheists or henotheists;  
 They ignore the truth about Me.  
 Therefore they degrade themselves, departing from  
 Truth Absolute.  
 If the Sun and other gods they worship as emanations of My power,  
 They may attain to bliss at last.  
 Those who worship any other god as Godhead,  
 Attain the non-reality of that especial god  
 Which is the object of their adoration.  
 The votaries of the deceased ancestors go to their  
 transitory realm;  
 But those who worship Me the Ever-living Reality,  
 Realise Me on the great Plane of Transcendence  
 With increasing perfect bliss.  
 I am impartial in bestowing fruits on men  
 According to their deeds—  
 My law inviolable is dispensation of reward  
 Resulting from man's actions.



**W**HATEVER My devotees of loving heart and  
cleanly body offer Me

Out of a naturally loving attitude towards Me—

Be it a leaf, or a flower or a fruit or water—

I accept with great affection,

Poor though the offering may seem to be;

But I refuse the richest offerings

When these are made to Me with importunity

And not with faith and love.

**O** son of Kunti ! I have explained to thee  
How four classes of people gradually qualify

For the life devotional :

The sore distressed, enquirers after truth,

The seekers of favour and the wise;

Before they step into the Realm of Bhakti,

Their worship takes three different forms :

Monism, henotheism and pantheism.

I have likewise explained to thee

How at the threshold of Bhakti or practices  
devotional

An individual resorts to four preliminary stages:

Fruitive Karma, selfless Karma-Yoga, Jñāna-Yoga

And Astānga-Yoga in relation to the world.

Having said all that,

I have at last informed thee of the nature of pure  
Bhakti.



Now, O Arjuna ! determine thou accordingly thine own position.

**T**HOU art a hero of righteousness

And hast come into the world along with Me  
To add harmonious development to My  
Transcendental Occupations.

Thou canst not therefore be regarded

As one among the neutral or fruit-seeking devotees.  
Devotion mixed with selfless Karma and Jñāna.  
Should therefore be observed by thee.

The duty thus incumbent on thee is:

Whatever thou seest, whatever thou mayst enjoy,  
Whatever sacrifice or penance and austerities thou  
mayst observe—

Consecrate them one and all to Me.

Worldly minded men perform their work with other  
motives;

When their purpose has been served,

They finally and formally present their actions  
unto Me.

All that I rate as nothing.

Thou, on the other hand, dedicating thine actions  
unto Me

From the beginning, perform them as a matter of  
devotion.

Thou shalt thereby free thyself from bondage of all  
good and evil



Resulting from thy Karma, and from fighting in  
this battle;

Equipped thou with the spirit of renunciation  
By relinquishing thine actions unto Me,  
Thou shalt be blessed with loving service to My  
Form Divine.

**O**NE mystery with Me is that I treat all equally—  
None is an object of hatred or of special love  
to Me—

This is the general law with Me.  
I am beyond all mundane relativities.  
But it is My special feature  
That I love and am attached to those  
Who are attached to Me and  
Serve Me devotedly and lovingly.  
He who worships Me with single-minded faith, and  
none else,  
Should be regarded as a saint or sādhu,  
Because his resolution is a perfect one,  
Even though he pursues some 'undesirable habits.'

**“UNDESIRABLE** habits” must be rightly  
understood.

The manners and demeanour of a fallen soul  
Are twofold—relative and truly personal.  
All conduct of life such as cleanliness and piety



And all those habits respecting healthy and nutritious diet

And activities providing wants—

All things that are conducive

To the furtherance of mental, physical and social growth, are relative;

While habits of the function of loving service to Me,

Which is innate in every pure soul, is personal.

This is known as one-pointed unalloyed devotion.

In the engrossed state of existence,

The Kevalā-Bhakti of an individual maintains a link

With the relative conduct of his life.

Even when undeviated true and single-minded love

Be awakened in a fallen soul, his habits relative

Will still continue while he inhabits the mortal coil.

But with the flash of pure devotion,

The wrong propensities are soon dispelled.

Worldly attachment will relax in just proportion to increasing love for Me.

As long as worldly predilections be not burnt out to the root,

Mundane appetites may sometimes force the bounds of decency in life.

But such profanities are curbed ere long

By loving devotion shown to Me.

**T**HE effort of those who have climbed the steps  
Of pure devotion are wholesome and praise-worthy.



If moral turpitude should creep into the life of such  
a saint,

It would soon be rectified by cultivating the attitude-  
devout

Which cannot be contaminated or destroyed by  
temporary violation.

Because of his past immoral habits,

A genuine devotee, should not be classified with  
the non-devotees;

With the awakening of unflinching love for Me

Transgressions of the past shall be obliterated by My  
grace;

Such a person should not then be scorned as a great  
sinner,

But be revered as a saint.

**O** Son of Kunti!

Be thou assured then of My promise  
That My devotee possessing steadfast love for Me  
Shall never know perdition.

The natural shortcomings due to birth

As well as elements ungodly in his character

Will be dispelled by fires of his immaculate-  
devotion.

Ere long he will attain most perfect and abiding bliss  
By following the path of unalloyed devotion

And practising the normal ways

That are the innate functions of the pure soul,



Carefully avoiding those of either pious or the sinful  
Karmins

Or the abnegation of the Jnānins.

Promise Me, therefore, O Arjuna ! that My devotee  
is not to be destroyed;

Thy promises shall be observed more strictly even  
than Mine Own,

For I may break My promise for the sake of devotees,  
But the promises by them are never unredeemed.

**O** Son of Prithā ! Even the wild barbarians,  
The fallen women, the Vaishya-Sudras and  
other lower castes

May soon attain the highest bliss when they  
completely

And unflinchingly resort to Me with firm devotion.  
Restrictions of caste and creed, colour or community  
Are no barrier on the Path of Bhakti.

When the savage and the low-born are thus entitled  
To lead a life pure of devotion

And all their evil habits and sinful life

Do not prevent their spiritual progress,

What wonder then, that obstacles of piety

Following from worldly noble actions,

Of the higher castes,

The pious Brāhmins and the holy royal sages,

May soon be overcome,

By wakening the innate normal conduct of the soul?



**B**OTH sin and piety are undesirable,  
 But they submit to true devotion.  
 Hence practise, O Arjuna ! unstinted loyalty to Me,  
 The Lord Supreme, whilst thou as pilgrim  
 Passest through this transitory and blissless world.  
 Engage thy mind in thoughts of Me;  
 Employ thy body in devoutest service unto Me ;  
 Offer thine obeisances to Me ;  
 Thus being absorbed in meditation and most  
 constantly attached to Me,  
 Thou shalt attain Me, the Lord Supreme,  
 Even after all thy present duties  
 Such as fighting are performed."

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## CHAPTER TEN

### ***SUPERHUMAN POWERS***



## CHAPTER TEN

### SUPERHUMAN POWERS

**S**REE Bhagavān said:

“O Mighty-armed ! Thou art My Beloved  
And so, desiring thy well-being,  
I shall now tell thee truths  
Of greater weight than e’er before; listen to Me again.  
I am the Primordial Cause of all the gods and sages;  
Therefore can they not perceive the Suprehuman  
Character

Of My Descent and Deeds  
Upon the mundane plane in My Own Human Form.  
The gods or sages all endeavour the truth to know  
About Me, only through attempts empirical ;  
Thereby, despite their strenuous efforts to under-  
stand Me,  
Fail to go beyond the scope of time and space,  
And therefore partially arrive at the Negative  
Principle  
Of the antepodes of all earthly qualities and actions.

**T**HIS principle is, in their belief, non-manifest  
and attributeless,



Formless and void of action.

They think this earthly wisdom to be the highest  
truth;

But the Highest Transcendental Truth is not  
Brahman;

I am the Ultimate Reality of all transcendence :

Ever Self-effulgent, and My Transcendental Potencies are inconceivable by human minds;

I am possessed of all the perfect qualities;

My Form Divine transcends all limited conceptions;

I am the All-Existence, All-Knowledge and All-  
Bliss.

**W**HEN My External Cosmic Energy reflects Me,  
I am recognisable as Paramātmā, or Iswara  
Who is a partial manifestation of My Primordial  
Absolute Self;

Brahman is only My indistinct, effulgent Aspect,  
Inconceivable by human intellect

Owing to the influence of My Deluding Cosmic  
Power.

So both these, My partial Aspects—

Paramātmā and Brahman—

Are My analytical and synthetical manifestations  
on the worldly plane.

Only on rare occasions, out of My Prerogative and  
Power Divine

Do I descend into this world.



Failing to realise the capacities of My inconceivable  
Internal Potency

Through the poor vehicle of their inductive reasoning,  
Those gods and sages who are intellectually  
developed,

And whom the mighty force of Māyā threw into the  
depths of ignorance,

Think this My Full Descent into the worldly plane  
To be "Iswara" or the "Paramātmā",  
And imagining that Brahman is greater than  
Paramātmā

They try to merge within that attributeless Neutre-  
God.

But My true dovotees,

Who realise the pettiness of human intellect, and  
reasoning

And that all their attempts by mere induction  
Are insufficient to comprehend My Transcendental  
Self,

Cultivate a pure devotion towards Me.

Thus moved by My compassion at their dedication  
absolute,

I make Myself and My Most Beauteous Form  
Apparent to their pure intelligence.

**H**E who knows Me, through My Grace,  
To be the Lord Supreme of Lords of all the  
universe,



And the First Source of all manifestations,  
 Is granted absolution from his sins  
 Arising from earthly experiences.  
 The knowers of the Scriptures fail to understand Me  
 In spite of their penetrating intellect.  
 The reason is that Buddhi—the introspective  
 intelligence,  
 Which can discern the inner meaning,  
 Discriminating intelligence that can distinguish  
 between self and non-self,  
 Forgiveness, truthfulness, pleasure and pain,  
 Control of internal and external senses,  
 Calmness, birth, death, courage, non-malice,  
 equanimity,  
 Contentment, austerity, gifts, fame and shame—  
 All these are mental qualities of individuals.  
 Though I am the Primal Cause of all these qualities,  
 Yet I am distinct from all.  
 Nothing remains unknown when the Doctrine is  
 known  
 Of “inconceivable simultaneous existence of  
 difference and non-difference”,  
 Otherwise known as *Achinta Bhedābheda*,  
 The Philosophy preached by Sree Krishna-Chai-  
 tanya,  
 As the substance and its properties like fire and heat  
 Are distinct yet non-distinct from one another,  
 So also I, the Lord Supreme,



And objects, qualities and feelings of the universe,  
Born of My Potency, though eternally inseparable,  
Are yet distinct from Me.

**M**ARICHI and seven other sages great,  
Sanaka and his brothers,  
The four sons of Brahmā who were born before the  
seven sages,  
And Svayambhuva and the others—the fourteen  
Manus—  
All these were born of Hiranyagarbha  
Who was empowered by Me.  
This world was populated by their progeny and their  
disciples.  
He who is rightly acquainted with the knowledge  
That My Transcendental Personality is the Highest  
End of all  
The Principles of Absolute Reality  
And that I manifest My Aspects Supernatural  
Through the vehicle of all My Potencies  
That are as yet beyond conception,  
And he who further understands that Bhakti-Yoga  
Is the summum bonum of all practices of all Yogas,  
Does surely perform the greatest steadfast Yoga  
Which leads him unto Me.

**K**NOW Me to be the Fountain Source of all  
things spiritual and earthly;  
Everything evolves from Me;



Thus knowing, those who worship Me with unalloyed devotion, are the wise.

They are truly versed in Transcendental Knowledge of Me:

The rest are ignorant.

The character of such unshaken devotees is this :

They have surrendered heart and soul to Me;

Exchanging mutual thoughts about their spiritual life,

And they discourse about Me.

All devotees who meet together,

Enlighten one another as to My Nature,

Heighten each other's spiritual progress

And delight in ever-blissful talks about My Transcendental Pastimes.

In their nascent stage of Bhakti and its practices,

They hear and chant My Holy Name

Knowing the bliss of true devotion;

And in their highest stage of spiritual illumination

And Love Divine, when their innate nature is fully awakened,

They are entitled a blissful intercourse with Me

As Consort in My Love-Games

By following the Path spontaneous of Love Divine

That leads to Braja.

Those who worship Me most lovingly by following this path,

I bless with transcendental knowledge



That helps them tread the way of Love Ecstatic  
Which can alone conduct them unto Me  
In Mine Own Realm of Perfect Bliss.

**T**HE followers of Bhakti-Yoga  
Cannot continue in ignorance.  
Some people think that those who seek the Truth  
By following the process of negation  
In the manner: "This is not *That*, This is not *That*"  
Are truly wise.  
They think that rarest knowledge is not attainable  
by Bhakti-Yoga  
In which emotion is predominant !  
Arjuna ! the truth is that a knowledge of the Great  
Reality  
Can never be acquired by the very limited mentality  
of poor individual souls  
However highly trained their intellect may be.  
With all their utmost striving  
They will fail to realise the Highest Knowledge.  
But if I be compassionate with them,  
Then only by My Grace and by My Potency  
My devotees who have endeared Me to their self  
Are blessed with knowledge of My Transcendence.  
My boundless mercy for them prompts Me to  
appear  
Within the shrine most holy of their hearts,  
And to dispel the gloom of ignorance



That clouds their minds,  
 Caused by their contact with the worldly relativities.  
 Transcendental knowledge is to be attained  
 Only by practising devotion to Me  
 And not by disputations or pedantic arguments."

**A**RJUNA said: "O Lord! the saints and holy sages.  
 Nārada and Ashita, Devala and Vyāsa  
 Have said, and so hast thou  
 That Thine Own Form Divine is beautiful beyond  
 compare;

Thou art the Endless Knowledge Absolute;  
 Thou art the Highest Shelter of all objects;  
 Thou art supremely Holy  
 Since all sinners become forever purified by Thy  
 Divinest Sight;  
 Thou art the Godhead, Primal Lord,  
 Unborn and All-Pervading, Eternal and Divine.

**I** believe all this that Thou hast told me, O Keshava.  
 To be unchallengeable truth.

Neither the gods nor demons know  
 Thine inconceivable Identity, my Lord Divine !  
 O Thou Supremest Lord of Lords !  
 Progenitor of all the Lords !  
 Protector of all sentient and insentient beings !  
 Godhead of all the gods !  
 O Ruler of the Universe !



Thou knowest Thyself by Thine Own Internal  
Chit-Power.

By no heavenly or human reasoning can one  
perceive the truth

Of how Thou dost Thy Transcendental Beautiful  
Primordial Form reveal

Upon the earthly plane,

Without submitting to apotheotic falsities,

Or laws of earth's phenomena.

He alone whom Thou dost favour

Can know Thee and perceive Thy Ways.

**B**Y Thy Grace alone I now see Thy True Nature  
in my heart

And can observe Thee in appearance before mine  
eyes;

I am blessed, O My Lord !

Tell me now without reserve

About Thy Superhuman and Divinest Glories

Which permeate the worlds.

O Mighty Lord of Yoga !

By what meditation shall I know Thee in Thine  
Own True Form?

And what especial Form of Thine am I to meditate  
upon?

Tell me again in detail, Janārdana !

About Thy Yoga and Thy Superhuman Powers.



The more I drink the nectar of Thy discourse  
On these transcendental truths,  
The more my thirst for hearing them increases."

**S**REE Bhagavān said: "Thou noblest of the  
Kurus !

There is no end to My Divine and Superhuman  
Powers.

I shall, however, tell thee now  
About some prominent among them :  
O Conqueror of sleep ! O Gudākesha !  
I have already told thee of My Real Person.  
I shall now tell thee of My relative existence.

**I** am the life of all the universe;  
I alone am the beginning, the centre and the end  
of all things;

I am Vishnu among the twelve Ādityas who are  
Dhātā,

Mitra, Arjāmā, Rudra, Varuna, Surya, Bhaga,  
Vivaswana, Pushā, Savitā, Twatsa and Vishnu;  
Of the luminaries I am the Sun;  
I am the Marichi among the deities of the wind;  
Among the stars I am the Moon.

**A**MONG the Vedas I am the Sāma-Veda;  
I am Indra among the gods;



The Mind among the senses  
 The spiritual Cognitive Faculty in all living beings;  
 I am Sankara among the eleven Rudras  
 Who are: Aja, Ekapāda, Ahibradhna,  
 Virupāksha, Sureswara, Jayanta, Vahurupa,  
 Trambaka, Aparājita. Vaivakshata and Sankara;  
 Among Yakshas—demi gods, attending on Kuvera,  
 The Lord of wealth and Rakshas, the demons,  
 I am Kuvera;  
 I am Pāvaka, fire-god Agni, among the eighth Vasus.  
 Who are Apa, Dhruba, Soma, Dhara,  
 Anila. Pāvaka, Pratyusa, Pravasha;  
 And among the mountains I am the Sumeru.

**O** son of Prithā ! Know Me to be Brihaspati  
 Who is the chief among the house-hold priests;  
 I am Skanda among the generals,  
 And among the lakes and seas I am the Ocean.  
 Among the great sages I am Bhrigu  
 And the "OM" among the words;  
 Among the Yajnas I am the Japa-Yajna—  
 The chanting of the Name of Godhead and telling  
 of the beads;  
 I am the Himālayās among immobile objects;  
 Of all the trees I am Aswattha;  
 And of the saints divine I am Nārada;  
 Chitraratha am I among the Gandharvas, the chorus  
 in heaven;



I am St. Kapila among the saints  
 Performing austerities for a purposed end.  
 Know Me to be Uchchaihsrava among the horses,  
 Born of nectar on the churning of the ocean ;  
 I am Airāvata among the powerful elephants  
 And Emperor among men.

**A**MONG the weapons I am the Thunderbolt,  
 The Kāmadhenu among the cows;  
 I am Kandarpa the Progenitor;  
 Among the serpents I am Vāsuki.  
 I am Ananta among the Nāgas—  
 Demi-gods with human faces and serpent's tails;  
 Among the aquatics I am Varuna;  
 Aryamā among the manes;  
 Among the dispensers of justice I am Yama.  
 Prahlāda I am among the demons,  
 Kāla among the controllers,  
 Lion among the beasts and among the birds I am  
 Garuda.  
 I am Pavana, the wind, among the swiftest objects;  
 Among the warriors I am Parasurāma;  
 Makara—shark, I among the fishes,  
 And I am the Gānges among the streams.

**O**F the created objects I am, Arjuna !  
 Beginning, Centre and the End.  
 Of learning I am the the Spiritual Knowledge



Of the individual souls and of the Over-soul.  
 I am the Determining Factor among the passages  
 of words  
 That seek to establish the *prima facie* proposition  
 on the one side  
 And refute it on the other.  
 Of the alphabets I am the "A",  
 The Dwandwa among all compounds,  
 The Mahākāla Rudra among the destroyers;  
 And I am Brahmā among creators;  
 I am the all-seizing Death.  
 Among the future events I come into existence.  
 Among the women I am Glory, Beauty, Speech  
 As well as Memory, Intellect, Patience, Forgiveness  
 And others—the consorts of Dharma.

I am the Great Sāma in the Sāma-Veda;  
 Among the metres I am the Gāyatri;  
 The Agrahāyana ( November – December ) am I  
 among the months,  
 And of the seasons am I the Spring.  
 I am the Hazard of the gamblers,  
 The Valour of the chivalrous;  
 I am Victory and Effort among the persevering;  
 And I am the Strength of the strong.  
 Among the children of the family of Brishni,  
 I am Vāsudeva or Valarāma;  
 Dhananjaya am I of the Pāndavas.



Among the Saints I am Veda-Vyāsa,  
 And I am Sukrāchārya among the poets.  
 I am the Sceptre among the punishers;  
 Among those who seek victory I am Polity.  
 Of the secrets I am Silence;  
 And I am the Wisdom of the wise,  
 I am that Seed from which all beings spring.  
 Arjuna ! no sentient or insentient object can ever  
 have existence without Me.

**O** Parantapa ! there is no end to My Divine  
 Supernatural Powers, of which I only mention  
 but a few to thee.

Whatever be endowed with majesty and might,  
 Excellence and splendour,  
 Know that to be part of My Superhuman grandeur  
 Born of the splendour of My External Power.  
 O Arjuna ! what value is this to thee to know about  
 My splendour?  
 By My Cosmic Energy which exercises influence  
 o'er all phenomena,  
 I permeate the universe as Paramātmā Immanent.  
 My Potency possesses all capacities.  
 It is only with a particle of these capacities  
 That I enter every atom of the universe.  
 I have My relative existence in the world;  
 I exist as the all-Pervading Paramātmā  
 Through the Agency of Cosmic Energy;  
 And in the Jiva-world, I am the Monitor Indwelling."

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## **CHAPTER ELEVEN**

### ***SREE KRISHNA'S LORDLY GRANDEUR***



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### SREE KRISHNA'S LORDLY GRANDEUR

**A**RJUNA said:

“My veil of ignorance is now withdrawn  
By listening to these most secret truths  
From Thine Own Holy Lips,  
About Thy Transcendental Form.  
In my abysmal ignorance I could conceive not of Thy  
Spiritual Reality.  
Now I have begun to understand Thou art for ever  
Self-Effulgent,  
Self-Revealed and that the highest Ideal of the  
human form  
As yet unseen, uncomprehended by the mind of man,  
Is Thy Most Beauteous Spiritual Krishna-Form  
And He is Thy Real Self;  
The Viswarupa is but one of many cloaks or Partial  
Manifestations.  
Lord ! all objects exist in Thee,  
And Thou dost exist in every object,  
But Thou art not everything  
Nor every object is Thyself.



**O** Lotus-eyed! I am acquainted now minutely  
with Thine Aspects

Of creation and destruction

And of the excellence of Thine Own Way

The magnitude of which is boundless

Beyond the realm of human intellect.

O Lord Supreme! I beg Thee, Purushottama!

To show me now Thy Lordly Form of Viswarupa,  
In which Form Thou art Immanent.

I am an individual soul within this universe,  
Albeit with identity

And cannot fully comprehend the actions of the  
Over-soul,

Which are beyond my human understanding.

Though I am insignificant, I have been, by Thy  
Grace, allowed

To understand a fragment of the truth

Anent Thy Real Self as Ever-Adolescent, Ever-  
Beautiful Sree Krishna;

But I am not yet fit to realise

Thy Lordly Aspect or Thy Majesty,

Both of which pass the comprehension of the  
human brain.

Thou art my Lord and Lord of all the Yogas.

Thus if Thou deemest I should see,

Show me Thou, out of Thy super-worldly powers,

This Lordly Form of Thine."



**S**REE Bhagavān said: "O Son of Prithā !  
 Observe My Forms Majestic innumerable and  
 divine,  
 Of variegated colours in their thousands.  
 Behold, Bhārata ! the Adityas and the Vasus,  
 The Rudras, the Marutas and the twin Aswinis;  
 Behold My many wonders;  
 None such have been seen before.  
 Whatever sentient and insentient objects thou  
 may'st wish to see,  
 All are to be found in this My Lordly Grandeur.  
 Know, therefore, O Gudākesha !  
 That all that and whatever more thou dost long to  
 see  
 Is only part of My Eternal Krishna-Form.

**T**HOU art My devotee, and therefore thou canst  
 see  
 My Beautiful, Eternal and Divinest Krishna-Form  
 Apart from any mundane relativities with thy pure  
 eyes of soul,  
 Divine Love and devotion,  
 Free from the limits of all attributes.  
 But this My Lordly Form is not so independent  
 And It exists in harmony with Cosmic and the  
 Jiva-worlds.  
 Therefore, Arjuna ! the pure eyes of Divine Love  
 for Me



Do not see this My Lordly Form;  
 Eyes that behold material forms are also rendered  
 incompetent  
 To see My Super-mundane Form.  
 The eye which has a certain colouring  
 Of quality intuitive yet not gross and material  
 Is called the eye divine;  
 I give thee *that* eye to behold My Lordly Viswarupa  
 Form."

**S**ANJAYA said to Dhritarāstra: "O King ! Thus  
 saying, Sree Hari,  
 Lord Supreme of all Yogas,  
 Showed to Arjuna the Superhuman Form,  
 Which was unique,  
 Unprecedented, and very strange,  
 Possessing many mouths, and eyes and many  
 wondrous sights,  
 With many ornaments divine and superhuman  
 weapons,  
 Wearing divine garlands and gorgeous clothes,  
 Anointed with divine perfumes,  
 All wonderful, most brilliant, and infinite;  
 And everywhere innumerable forms appeared.  
 If the blazing splendour of a thousand suns  
 Were suddenly to rise up together in the sky,  
 Even that would scarce compare  
 With the effulgent glory of that Viswarupa.



Then Arjuna saw innumerable worlds  
Both as a unit and in their separate existences  
Within the Body of the Lord.  
Thus filled with wonder and amazement, and  
bowing down his head,  
Arjuna thus adderssed the Lord with folded hands."

**A**RJUNA said: "Lord I behold within Thy Body  
All the gods, all hosts of individuals,  
Brahmā seated on the Lotus-seat,  
Mahādeva, all the sages and the heavenly serpents.  
Lord of the Universe! O Viswarupa!  
I see within Thee manifold arms and bodies,  
Mouths, eyes and the all-pervading Ananta-Rupa;  
I see no beginning and no end of Thee.  
Thy Form can hardly be beheld for its resplendence  
Scintillating like a mass of brilliant lustre,  
Of fire and sun, immeasurable  
I behold Thee, head bedecked with crown and disk  
in Thy hands—  
Splendour suffused with a celestial glow.

**T**HOU art Imperishable Truth That should be  
known;  
Thou art the Great Receptacle of this Universe;  
Thou art Undying;  
Protector of Sanātana Dharma—  
Religion universal and eternal;



And Thou art the Ancient Personage.  
 Thou hast no beginning and no end;  
 Thy powers are infinite;  
 Thy two eyes are like shining suns;  
 Thy Face is all resplendency;  
 The universe Thou dost illuminate with Thine Own  
 Radiance.  
 Thou alone pervadest all existence betwixt the earth  
 and heaven;  
 I see Thine awe-inspiring Form;  
 O Great Soul! all three worlds are trembling.

**L**OOK! Those gods are encompassed by Thy Body:  
 Awe-struck people are extolling Thee  
 With hands joined palm to palm;  
 Great sages utter the Vedic Amen "Swāsti",  
 Beholding Thee while chanting thoughtful hymns.  
 The Rudras, Ādityas, Vasus, Sadhyāyas, Viswadevas,  
 The twin Aswinis, Marutas, the manes, celestial  
 singers,  
 Yakshas, the gods and the Siddhas—  
 All are beholding Thee with great amazement.  
 O Mighty-Armed! at this Thy awesome multiform,  
 The people of the worlds are trembling and so am I.  
 O Vishnu! Who pervadest the universe!  
 Terror strikes my heart to see Thy wondrous Form  
 Touching the sky and shining with iridescent  
 colours;



And I cannot hold My peace and patience.  
 I am bewildered to see Thee like the universal  
 conflagration  
 At the break-up of the world.  
 I know not where lies my well-being,  
 O Lord ! Thou Shelter of the Universe !  
 Be Thou gracious unto Me.

**A**LL those sons of Dhritarāstra with their allied  
 princes,  
 With Bhishma, Drona, Karna and the warriors of  
 our side  
 Are entering headlong into Thine avenging Mouth ;  
 Some of their heads are crushed between Thy fear-  
 some Teeth.  
 Just as the flowing currents of the river  
 Sweep down towards the sea to be swallowed by it,  
 So also are these heroes entering Thy flaming  
 Mouth to be exterminated.  
 Just as the moths flicker round the glowing flame to  
 merge with death,  
 So are the worlds fast entering into Thy Mouth to  
 perish.  
 O Vishnu ! Thou art putting all the worlds into Thy  
 flaming Mouth  
 Devouring them completely.  
 Thou hast dazzled the whole universe entire  
 With Thy brilliant splendour,



And art shining bright in all Thy glories.  
 Tell me, Deva ! why art Thou so terrifying !  
 I greet Thee; be Thou propitious !  
 I know not Thy ways ; I beg to know them all."

**S**REE Bhagavān said : "I am revealed now as the  
 mighty Destroyer  
 Of these multitudes of men ;  
 I shall destroy all warriors, except you the Pāndavas,  
 Arrayed in hostile armies.  
 In this destruction, the sole Agent am I, not thou.  
 When thou art not responsible for this destruction,  
 Thou must be ready to give battle  
 And enjoy an ever-lasting glory  
 And a prosperous kingdom as the result of victory..  
 By Me have they been slain already ;  
 Be thou but an intermediary of My Action,  
 O Savyasāchi—shooter of arrows with both hands !  
 Already have I destroyed great Drona,  
 Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and the other heroes ;  
 Cast off thy fear, arise and fight ;  
 Thou wilt conquer thine enemies and come out  
 victorious."

**S**ANJAYA said to Dhritarāstra: "O King !  
 Having heard these words of the Divine Lord  
 Keshava,  
 Arjuna, trembling with fear,



Saluting Sree Krishna again and again with folded hands,  
And in a faltering voice began to say:"

**A**RJUNA said : "O Lord of all the senses !  
Hearing about Thy glorious deeds,  
The world becomes attached to Thee,  
The demons fly in fear to every corner,  
The saints make their obeisance unto Thee.  
Great Soul ! Why should they not greet Thee,  
Who art the Lord Supreme, the Primal Cause?  
Thou art superior to Brahmā, O Ananta !  
O God of gods ! O Thou Abode of all the universe !  
Thou art the Word Divine, Thou art Infallible—  
Thou dost transcend all sentient and insentient  
things in Nature.  
Thou art the Primordial Eternal Being ;  
Thou art the only Shelter of this Universe ;  
Thou art the Knower and the Known ;  
Thou art identical with Thine Transcendental  
Realm  
Which is beyond all qualities of Māyā.  
O Lord of Boundless Form !  
By Thee everything is pervaded.  
Thou art Vāyu, Yama, Fire, Varuna,  
Moon and the Creator Brahmā;  
Therefore do I bow to Thee a million times,  
And hail Thee again and yet again.



**H**AIL to Thee on all sides! O Lord of Power  
Infinite!

Thou alone art Master of immeasurable strength—  
All potencies pervadest Thou, O Lord!

Thou art the All in all.

Whatever I might have said from inadvertence  
Or from love, addressing Thee in such familiar terms  
As "Krishna!" "O Yādava!" "O Friend!"

Being ignorant of this Thy Greatness

And of Thy Glory, and merely looking on Thee as  
my most loving Friend

Or in whatever way I might have shown some  
disregard for Thee

In fun, at play, in sleep, at meals,

Before an assembly or while alone,

I crave Thee, O Achchyuta! to forgive me all.

**T**HOU art the Father, the Object of reverence  
And the greatest Guru, Spiritual Master, of  
this Universe;

Far from superior, there is none equal unto Thee

In all three worlds. Thy greatness is unrivalled.

Thou art the Lord and Object of all worship.

I offer my humble obeisance to Thee

Imploring Thy forgiveness.

Thou and the normal soul have an inseparable relationship



Of confidential love, as between Master and man,  
Or parents and Child, or between the lover and the  
Beloved.

Thou dost accept such confidential services  
And loving homage from Thy servants, friends,  
Parents and consorts, and graciously forgive  
The intimate expressions used towards Thee.

I am filled with wonder;  
My curiosity is satisfied to see Thy Universal  
Form

Of Viswarupa, Which was not seen before;  
But this Form does not please the eyes and mind of  
Thy devotees.

My mind is sore afflicted at this fearsome Form, O  
Lord!

O God of gods ! Abode of all the Universe !  
Have mercy on Me and show me Thy All-Majestic  
Four-armed Form of Vāsudeva,  
The son of Vasudeva—the Ocean of all grace.  
Let me now see Thy Four-armed Form  
With golden crown on head  
And disk-conch-mace-lotus in Thy hands.  
From that Form dost Thou manifest this Thousand-  
armed

And Universal Form within the Cosmic world.  
O Krishna ! now I have understood without a doubt.



That Thy Sachchidānanda Two-armed Krishna  
Form

Eternally exists as the Loving Lord.

The Majestic Four-armed Form as Nārāyana

Is the Manifestation of Delight Supererual

Of Thy All-loving Two-armed Krishna-Form:

And when the universe is created,

Then from Thy Four-armed All-Majestic Nārāyana  
Aspect

This All-Pervading Virāta or Great Universal Form  
does emanate.

My curiosity has been aroused a thousandfold

By virtue of this transcendental knowledge."

**S**REE Bhagavān said: "I have been pleased to show  
thee

My Form Supreme belonging to the Cosmic Plane.

To none but thee have I before revealed

This boundless Primordial Lustrous Form.

O greatest hero among the Kurus !

None but thou alone in this world hast seen My  
Viswarupa Form

Either by virtue of study of the Vedas or sacrifices,  
Or largesses, or rituals, or practising severe austerities.

Those who have reached the celestial region  
And attained a godly life



Behold and meditate upon My Viswarupa Form  
By means of their godly eyes and godly mind;  
Those who are ignorant and fettered worldings  
Can never see this Form;  
But My devotees can pierce these gross and subtle  
walls of ignorance and godliness  
Of the mundane and celestial worlds by virtue of  
My Grace.

They may transcend to My Eternal Realm  
And be established in that spiritual plane.  
Hence, they, like thyself, are not content  
With My Universal Viswarupa Form,  
Which is but a distant manifestation  
Of My Majestic Aspect in the Cosmic Universe,  
But yearn for the sight of My Eternal  
All-Loving, All-Beautiful and Adolescent Krishna  
Form.

**O**NLY the ignorant think highly of My Viswarupa  
Form;

But be thou not bewildered or afflicted by this  
awful presence.

My devotees love peace and are affectionately fond  
Of My All-beauteous Ever-adolescent Krishna-Form:  
They therefore are aggrieved to see this terror-  
striking Form.

I bless thee now, that thou mayst not be frightened  
of My Viswarupa Presence;



My devotees have naught to do with Viswarupa on  
the cosmic plane.

But thou art My friend, who came into the world

As an accessory to My Divine Deeds—

Thou shalt be an adjunct to My wishes and  
activities;

It does not hence befit thee to be so affected.

Give up all fear and with a cheerful heart

Behold again My transcendental blissful Form.”

**S**ANJAYA said to Dhritarāstra: “So saying, the  
Lord Divine

Vāsudeva withdrew His fearful Viswarupa Form

And showed Arjuna first His Four-armed Nārāyana  
Form

And then His Gentle, Loving, Two-armed Form of  
Krishna—

Human in appearance, encouraging Arjuna with  
sweet and hopeful words”.

Seeing the Beauteous Loving Human Form of  
Krishna Arjuna said,

“O Janārdana! I am now restored to peace of mind

And have regained devotion for Thee,

The normal function of my self,

In seeing Thy evergraceful Human-Form.”

**S**REE Bhagavān said: “Arjuna! My Form which  
thou didst see



Is not accessible to many;  
 Even the gods like Brahmā, Rudra and the others  
 Are ever anxious to have a glimpse of My All-  
 beautiful, Magnetic Form.  
 If thou shouldst argue that how can this Form be  
 inaccessible  
 When I am seen apparently by many here on earth,  
 Then listen to the truth:  
 The relation between the observer and observed is  
 designated "observation,"  
 Which may be classified into three groups  
 According to the angle occupied by the observer.  
 The first is based on pure and complete conception  
 Of this transcendental knowledge;  
 The second but proceeds from ignorance;  
 The third reposes on empiricism and human logic  
 Drawn from inference within the bounds of time,  
 space and the three dimensions.  
 People who are infatuated by utter ignorance  
 Consider My eternal transcendental Human Form  
 To have been born of Māyā and transitory;  
 They thereby are deprived of realising My true  
 Nature.  
 The pedants and the gods all falsely reason  
 This transcendental Form which is identical with  
 Me  
 And is the Form Eternal Which I use  
 When I make My Divine Descent into this worldly  
 plane



From My divine power and prerogative  
 Without submitting to the laws of Nature ;  
 Thus they are prone to think My All-pervading  
 Viswarupa-Form,  
 That manifests within the cosmic plane,  
 Or the negative and extra-cosmic, non-differentiated  
 Brahman,  
 To be My eternal Self! and regard My Human Form  
 As but a means of worship at the start.  
 But true devotees whose spiritual eyes are opened  
 By the genuine Preceptor with the spark of  
 transcendental knowledge  
 Know and see My Krishna-Form as the Supreme,  
 All-beautiful, and Transcendental, Ever-adolescent.  
 Therefore I say, Arjuna! that this spiritual complete  
 realisation  
 Of My Krishna-Form is not within the reach of  
 even gods.  
 Among the gods, Brahmā and Siva are My devotees  
 And they aspire to this All-gentle Form.  
 Thou art My friend and devotee, and through My  
 Grace  
 Thou hast been made to realise the great supremacy  
 Of My eternal Form,  
 After having seen My Viswarupa Aspect.

**N**EITHER by the reading of the Vedas,  
 Nor by austerities nor by charities nor by sacrifice



**'Can I be seen in My eternal Human Form  
As seen and realised by thee.  
Arjuna ! it is by single-minded, undistracted devotion  
only  
That I can in this Form be seen and realised  
transcendentally,  
For that devotion, Parantapa !  
Leads such a pure devotee into My perfect Realm  
of Bliss.  
He who does serve Me with integrity of heart,  
Refrains from all fruitive Karma and dry Jñāna  
And cultivates a truly loving attitude towards Me,  
And renders eternal good to all  
By helping them in the awakening of their pure  
selves  
Which I deem unselfish service unto Me,  
Attains Me as Sree Krishna in My Abode of Bliss.**

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**CHAPTER TWELVE**  
***UNALLOYED DEVOTION***



## CHAPTER TWELVE

### UNALLOYED DEVOTION

**A**RJUNA said, "O Krishna ! from all that Thou  
hast told me until now,  
I gather there are two ranks of Yogins:  
The ones who worship Thee with an unflinching  
love,  
Engaging harmoniously in Thy service  
All their mind and body and social activities;  
The second who adopt a selfless Karma-Yoga,  
Accepting physical and social functions  
So far as they are in accordance with their Yoga  
And worship by means of intuition  
Thy non-manifested Negative Imperishable Aspect.  
Now, tell me, pray, which of these are the better  
Yogins?"

**S**REE Bhagavān replied: "Those who engage  
their full attention  
Upon Me with faith absolute and an unflinching  
attachment  
And pour their life into the perfect mould of un-  
alloyed devotion  
And everlasting service, are best among the Yogins.



Bhakti beyond the triple qualities  
 Is thus superior to Karma, Jnāna and Yoga.  
 These devotees are the highest Yogins.  
 Those who are self-controlled, tranquil and calm  
 Altruistic, and prone to worship My Eternal,  
 Indefinable, Unmanifested, Uniform, Non-differen-  
 tiated,  
 Omnipresent, Inconceiveable, Infallible,  
 Indefinite and Attributeless Negative Aspect—  
 Brahman—  
 Find rest at last in Me  
 After experiencing a series of obstacles.  
 As there is no other One to worship but My Self,  
 In whatever form thou strivest to attain the  
 highest goal,  
 Thou shalt at last come unto Me,  
 If thou be sincere in thy endeavours.

**T**HE difference between a Jnāna-Yogin and a  
 Bhakti-Yogin

Is that the means adopted by the Bhakta  
 In the cultivation of devotion unto Me  
 Is realised to be identical  
 With the End, which is Love Divine,  
 While Jnāna-Yogin's method negative  
 Leads him to the end of Jnāna's path,  
 Which is the Non-distinct and Attributeless  
 Brahman—



My Negative Aspect; I am Lord of Love Divine.  
 To a Bhakta, means and end are one,  
 While with a Jnānin they are two.  
 When the means is eternal,  
 The end attained by it is also eternal,  
 And therefore in devotion the Means and End are  
 both identical;  
 But when the means that leads man to the end,  
 Ceases when the end is realised,  
 As in the case of the Jnāna-Yogins,  
 Then the end reached by such temporary means  
 Must also be ephemeral.

**T**HE path of Jnāna, then, is ultimately proved  
 To be a source of troubles.  
 Those who dedicate devout and patient labour  
 With dry wisdom as their goal,  
 Find their endeavours end in the fruitless troubles  
 Like the toil of those who try to get substance out  
 of chaff.  
 Without devotion to the Godhead,  
 The striving after unity with Brahman  
 Ends in trouble and distress.  
 The principle of all negation  
 Is the antithesis of normal function,  
 For every conscious entity must ultimately forge a  
 link eternal  
 With God, by means of service and of godly love.



The negative attempt places no reliance upon God  
 And therefore is best at every spot with dangers.  
 Intelligence cannot be pure without devotion unto  
 God—

The Centre of all beings;  
 Those who with their imperfect mind  
 Pretend to think that they are free from limitations  
 of the world,  
 Are hurled down from the last step approaching  
 liberation  
 Back to this world of relativities.

**J**IVAS are eternal and sentient beings;  
 If they could merge into the attributeless  
 Brahman,  
 It would be self-annihilation.  
 Even when they realise their normal functions,  
 They find it difficult to rid themselves  
 Of the supremely false impression  
 That they themselves are none else but the Godhead.  
 For such a Jiva in the fleshly body  
 To meditate upon the Non-distinct Brahman  
 Brings him but misery both as to means and end.  
 A Jiva is a conscious and eternal entity  
 And has a spiritual form of its own,  
 The principle of non-differentiated Monism  
 Is therefore full of miseries.  
 Bhakti is the normal function of all souls.



Jñāna, independent of it, is the root of greatest evil.  
Hence, the principle of an impersonal, inert and  
all-pervasive worship,  
Based on inductive reasoning, is not at all acceptable.

**T**HE truest devotees perform their physical and  
social duties

Completely in obedience to My devotion  
And meditate upon My transcendental and eternal  
Form with single-minded faith.

I soon deliver those, O Pārtha !

Whose hearts are absolutely true to Me,  
From the ocean of chagrin which is this world, and  
death.

By My grace do they attain to perfect freedom  
From the bondage of the great illusion,  
And when thus freed, I shield them  
From the Non-distinct Monism which is really death  
to them.

The helpless, hopeless. egotistic view of merging  
into Brahman

Is the cause of ruin to all Jñānins.

**C**ONCENTRATE thy mind upon My transcenden-  
tal

And most lovely Form, and meditate on Me alone ;  
Engage thy pure intelligence in My service ;



Establish thyself in the devotion of My Self  
Supreme.

Thou shalt thereby without doubt attain to *Prema*,  
The Divine Love, which is as pure as molten gold.

This is the highest end of all devotion.

If thou canst not concentrate the whole attention  
on Me

Out of a natural and deep attachment to Me,  
Then attempt, O Dhananjaya! to follow the regular  
way of practices

According to the Scriptures by curbing thy mind  
From meddling with matter, in order to reach Me.

**T**HERE are two ways to the attainment

Of the highest end of *Prema*, Love Divine :

One is the path of a normal, natural attachment for  
the Lord

Without any forced attempt upon the seeker's part ;

The second is the path of regulated course of  
practices

According to the dictates of the Scriptures.

The former is called *Rāga*, the latter is known as  
*Vidhi*.

*Rāgānugā-Bhakti* is the spontaneous and profound  
attachment

That arises from a strong desire to love and serve  
Krishna,



While Bhakti that is practised on the basis of a  
faith unshaken,  
Regulated by the Scriptures, is called Vidhi.  
It is desirable for an ordinary individual,  
Whose heart is not afire with a spontaneous love  
for Krishna  
To follow the path of Vidhi-Bhakti.

**I**F thou art unfit even for Vidhi or the other  
grades of Bhakti,  
Regulated by the Scriptures  
Dedicate thou, then, all thine activities to Me.  
Thou shouldst hear, chant, worship, make obeisan-  
ces to Me,  
Cleanse the Temple, cul flowers for My adoration.  
In this way, thou shalt succeed  
In gaining My affectionate eternal comradeship.  
Thy mind will cling for ever to My transcendental  
beauteous Form  
As the Sree Krishna of All-love  
Instead of giving its attention to phenomena of  
earth.  
If thou still fail to concentrate thine actions all to  
Me,  
Be self-possessed, give the results of all fruitive acts  
to Me  
By following the path of selfless Karma-Yoga, as  
indicated in the Vedas.



**S**UCH a devotee is naturally free from malice;  
 He does not envy even those who are deemed  
 enviable,  
 And he is a friend to all;  
 His heart is tender to those brothers who have gone  
 astray;  
 He tries to render them a permanent and real good;  
 He is indifferent to worldly matters  
 And is not proud of physical associations;  
 He looks on pleasure and pain alike without  
 concern;  
 Despite strong cause of provocation, he forbears.  
 Always content is he with whatever meagre  
 portion  
 Comes to him for his maintenance of body;  
 He is a devotee with firm determination  
 To achieve the Final End that he desires  
 And therefore is a steady Yogin;  
 He has a steadfast faith in Me  
 And is alert to gain My *Prema* or Love Divine.  
 A devotee who offers such a mind and heart to Me  
 is dear to Me.

**A** Shānta-devotee neither causes uneasiness  
 Nor suffers any caused by others;  
 He is not elated with attainments nor is he jealous  
 of another's gains;



He is free from wrath or fear, of any of the world's events,

Such a devotee is dear to Me.

My devotee remaining unaffected by the world's affairs,

Pure inwardly and out, active and alert;

Indifferent to all conflicting happenings,

Calm and tranquil in his judgment, and in mind,

Who does not seek the fruits of his devotion

Relying on My dispensation—

Such a devotee is dear to Me.

The devotee who never feels elated

By promises of worldly gain, or does not mourn at such loss,

Who does not hanker after earth's achievements,

Who casts aside all benefits derived from good and evil source

Virtue and vice, sin and piety—

Such a devotee is dear to Me.

He looks with kindly eye on friend and foe alike,

Not over-joyed is he when eulogised,

Nor sore distressed with disrespect.

He is indifferent to heat and cold, pleasure and pain;

He shuns associations that are evil;

Calm and tranquil is he in observation.

He is unmindful of praise and of abuse;

He is controlled in what he says, cool and collected in temper;



**He is content with little food and bare necessities;  
Not anxious for a homely life and therefore not  
attached to such affinities;**

**Such a devotee is also dear to me.**

**Those who, with firm faith and sincere devotion  
unto Me,**

**Relish the nectar of these truths, related by Me,  
From the beginning to the end of this discourse,  
Are My true devotees and are exceedingly dear to  
Me."**

NOTE:—In the first three Chapters, selfless Karma-Yoga is described as the means to salvation. In the second six Chapters, Bhakti-Yoga is explained to be the only means to the realisation of the Supreme Lord. Bhakti is two-fold: esoteric and exoteric. Inward performance of Bhakti is done by remembrance and meditation; and in the case of a neophyte's inability to give undivided remembrance, he should attempt earnest practices and follow those who can. These three inward practices of Bhakti are difficult for the worldling to follow, while the spiritually intelligent and those who are free from all offences are eligible to practise them. The external practices of Bhakti by way of hearing and chanting the Name of the Godhead are easily open to all. The superiority of these devotees who follow either or both of these inward and outward practices of Bhakti-Yoga, is shown



in the second six Chapters. But when a neophyte is not fit to control his mind and senses and worship the Supreme Lord with a steadfast spontaneous attachment or firm faith in Him, selfless Karma-Yoga, consecrated to the Godhead, is mentioned in the first six Chapters, as inferior to unalloyed devotion.

In the absence of a spontaneous attachment and the awakening of the soul's normal loving service to the Lord Supreme, the practice of the regulated Vidhi-Bhakti, as prescribed by the Scriptures is to be followed, failing which the neophyte should then strive after knowledge—Jñāna—that leads him to the realisation of his true self. When this is not possible, he should meditate on such thoughts as "Thou art That" "I am the Brahman", as a means of acquiring Jñāna or wisdom relating to the pure self; and for those who are unfit even for such meditation, Karma-Yoga is prescribed. The fruit-seeking Karmins attain peace by relinquishing all results of their actions. There are two ways to the attainment of pure devotion; the one is a direct way, the other is a gradual process. Listening, chanting, meditating, service, worship, adoration, self-surrendering to the Name, Form, Attributes, the Transcendental Retinues or Hosts and Deeds of the Lord Supreme, based on a spontaneous and firm faith, is the direct method; while the gradual course of general progress begins with the renunciation



of all fruitive acts; at the second stage the consecration of results of actions to the Godhead; at the third stage, meditation and concentration following the process of Astānga-yoga; fourthly, knowledge or Jñāna of one's true self; and lastly, the Vidhi-Bhakti or the perfect knowledge of the eternal and transcendent Name, Form, Attributes and Activities of the Lord Supreme.

Sādhana-Bhakti is the only means to the attainment of perfect and divine Love. This Bhakti-Yoga has two phases; the inward one lies in the absolute attachment to God; the external process is practised by listening to and chanting the Name of God. The inward practices of Bhakti-Yoga are either remembrance or concentration or inward attempts at such concentration. So, concentration of the mind in the remembrance of the Lord is better knowledge or Jñāna and superior to practice. In the stage of practice, care is taken to achieve meditation; but when concentration of the mind and constancy of remembrance, which are desired ends of practice, are attained, then meditation naturally follows. Meditation is therefore superior to mere Jñāna. When meditation becomes steady, then all hankering after celestial pleasures and salvation are purged out of the heart. When the heart is thus cleansed, all the senses find their real and perfect rest in being wholly engaged in the service of Sree Krishna,



Who is the Lord of all senses, and Bhakti is awakened to engage an individual soul in the loving service of God. When formidable desires for either elevation or Karma, salvation or Moksha, are finally alienated from the heart of an individual soul, he attains a state of mental peace, called Shānti.

This gradual course of Bhakti, when sincerely followed, leads one to Krishna-Prema or Divine Love—the summum bonum of all spiritual practices. Pure Bhakti, devotion, is ever blissful and is the only positive means to the realisation of the Highest End of spiritual existence. This is the **gist** of the Chapter and of the entire Geetā.

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**CHAPTER THIRTEEN**  
***CREATION***



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### CREATION

**A**RJUNA said: "O Keshava! I beg; Thee to explain  
Prakriti, the Female Principle of creation;  
Purusha—the Male-Principle;  
Kshetra—the body as the spirit's habitation;  
Kshetrajna—the soul and Over-soul;  
Jnāna—the knowledge; and Jneya—the knowable."  
Sree Bhagavān said; Arjuna! to make thee understand

The esoteric principle of Bhakti, |  
I have explained the real nature of the soul  
As well as the various actions of the soul conditioned.  
I have told thee explicitly about pure Bhakti.  
The triple paths of Karma, Jnāna and Bhakti have  
also been explained.  
Now I shall tell thee of Jnāna and Vairāgya  
Or abnegation from the angle of transcendental  
knowledge,  
Which will all the more confirm thy faith in  
unalloyed devotion.

**T**HE esoteric truth anent conception of the God-  
head,



Which I explained to Brahmā in the Bhāgavatam,  
Is that the knowledge about Me and My most secret  
Love

Together with My transcendental Love and the  
Means of realising them

Can only be acquired through My Grace.

Thereby I explained the fourfold truths regarding  
Jñāna or true knowledge,

Vijnāna or transcendental esoteric knowledge,

Rahasya or the mystery of Love Divine

And Tadanga, the means of realising it.

If these four principles are not completely under-  
stood,

The mystery of Love Divine is not unravelled.

I shall endow thee with such discernment

That thou shalt realise what My Divine Love is.

**O**NCE pure devotion is awakened in the heart,  
A transcendental knowledge and a genuine  
indifference

To objects that are adverse to My service,

And a spontaneous acceptance of all

That does support My cause, will follow soon ;

For pure devotion, transcendental knowledge

And genuine asceticism all go hand in hand.

Know therefore these two latter principles

By practising a pure devotion.



**O** Son of Kunti! this body is called Kshetra,  
 And he who is well versed in its faculties  
 Is known as Kshetrajna.  
 This body is called Kshetra, because it is the  
 germinating ground  
 Of that development which is the world-tree—  
 The field of carnal pleasure.  
 He who knows the nature of this body  
 Both in its conditioned and its freed state  
 Is a Kshetrajna or a Jiva-soul.  
 Conditioned, it identifies itself with the fallacious  
 ego  
 And vainly thinks itself enjoyer and possessor of  
 the world's phenomena;  
 Freed, it is no longer proud of worldly relativities.

**I**N considering Kshetra and Kshetrajna,  
 Thou must understand, Bhārata! these three  
 principles:  
 The Over-soul, the individual soul and Matter.  
 As every form enshrines an individual soul  
 As its Kshetrajna, so I am Iswara—  
 The Lord and the Supreme Knower or Kshetrajna  
 of the Universe.  
 I am Paramātmā, the Primordial Knower of all  
 souls,  
 Of the various Kshetras as well as all the worlds.



Those who conceive of these three Principles—  
 God, soul and Matter,  
 By understanding Kshetra and Kshetrajna and the  
 Over-soul,  
 Are blessed with knowledge true,  
 And this knowledge is Vijnāna.

**T**HOU hearest now from Me, what Kshetra is,  
 What is its nature, and its changes, whence it  
 comes,  
 Who is Kshetrajna, who and what are the powers  
 and functions of the Kshetrajna—  
 Jivātmā or the soul, and Paramātmā  
 Or the Over-soul.

**T**RUE conceptions of Kshetra and Kshetrajna  
 Have been described in many ways by sages  
 Like Vasistha in the Yoga-Scriptures;  
 And in the Vedas by Vyāsa;  
 And in the Smritis by the saints.  
 They have explained them separately  
 And in distinctly different ways;  
 The Brahma-sutras, aphorisms of the Vedānta,  
 Established them by reasoning as truths exact.  
 From those aphorisms of the sages and the saints,  
 The Vedas and the Vedānta, it is established that  
 the Kshetra  
 Is composed of twenty-four material principles.  
 These are the five great elements



Earth, water, fire, air, and ether;

Ahankāra or perverted ego, Buddhi or discrimination;

Avyakta or Pradhāna—the Prakriti of triple qualities.  
Which is the cause of Mahattattwa, the female principle in Nature;

The ten external organs of sense and action—

The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, touch,

Voice, hands, legs, anus and the penis;

The mind or the internal organ of both sense and action

And sight, sound, smell, taste, touch—

The five faculties of these five senses.

Knowing these twenty-four material principles,

Man can understand what is Kshetra and what its functions are.

Note that Prakriti begets Mahattattwa,

Mahattattwa begets Ahankāra,

And Ahankāra begets Mahābhutas.

Desire, hatred, pleasures, pains

Are the effects of the five great elements or Mahābhutas

And with the body are concerned ;

The perverted self or mind, patience and suchlike qualities,

Are vitiations of the Kshetra,

Followed by birth, death, fear and hunger,

And therefore by Kshetra both the body and the mind are meant.



**N**OW I will tell thee of twenty qualities of character

Which the unwise think are twenty vitiations of the Kshetra :

- Defiance of arrogance and inoffensiveness,
- Forbearance, coveting no honour, uprightness,
- Services to the Preceptor, inward and outward purity,
- Steadfastness and self-control and absence of egotism,
- Aversion to objects of a sensual pleasure ,
- Insight into the transience and evils
- Of birth, death, decrepitude, disease and sorrow,
- Non-attachment to offspring, wife, home and relatives,
- Aloofness from the pleasures and the penalties of family-life,
- Equanimity at the approach of both desirable and undesirable events,
- Unflinching pure devotion unto Me,
- Resorting to solitude and sacred places,
- Avoiding places where the evil-minded live,
- Constancy in morals and searching for salvation as the desired end—

The unwise think these twenty traits  
To be the vitiations of the body and the mind.  
But they are not corruptions of the Kshetra ;  
They tend towards the knowledge Absolute.



They are antidotes to such corruption of these  
twenty things;

Single-minded pure devotion unto Me alone

Stands foremost and must be adhered to;

The nineteen that remain contribute to devotion,

And purify the blemishes of earthly mind and body

And ultimately waken from its dream

The pure eternal heart within the soul,

Which is the seat of true devotion.

Knowest thou these nineteen to be the throne of yet  
another—

Bhakti or devotion, as the Queen.

This is all true and transcendental knowledge,

The rest is ignorance.

**I** have thus told thee of Kshetra

With its nature, perversions and their antidotes,

And I have told thee of Kshetrajna,

Which is compounded of Jivātmā and Paramātmā,

And constitutes the secret Knower of the body.

I have explained to thee that knowledge

Of the Kshetra and Kshetrajna is called Vijnāna.

Let Me now tell thee about the Knowable

That may be known by means of that Vijnāna.

That Knowable without beginning,

Is a subordinate Principle to Me;

It is beyond the scope of gross and subtle substances,

Beyond cause and effect,



And it is known as "Brahman".

When its true nature is perceived,

It leads man to the everlasting nectar of devotion  
unto Me.

**J**UST as the sun's rays emanate from the sun,  
So also Brahman, the Great,  
Is but a reflection of My Glowing Aspect.  
Brahman\* is the Receptacle of all beings,  
In infinity from Brahmā\* to the smallest ant.  
That Being Infinite possesses an infinity of hands  
and feet,  
Of eyes and mouth, of heads and ears.  
Thus does the Neuter-God Brahman exist,  
Accommodating every entity within It.  
Though that Great Principle, the Neuter-God,  
Does manifest all mundane senses, it is Itself devoid  
of such;  
Ever detached from earthly relativities ;  
Preserver of the world as Vishnu.  
It is devoid of all worldly qualities.

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\* Brahman is the Negative Aspect of the Absolute Whole, the Supreme Lord ; Brahmā is only an individual soul with deligated power to create the fourteen worlds or the Universe in which we live—He is supposed to have four heads, having the capacity to gauge the fourth dimension and is superior to ordinary entities. Brāhman is the highest of the four castes in Hinduism ; Brāhma is a follower of a Pantheistic sect in Hinduism, started by Raja Rāmmohan Roy.



Yet does possess six thousand qualities. ¶  
That distinguish Him as Bhagavān.

**T**HAT Great Principle. the Neuter-God exists as  
Brahman,

Containing every object in Itself ;  
And It lives as Paramātmā in each atom.  
Thus the He-God does exist both in and out of  
every entity.

All the sentient and insentient worlds have emanated  
from Him.

Inconceivable is He to human senses  
For He is greater than the greatest,  
And infinitely smaller than the smallest ;  
He is simultaneously both near and far away.\*  
Undivided He remains though He may seem divided  
In the diverse beings He exists within.  
Though He exists in every individual Jiva  
As the Unit-Purusha, Vishnu,  
Yet He retains His Undivided Life  
As the Great Aggregate-Parameswara—  
The Lord Supreme of all the entities of all the  
worlds together.

He is the Sustainer within sustenance,  
Destroyer in destruction, and the Creator in creation

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¶ Cf. Svetasvatara Upanishad 19

\* Cf. Isha Upanishad—"Tatdure tadwantike"



**H**E is the Master-Light of lights;†  
 He is beyond all darkness and is ever radiant ;  
 He is the Knowledge and the Knowable  
 In His Manifestive Form Divine  
 And He is the Object of that Knowledge ;  
 He lives as the Great Indweller of the hearts of all  
 things living.

Thus I have briefly told thee about Kshetra,  
 Jnāna and Jneya or the Object of all knowledge.  
 Full understanding of these principles is called the  
 Knowledge Transcendental.

My devotees possessing Transcendental Knowledge  
 Attain the purest Prema-Bhakti.

Non-devotees deprive themselves of this Knowledge  
 Owing to their pointless wrangling  
 Over sect and the false notion of their oneness with  
 Brahman.

This Jnāna is no less than solid rock on which the  
 Jiva,

Having realised his purest self and functions,  
 Builds up the shrine of his devout activities.

This will be more explicitly explained with  
 Purushottama.

**I** shall now tell thee the results  
 Of understanding Kshetra and Kshetrajna.

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† Cf. Katha Upanishad.



Three principles are noticed in the shackled lives  
of Jiva-entities :

Prakriti, Purusha and Paramātmā.

The Kshetra— that is the fleshly body composed of  
all five elements,

The subtle form of mind, the perverted ego and the  
buddhi—

Is Prakriti;

The Jiva is Purusha

Due to his enjoying mood in his conditioned state;

And Paramatmā is My Immanent Manifestation  
between these two.

Prakriti and Purusha are both eternal:

They existed even before the dawn of worldly time  
and space,

Born of My Potencies which co-exist with My  
Supreme Divinity

Within the spacious undivided spirit-time that is  
eternity.

The Cosmic Power was dormant in Me ;

I made it manifest in worldly time

When to create the universe I willed.

The Jivas also are among My Potencies Eternal

For they have stepped into the realm of Cosmic  
Potency

By turning their back upon Me,

On account of the misuse of their free will,

Submitting to the slavery of an enjoying mood,



Of mastering phenomena within the bounds of time  
and space;

Albeit the Jivas are essentially all spiritual in their  
unalloyed existence.

It was My Inward Potency that gave the Jivas  
Their own Tatasthā-Nature, or the oscillating  
tendency

Upon the margin which offered them a free choice  
To come to Me and be most lovingly attached to Me  
and My service,

Or cast themselves within the bounds of earthly  
limitations

To offer adulation unto Māyā.

How an eternal spiritual entity could be enthralled  
by Māyā

Can never be determined by the human reason.

My inconceivable capacities transcend

The understanding of the human senses.

Know thou this however:

That the perversions and the qualities of the  
conditioned Jivas

Are born of Matter coming into contact with Prakriti,  
Those qualities and actions belong not to the Jivas  
in their unalloyed existence.

**M**ATERIAL causes and effects,

That is the bodies and enjoying mood of all  
their senses,



Are of Prakriti.

Out of their perverted egotism,

Jivas derive their moods of pleasure and of pains

According to their vacillating tendency

Between the transcendental and the mundane.

The pure souls have no lording or enjoying mood,

But only when they misidentify themselves

With gross and subtle bodies born of Matter or  
Prakriti

In their fettered state of life,

Do they adopt this attitude of mastering phenomena.

**K**ARYA refers to the material body ;

Kāraṇa signifies the senses;

And Kartrittva the presiding deities of senses.

All these concern Prakriti, the Material Cause

Of these three factors, due to her contact with  
Purusha

Who, as a fallen soul, enjoys the pleasures and the  
pains

Which are the consequent effects.

Prakriti is the root of all effects and causes

And their agency, as well as of enjoyment.

She dominates the first three by her influence on  
matter,

While Purusha, being spiritual, causes his enjoying  
mood, in his perverted state.

Prakriti is the cause of all material effects



Within the changing Universe.

Purusha or Jiva misapprehending his identity

Causes the enjoyment or the suffering of these  
effects,

While Purushottama is the Efficient, Final Cause  
Of all the causes and effects.

**W**HEN Jiva misidentifies with physical and  
subtle forms

Born of Prakriti—caused by his ignorance

Arising from his choice of lower worlds

When on the border-line of the ephemeral and the  
eternal sphere—

He deems himself appreciator of effects caused by  
Prakriti.

Jiva emanates from the Tatasthā-Potency of the  
Lord Supreme.

Tatasthā-shakti is that potency existing on the  
border--line

Between the Esoteric and the Exoteric Potencies,  
Partaking of the influence of both.

A Jiva can thus make the right use of his free will

By following the trend of the Internal Potency

Leading to progressive service of the Lord,

Or by misusing the same will

He may be overpowered by Māyā,

And thus forget his real nature.



He is thence ousted from his normal place within  
the Transcendental Realm  
And lodged within his tenement of clay;  
Thenceforth does he enjoy or suffer on the wheel of  
Karma,

Rising and falling.

He then becomes attached to gross and subtle forms,  
Born of Prakriti, forgetting that his preference  
Is only possible while his true nature sleeps.  
He therefore undergoes a round of births and deaths  
by force of Karma.

His pious deeds afford him righteous birth,  
His sinful acts ensure his birth of evil womb.  
Nor piety nor sin can help such fallen Jiva  
Out of the relativities of earth.

**J**IVA is My companion ever ;  
When he directs his mind and heart to Me,  
He comes in closer contact with Me.  
By nature, he is free to choose this inclination,  
Of proceeding this way or that way from the border-  
line.  
By turning towards Me, he achieves the acme of  
Jiva-life,  
Endowed with My pure Love.  
But when by adverse choice he enters the material  
plane,



I, as his Eternal Comrade, accompany him as  
Paramātmā.

Within the person of the Jiva,

I am the Observer of his actions,

Existing nearest to him, yet apart from him.

I am his Approver and Preserver;

His sole Appreciator and his Saviour;

To him I am for ever Paramātmā.

I am the Lord Supreme and the Supreme Purusha  
of his person.

I am the Bestower of rewards

According to the actions done by him in his  
conditioned state.

He who is conversant with these principles of the  
Purusha—

Jivātmā and Paramātmā—which are beyond the  
triple qualities,

And of Prakriti or the Cosmic Energy and her own  
qualities,

Shall never undergo rebirths again

Though he may be in the material universe.

By My Grace, he turns his face towards Me

And reaches My Eternal Realm of Transcendental  
Bliss.

**T**HE fallen Jivas are divided into two groups

According to their spiritual endeavours—

Those who are averse to Me



And those who are addicted to My Love Divine.  
Eccentric are they who are materialists, atheists  
and sceptics;  
Agnostics and cold moralists—they do not turn  
towards Me.  
The selfless Karma-Yogins trust the Spiritual  
Realm  
And being honest seekers after Truth, they and My  
Devotees  
Have their inward vision turned towards Me.  
Of these, the devotees stand foremost,  
For they behold and meditate upon the Paramātmā  
On the transcendental plane beyond the limits of  
the worldly plane  
And reaching to the plane of pure self.  
The Sāṅkhya-Yogins, belonging to the second class,  
seek the Godhead.  
Knowing Prakṛiti and her twenty-four elements and  
properties,  
They recognise the twenty-fifth, the Jiva proper, to  
be all spiritual,  
And by degrees devote themselves to worship of  
the Bhagavān,  
The twenty-sixth Substance.  
Even inferior to them are selfless Karma-Yogins,  
Who dedicate the fruits of all their actions unto Me.  
They thereby have the chance of being blessed  
With inclination to My worship.



Sāṅkhya, Astāṅga and selfless Karma-Yoga are  
indirect and qualitative means  
Resorted to by those respective Yogins, for realising  
Paramātmā.

The Jñāna-Yogins realise the Godhead when the  
goal of all their knowledge  
Is the Transcendental Personality of God  
And not emancipation from their worldly bondage.  
Purest devotion alone leads man directly to  
attainment  
Of the God of All-Love and His Prema.

**S**TILL lower in the scale than selfless Karma-  
Yogins

Are those who, trusting on the next world,  
Seek reality and gather knowledge of the Truth,  
They hear from others.  
They also attain to pure devotion  
By being in the company of Sādhus or true devotees,  
And listening to what they say of God-  
Know thou, O best of the Bharatas !  
All that is born among the mobile and immobile  
To be the product of union of Kshetra and Purusha.

**E**VEN though the Lord Supreme exists as  
Paramātmā

Equally in every being—sentient and insentient,  
He does not yield to changeability



Albeit those whom He pervades are mortal.  
 He who knows Paramātmā thus,  
 Is rightly conversant with His Truth.  
 Submission to the lure of Māyā or Prakriti  
 Has placed the fallen souls in diverse circumstances  
 and environments.  
 Amongst them, he who knows Me, by pure intuition  
 As Paramātmā equally pervading every object,  
 Does not degrade his real self to depths of worldiness  
 Or yield to a corrupted mind.  
 He who beholds this can see his true self to be  
 unconcerned  
 In every action of his life and thus can say:  
 "It is Prakriti in the form of senses and body,  
 Who does all this and I, the pure self, do not  
 perform such Karma."

**W**HEN the truly wise, by spiritual vision  
 Perceives that differences in shape and  
 colour, size and form  
 Of mobile and immobile objects and their diversities  
 Merge into the same Prakriti only at the time of  
 universal cataclysm,  
 And that all manifest phenomena  
 Spring from the same and sole Prakriti at creation,  
 Then all his notions of material differences vanish.  
 He is then established in transcendence



And recognises that his spiritual nature  
Is one with that of Brahman.

How such a Jiva, as observer, observes Paramātmā,  
The Observed, is told thee later on.

**T**HUS permeated with the vision of Brahman,  
Such Jiva then beholds that Paramātmā is  
Unchangeable,  
Eternal and Primordial, and far beyond all Māyik  
qualities.

Though He is the Monitor Indweller of the body,  
Existing along with Jivātmā, He is, unlike the  
latter

Not implicated in the nature and the influence of  
flesh.

A Brahman-realised Jiva then is not involved  
In earth's affinities though he has knowledge o  
them.

Just as ether is accessible to all parts owing to its  
subtlety

Yet is not involved in any object,

So also Jiva, who has realised his nature

To be indentical with that of Brahman,

Is not entangled by affections and influences of the  
body,

Though he permeates the body, following the  
Paramātmā's nature.



**O** Bhārata ! as the single sun illumines all this world,

So does the knower of the Kshetra—

Body and Prakriti—reveal the Kshetra.

The knower of the body as Kshetra is the Jivātmā,

While the Knower of Prakriti as Kshetra is  
Paramātmā.

All the actions and effects of Cosmic Energy are  
Kshetra.

Both spiritual entities—Jivātmā and the Paramātmā,  
Are known as Kshetrajna.

He who perceives the difference between Kshetrajna  
And Kshetra, with eyes of spiritual knowledge,  
And knows the way to the emancipation from  
phenomenal affinities,

Realises Bhagavān, Who is superior to both  
Jivātmā and Paramātmā.

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**CHAPTER FOURTEEN**  
***THE TRIPLE QUALITIES***



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE TRIPLE QUALITIES

**S**REE Bhagavān said: "I have told thee  
All about the transcendental knowledge.  
I shall now tell again how by pure wisdom  
The Suprema Knowledge anent the Godhead may  
be acquired  
With which the sages like Sanaka and the others,  
who were Jnānins,  
Attained to high perfection in devotion.  
Knowledge is generally qualitative;  
But non-qualified Jnāna may be said to be the  
highest Jnāna.  
When a Jiva resorts to this knowledge  
Free from the triple qualities of this world phenomenal,  
He attains My very Nature, in the sense  
That he can realise identity in quality,  
And not the quantitative difference  
Between his pure nature and My Self.  
The ignorant believe that when the worldly form  
And attributes and relative conditions are eliminated,  
The Jiva becomes formless, without attributes and  
actions.  
They know not that, as in the cosmic universe,



'Distinctness' marks the difference amongst all substances,

So beyond material limits in the Transcendental Realm

Does every entity possess distinctive character,  
For there the name, form, attributes and function  
And character of every entity are spiritual and eternal.  
Thou must first transcend the bounds of Māyā's world

Of triple qualities, by means of attributeless knowledge,

Which leads thee to union with the Attributeless Brahman,

And after, in the Realm of the Divinity,  
Bereft of earthly relativities,

Only the transcendental qualities are fully waked and realised.

When this stage has been gained,

Jivas are neither born within creation

Nor do they suffer self-annihilation at the dissolution.

**T**HAT fundamental principle of Cosmic Power  
Is the womb of all the Universe.

I impregnate the Jiva-seed within the womb of  
Great Brahma-Prakriti,

And Lo! innumerable beings, O Bhārata! thus come into existence.

Brahma-Prakriti is the material perversion



Of My Inward Chit-Potency  
 And the impregnation of the Jiva-seed  
 From Marginal potency to Brahma-Prakriti  
 Brings forth innumerable Jivas.  
 The womb in which the Jiva-seed is impregnated  
 by the Lord Supreme  
 Is called "Brahma-Prakriti" owing to her "Greatness"  
 And growing capacity for giving birth to these  
 material effects.

**W**HATEVER form of gods, or human beings,  
 Birds, beasts or insects are produced,  
 Great Brahma-Prakriti, O Son of Kunti! is the  
 Mother of them all.  
 I, as the Cause, am the Divine Father—  
 The Impregnator of all seed.  
 The triple qualities—Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas—  
 Are born of that Prakriti, and they bind fast,  
 O Mighty-armed! the spiritual, imperishable Jivas  
 Who from the Marginal Potency,  
 Are born of the womb of the Cosmic Potency,  
 In gross and subtle material bodies.

**O** Sinless One! of the triple qualities of Prakriti,  
 Sattwa is the most lustrous, stainless and  
 sinless.  
 It is the sattwa-quality that binds the spiritual soul,  
 Fettered in the body, by vanities of wisdom and  
 felicity,



Which make him wise and happy.  
 Know thou Rajas to be of the nature of passion.  
 It makes man thirsty for the passion yet unsatisfied,  
 And eager for objects of passion when attained.  
 This Rajas-quality causes, Son of Kunti! the  
 shackled Jivas  
 To be trapped by their attachment and desire for  
 Karma.

O Bhārata! the Tamas-quality begets  
 But ignorance and inebriety of all embodied Jivas.  
 By lethargy, infatuation, sloth  
 And dull depression it binds them fast.

**S**ATTWA binds the Jivas with allurements of  
 happiness;  
 Rajas entangles them in the net of Karma;  
 While, enshrouding wisdom, Tamas drowns them  
 in inadvertance.

O Bhārata! where Sattwa predominates,  
 There the Rajas-Tamas qualities subside.  
 When Rajas is stronger, the Sattwa-Tamas then  
 are vanquished;  
 And when Tamas rises high,  
 There the Sattwa-Rajas qualities are overshadowed.  
 Thou must know the qualities  
 As well as their mutual relationship.  
 Sattwa enhances true knowledge of the sense-  
 perceptions.



O Bharatarshabha ! indulgence in Rajas  
Increases avarice, desire of enterprise,  
The undertaking of material work, unrest,  
And a desire for association.  
Descendant of Kuru ! predominance of Tamas  
Begets inertness, ignorance, inebriation,  
Perversion of intelligence, delusion.

**W**HEN a person in whom Sattwa did predominates,  
Goes the way of all flesh, he attains the  
happy region,

Coveted by worshippers of Hiranyagarbha.  
When a person of Rajas-temper dies,  
He is born again into the family of those  
Who are attached to Karma or to action ;  
So also a person of Tamas mentality and action  
Is born after death amongst the foolish and  
irrational.

The fruits of Sāttwik Karma  
Performed by Sāttwik persons, are said to be pure  
And free from uneasiness and troubles;  
Verily the fruits of Rājasik performances  
Beget great pain and tribulations,  
While ignorance and forgetfulness  
Of self's true nature follow Tāmasik Karma.  
From Sattwa arises knowledge;  
And avarice from Rajas,  
While Tamas begets ignorance, infatuation and  
delusion.



Those who live a life of Sattwa-quality  
 Arise to heaven after death, as far as 'Satyaloka'  
 Which is the highest region of the fourteen worlds.  
 The Rājasik have their heaven with the middle-  
   born in mankind;  
 While the Tāmasik, abiding in the lowest gunas,  
 Descend to the seven lower regions down to Hell.

**I**T is the gunas that prompt people to action.  
 When with the pure intelligence a seer beholds  
 No other agent of Karma than the gunas  
 And realises that devotion to Me  
 Is far beyond the influence of triple qualities,  
 He takes the path of unalloyed devotion or Bhakti.  
 A conditioned soul can transcend the triple qualities  
 Of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, by dint of his  
   attachment  
 To such attributeless love  
 And thereby be freed from birth, death, decrepitude,  
 The physical and mental threefold miseries,  
 And can eventually taste the nectar of Divinest  
   Love for Me."

**A**RJUNA said: "By what sign is he known,  
   O Lord!  
 Who has crossed beyond those triple Gunas?  
 How does he behave in this world?  
 And by what means is he free to go



Beyond the influence of those triple qualities ?”  
 Sree Bhagavān then replied : “The chief trait of one  
 Who has crossed beyond the triple qualities  
 Is that he is not influenced by hatred or desire  
 For either the wisdom-light of sense-perceptions,  
 Or action and enterprise  
 Or ignorance and infatuation.  
 He longs for nothing.  
 A fallen soul is deep engrossed in this world  
 By these triple qualities of Māyā;  
 And can but loose the fetters when he has reached  
 the state  
 Of true salvation in realising his pure self.  
 So long as man falls short of self-realisation  
 By the Grace of God,  
 He must relinquish hatred, malice and desires,  
 That he may reach the stage  
 Where Gunas influence him no more.  
 The influence of Māyā's qualities  
 Must rest to some extent in every individual;  
 But he should neither cherish them from sheer  
 attachment  
 Nor out of malice abandon them.  
 One in whom these two signs are noticeable,  
 Has crossed beyond the triple qualities;  
 But those who are strongly attached to the world  
 Acting from selfish motives  
 Or those who indulge in abnegation



Under the false impression that this world is all  
 illusion,  
 Are not true nirgunas—  
 They have not overcome the forces of the triple  
 qualities.

**H**OW does he behave in the world ?  
 The Māyā-qualities work out their respective  
 functions  
 On his body, mind and manners and demeanour;  
 He lets the gunas go their way  
 Though realising his true self to be distinct from any  
 of them,  
 He is aloof from all influence  
 Observing them as an indifferent neutral.  
 His physical activities give rise to pain and pleasure,  
 Agreeable and disagreeable circumstances,  
 Praise and blame, fame and censure,  
 But he regards them all with equal calm.  
 In his behaviour in the world,  
 He knows full well that honour and dishonour,  
 Friends and foes are only mundane relativities  
 And have no true concern with self  
 Which is all-spiritual.  
 He relinquishes all things  
 Concerning mundane relativities and abnegations.  
 His conduct is neither worldly nor abnegatory,  
 But conduces to a realisation of transcendence.



**H**OW does he transcend the Gunas ?  
 He who renders unto Me alone a qualified  
 devotion,  
 And single-minded and unfailing love,  
 Adopting the Jñāna and Karma favourable to  
 Bhakti-Yoga  
 And ever is occupied in serving Me,  
 Transcends the limits of the Gunas—  
 Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas.  
 Thereby he ultimately realises My True Self  
 Of the Divine Shyāma-Sundara, the Ever-adolescent  
 Two-armed Form,  
 After perceiving the identity in the essential nature  
 Of his pure self and Mine, on reaching My Brahma-  
 Manifestation.

**I**F thou thinkest that absorption in the Great  
 Brahman  
 Is the highest goal of all spiritual practice,  
 And if thy question be—how then can such person  
 attain  
 My further Prema or Ecstatic Love Divine  
 Which is beyond the range of Māyā's triple qualities,  
 Then listen to Me, Arjuna !  
 I am the Bhagavān, the Most Supreme Lord,  
 In My' Original Reality in the Realm of pure  
 Transcendence.



The First Manifestation that the Cosmic Potency  
 reveals,  
 When the all-spiritual Jiva-seed is impregnated  
 Through the agency of My Tatasthā-shakti, the  
 Marginal Potency,  
 Is My Brahma-Aspect.

**B**Y following the path of Jnāna  
 And cultivating its development, the fettered  
 soul arises  
 To the state of Brahman by gradual degrees,  
 Attaining first the threshold of Nirguna—  
 That stage of pure transcendence  
 That is free from Māyā's attributes.  
 Before he can attain to that stage of relationship  
 He is possessed by an impersonal non-differentiated  
 attitude.  
 This attitude is due to his enthusiasm  
 In decrying the diversities in manifest phenomena.  
 When he is steadily set in this, and only then,  
 Is he enabled to conceive of the Realities and  
 Revelations  
 As well as the harmonious diversities  
 Within the Unity in the Transcendental Realm.

**S**OME Jnānins, like Sanaka and others,  
 Have also at long last tasted  
 The Blissful Ambrosia of Purest Attributeless Love,



After toiling up laborious gradations on the path of  
Jñāna

And gaining an impersonal conception of Divinity.

Those who persist in cherishing a misconception  
as to the Brahman,

Due to their fallacious hankering after union with  
the Absolute,

Are finally deprived of this Nirguna-Bhakti.

For know thou, I am the Positive Reality

Beyond all qualities of Māyā;

And I am the Absolute Source of Brahman,

Which is the goal of all the Jñānins.

The Bliss Ecstatic, Immortality, Immutability,

Eternal Dharma of Love Divine

And Ever-present Mellow-sweetness

Are the character and sign

Of My Most Transcendental Personality."

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**CHAPTER FIFTEEN**

***THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GOD***



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE SUREME PERSONALITY OF GOD

**S**REE Bhagavān said : "Arjuna ! Dear !  
If thou thinkest that it is desirable  
To enter the world in strict obedience to the  
Vedic Scriptures,  
Then listen thou to Me :  
This world of action has been compared with an  
Aswattha tree.  
To the Karmins it seems to have no end;  
The Vedic words relating to fruitive actions are all  
its leaves.  
This tree stands with root upwards  
And the branches spreading down.  
In other words, this tree—the world—  
Originates in Me, Who am the Highest Fountain-  
head,  
And is extended down, for the enjoyment  
Of the fruits of Karma, by the fallen souls.  
He who knows the fluctuating nature of this world  
Has been initiated in the Vedic principles.

**T**HE world is represented as a wondrous tree,  
Of which the highest branch is the Satyaloka.  
Mahat-tattva is its primal sprout,



Born of the seed infused by Me within Prakriti.

Prakriti begets Mahat;

Mahat-tattva begets Ahankāra;

And Ahankāra begets Mahābhūtas.

Its lower regions are represented by the earth, ether  
and heaven,

Its branches represent celestial denizens, human  
beings and animals

Including the reptiles and the insects.

**N**ON-DEVOTEES consider this to be the ideal  
Of fruit-bearing trees, judged by the standards  
of their life,

Pursuing dharma, wealth, desire and Moksha;

To them it is imperishable.

But devotees know it to be changeable and  
transitory.

Fruitive actions, as directed by the Vedas,

Are comely leaves that clothe the tree,

By reason of their power of multiplying.

A knower of these truths does know the Vedas  
well.

**S**OME of its branches droop with fruits of Tamas-  
guna;

Some neither languish nor ascend but outwardly  
extend,

Nourished by the Rajas quality;



All branches are thus nourished by Prakriti's triple qualities.

Worldly phenomena and objects of sense

Represent the leaves upon the branches.

As in the Banyan tree, long tendrils of this Aswattha-tree

Spread downwards in search of fruits of Karma.

Both the upward and the downward branches of this world-tree

Represent the denizens of the celestial and the earthly realms

And develop into leaves innumerable

Of joys of sound, sight, taste, smell, touch,

Being watered by the springs of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

Beneath this tree is a precious treasure—hidden !

Long stems are spreading down to it with grasping hand.

**F**ROM the highest to the lowest regions of the Universe,

Confined within the bounds of time and space,

All are entangled in Karma at the root,

For their desires are the cause

Of all their pious or their sinful acts.

The real nature of this tree

Is very difficult to ascertain in this world.

There are divergent views about it:

Some say that it is real and eternal;



Others opine that it is real but changeable in nature.

Be that as it may, do thou Arjuna !

Cut at the very root of this Aswattha

With the mighty axe of genuine asceticism

By shunning the evil—the worldly and the atheistic  
And associating with true devotees.

Then search for blissful Treasure that is hid beyond  
the root;

For once established in the Truth, the Jivas return  
no more.

The blissful Treasure is none other

Than the Being Most Supreme—

The Highest Root of all.

From that Primeval Fountainhead Purusha

Has streamed this worldly inclination for ages  
immemorial.

If thou wouldst free thyself from this entangling  
inclination,

Seek refuge in that personage Primordial

And worship Him in pure devotion.

**T**HOSE who have conquered arrogance,  
infatuation,

And attachment to evil associations,

Who discriminate between eternal and transitory  
objects,

Who with passions quelled, are liberated

From conflicting tendencies of pain and pleasure.



Love and hatred, of the worldly relativities,  
Such disillusioned souls attain that highest eternal  
End.

No sun or moon or arc of flaming planets  
Can e'er reveal My blissful and eternal Realm,  
From where no Jiva does return, when once  
attained.

**J**IVAS have a dual state of existence—  
The freed and the conditioned.

In the conditioned state,  
He tends to associate with objects of phenomena  
Due to his perverted egotism;  
In the freed stage, a pure soul  
Is ever tasting My blissful realisation.  
To attain this, the conditioned soul must sever the  
root

Of the Aswattha-tree of worldliness  
With the sharp weapon of dissociation from the  
enjoying mood.

Attachment to worldly objects is association.  
Dissociated from such earthly relativities,  
Man can attain a life which is no longer influenced  
By Māyā-qualities, and be engaged in pure  
devotion.

The society of true devotees  
May also be said to be 'association'.

Thus a worldly minded person must shun worldly  
attachment



And be in the company of devotees.  
 Those who renounce the world and take to pseudo-  
 asceticism  
 Do not get rid of the baseness of the world.  
 He who resorts to loving devotion to the Godhead  
 Attains redemption from this world.  
 Devotional instruction is therefore indispensable to  
 his well-being.

**I**F thy question be, how can a jiva  
 Acquire this twofold condition, then listen  
 further:

I am the Whole—the Supreme Lord of All-being,  
 All-intelligence and All-bliss.

I have two groups of Being: the Associated Group,  
 and those

Which are separated and infinitesimal.

I manifest Myself as Rāma, Nrisimha, and other  
 'Descents'—

Who are all My Associated Parts;

My separated parts emanate from Me

In the form of innumerable Jivas,

Who are My eternal servants.

In the Associated Manifestations,

I exist in all My Fulness;

But in the separated individual entities

My 'I', as the Supreme Lord,

Does not predominate,

But the Jiva's 'I' exists within.



**T**HOSE jivas or separated parts  
 Are either free or are conditioned,  
 And in either case they are eternal entities.  
 In the freed state, the jiva is entirely under My  
 protection  
 And fully dissociated from Prakriti;  
 In the fallen state, he draws on and calls his own,  
 The mask of the six senses of Prakriti—  
 The mind and the five physical senses,  
 Like a prisoner dragging his chains  
 By which he is fettered hand and foot.  
 It is not that this bondage ends with death.  
 A jiva is born in his physical body  
 According to the Law of Karma,  
 And has to leave it when the time arrives.  
 After discarding one body and entering his new  
 one,  
 He carries with him the impressions and desires of  
 his previous body.  
 As air imports sweet perfume from a flower  
 And exports it to some other place,  
 So also a jiva passes from his body to a later one,  
 Carrying with it its subtle senses and sense-  
 perceptions.

**H**AVING taken to himself a newer fleshly body,  
 Only the mind again begins to savour  
 The phenomenal world and sensual properties



Such as sound, sight, touch, smell  
 And hearing, with the help of the physical senses.  
 The infatuated and the ignorant  
 Do not perceive this law of reincarnation  
 Of a jiva's passing from this body  
 And dwelling at a later period in another body of  
 his own  
 For a certain span of time  
 With its enjoying mood towards the phenomenal  
 world,  
 His senses conjoined with the gunas.  
 But those who are truly wise  
 Do realise this change in fallen souls  
 And come to the conclusion after due deliberation  
 That the fallen state of jivas is essentially deplorable.

**T**HE Yogins who strive to attain the Ultimate  
 Reality

Observe such births and rebirths  
 To be dependent on the knowledge of the self,  
 While the Yatis, monks, of impure heart  
 Fail to understand the true position of the jiva  
 Owing to their want of spiritual culture;  
 And the scholars, despite their erudition in the  
 Scriptures,  
 Cannot conceive the real nature of the jiva-soul.  
 Scriptural knowledge of itself is not at all sufficient



To enable man to understand the functions of the purest self.

If thou ask how it is possible

For a jiva in his fallen state

To cultivate pure knowledge of the transcendence

When he is closely bound to Matter

And debarred from any access to self-consciousness,

Then listen to what I say :

Even in the world phenomenal, exists the Spiritual Reality.

By resorting to it, the normal function of the pure self

May be gradually wakened from its dormant state,

And the material associations may be removed.

The glowing light within the sun, the moon and the fire,

Which illuminates the world entire,

Belongs to Me alone, and not to any other.

**E**NTERING the earth, all beings I support by My Own Potency

And it is I alone Who, through the nature of the moon,

Augment the growth of all vegetation.

Abiding in the body of all beings,

It is only I Who, as the 'digestive fire' or gastric heat,



Digest, with the help of Prāna and Apāna,  
 The four-fold food,  
 That which is masticated, sucked, licked and drunk  
 I enter in and I exist as the Iswara  
 In the hearts of all.  
 From Me alone proceed their memory,  
 Knowledge and its loss  
 According to the award of Karma  
 Performed in this or in their previous births.  
 I am hence not only the All-pervading Brahman,  
 But am also the fruit-giving Paramātman,  
 Dwelling in the heart of every entity.

**I** am further not only the object of the jiva's worship  
 As Brahman and Paramātman,  
 But I am Sree Bhagavān—the Great Teacher  
 Dispensing eternal good unto jivas—  
 The All-powerful Supreme Knowledge of the Vedas.  
 I am, indeed, the Author and Greatest Exponent  
 Of the Vedanta, as well as the Knower of the  
 Vedas.

Therefore for the eternal bliss of all jivas,  
 I am the Great Brahman in all cosmic Universe;  
 I am the Paramātman in the hearts of the jivas as  
 their Lord;  
 And I am Sree Bhagavān, the Bestower of spiritual  
 comprehension to the devotees.  
 In these three Aspects I redeem the fallen souls.



**I**F thou canst understand Prākṛiti as One External  
Potency

And canst discover the meaning  
Of there being more than one Purusha,  
Then mark the following :  
Purushas are two in all—They are *Kshara*, the  
changeable,

And *Akshara*, the Unchangeable.

My separated all-spiritual part— the jiva—

Is known as the Kshara-Purusha,

Becasue he in his original existence

Stands on the border line

Between the transcendental and the mundane  
realms

And therefore is by constitution oscillating,

Being influenced by both Internal and External  
Potencies.

Thus it is that owing to the possibility

Of swaying him from his position

And imprisoning the mind and body by bonds of  
*Māyā*,

The jiva is known as the Kshara or changeable  
Purusha,

While My Associated Entity Divine

Is Known as Akshara-Purusha,

The eternal and imperishable.

**M**Y Associated Part, is also designated Kutastha-  
Purusha,

Characterised by His Trine Manifestations:



(1) The All-pervading Neuter God in the manifestive world,

Otherwise known as Akshara-Purusha,

Is the Brahman—the Great,

Sum of all negations in manifestation ;

This Neuter-God Brahman is therefore but a Relative Principle

And not the Absolute Whole.

(2) My Partial Aspect, that is manifested in the world

As Refuge and Indwelling Monitor of all souls

And partially reveals transcendence to their hearts,

Is known as Paramātman,

Who is again a Relative Manifestation

And not the Absolute.

That Paramātman, as the Second Akshara-Purusha, Is superior to Brahman.

This Paramātman is Iswara, the Lord,

And entering into the three worlds

Exists as their Sustainer.

(3) The Third and Highest and the Most Supreme

Akshara-Purusha, is known as Sree Bhagavān,

And I am that Supreme Sree Bhagavān.

I transcend immeasurably the Kshara-Purusha, jiva.

I am far superior to the Akshara-Purushas Brahman and Paramātman.

Therefore I am known in the world



And in the Vedas, as Purushottama—  
 The Most High and Supreme Purusha.  
 Kshara-Purusha is thus the jiva;  
 Akshara-Purusha is the Lord of jivas,  
 Who has Three Aspects—  
 Brahman, Parmātman and Sree Bhagavān or  
 Purushottama.  
 Just as the sun is superior  
 To all other luminaries and fire combined,  
 So Sree Krishna is the Supreme Lord  
 Unequaled by any of His Manifestations.

**H**E who is not deluded by the various  
 Conflicting theories and doctrines of the  
 world

But knows Me as Purushottama  
 All-blissful, All-intelligent, All-knowing,  
 Most-beautiful, Magnetic and All-loving—  
 The Supremest Lord of all—  
 Is aware of all the esoteric truths  
 The Scriptures ever mentioned.  
 He knows everything aright, Bhārata!  
 Devoted to Me in every way.  
 Others, who offer worship in every other way,  
 Do not worship Me aright  
 Owing to their ignorance  
 And wrong conception of My Nature.



**SINLESS!** this Purushottama-Yoga is most secret.  
 Blessed is that soul who understands it.

O Bhārata ! the knowledge of this  
 Removes all stains and obstacles that hinder  
 The progress of a devotee upon the way of true  
 devotion.

Bhakti is a transcendental principle.  
 That it may blossom in all bliss—  
 The purity of the subjective jiva,  
 The Bhakta in his unalloyed existence,  
 The fullest appearance of the Objective Lord Sree  
 Bhagavān—

Are all essential.  
 Devotion is the link between the devotee subjective  
 And the Objective Beloved.  
 Pure and unalloyed Bhakti or devotion  
 Does not function whilst conceptions  
 Of Brahman and Paramātmā are confused.  
 With the conception of the Godhead,  
 But only when Sree Bhagavān is identified  
 With Purushottama—the Absolute.

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**CHAPTER SIXTEEN**

***THE DIVINE AND THE DEMONIAK***



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

### THE DIVINE AND THE DEMONIAK

**S**REE Bhagavān said: "The world-tree has two kinds of fruits—

One engenders firm attachment of the jiva to the world,

The other fosters his freedom from such bondage.

The jiva is essentially a pure all-spiritual entity,

But in his conditioned state

He is fastened by the ties of Māyā's triple qualities.

His safety lies in the purity of his all-spiritual existence,

For which the Scriptures have prescribed the process of Jnāna-Yoga;

The different actions of Karma, that tend to bring about that end

Are called 'divine',

While all those actions that are detrimental

To the cause of spiritual realisation

Are held to be 'demoniac'.

**C**HARITY, self-control of the senses, sacrifices,

Study of the Vedas, austerities, simplicity,

Non-malice, truth, absence of anger,

Non-attachment to mundane relations,



Tranquility, absence of calumny, compassion to animals,

Uncovetousness, mildness, modesty, fidelity,

Vigour, forgiveness, forbearance, purity,

Absence of hatred, cruelty, and pride—

These qualities are regarded as 'divine'.

O Bhārata ! one born in an auspicious hour

Is qualified with these divine properties.

Ostentation by making a pretence of one's religious temperament,

Pride of high lineage, or opulence,

Vast erudition and youthful beauties,

Egotism, anger or wrath,

Insolence and ignorance of one's own true self—

These six are the 'demoniac.'

O Pārtha ! one born in an ominous moment is influenced by them.

**W**HILE adhering to the qualities 'divine',

It is possible to man to strive after salvation;

But the 'demoniac' qualities

Entangle jivas in all worldliness.

Purity of existence is attained by Jnāna-Yoga

In pursuance of the Varnāshrama-dharma—

The duties incumbent on man

According to his station and caste in life.

O Pāndava ! thou hast attained

The godly qualities of a Kshatriya—



A ruler and a fighter.  
 Fighting by a Kshatriya for a righteous cause  
 And killing friends and relatives in fighting thus  
 With bow-and-arrow in accordance with the laws  
 of war,  
 Is not reckoned as 'demoniac'.  
 Hearing this, cast off thy dejection,  
 O Arjuna ! and mourn no more.

**T**HERE are two kinds of created beings  
 In this world—divine and demoniac.  
 I have told thee at great length of the divine;  
 Hear from Me now, O Pārtha ! about the ungodly.  
 Ungodly people of demoniac disposition  
 Know not the difference between  
 The inclination to a life religious  
 And disinclination for religion ;  
 They observe not a purity of body or of mind ;  
 Neither is adherence to good conduct  
 According to the rules of life, found in them,  
 Nor do they follow truth, avoiding all falsehood.  
 The demoniacal consider this world to be unreal,  
 Unsupported and godless.  
 They hold the view that a mutual union of cause  
 and effect  
 Is no cause of the creation of the Universe,  
 And therefore there is no need to believe  
 That there is One Lord



Who is the Efficient Cause of all creation,  
That sexual pleasure alone is the cause of all living  
beings,

And if there be any God at all,  
He must also have produced the world  
Out of His control of carnal satisfaction,  
And as such, is not worthy of worship.

**B**ASING this argument on such atheistic  
reasonings,

The demoniacal, utterly ignorant  
Of their essential spiritual nature and existence,  
Who are of blunt intellect and violent temper and  
deeds,

Rise to power as enemies of all the world, for its  
destruction.

Actuated by insatiable lust,  
These arrogant, vain and boastful persons  
Work with very low and unholy resolution  
Under the influence of unwholesome and shameful  
views

Due to their delusion and infatuation.  
Beset with life-long, endless cares,  
They think that sensual enjoyment  
Is the be-all and end-all of human existence.

**B**OUND by innumerable ties of hopes  
And overpowered by lust and anger



These wretched persons amass by illicit means  
 Hoards of wealth for their carnal satisfaction.  
 They think: 'I have this sum of money today—  
 This is success—this is mine—  
 In future I shall earn more profit.  
 I have killed this enemy  
 And others also I shall soon destroy—  
 I am the lord—I am the enjoyer—  
 I am successful—I am the most happy man in all  
 the world.  
 I alone am rich and well-born—  
 I have a large following.  
 Who is there so great as I or equal to me ?  
 I shall perform sacrifices—  
 I shall enjoy and be happy'—  
 Such are their ravings  
 Being intoxicated by ignorance and infatuation.  
 Thus being bewildered by many a fancy,  
 Entangled in the snares of infatuation  
 And allured by the gratification of lust,  
 They are doomed to perdition.

**S**ELF-glorified, and insolent,  
 Intoxicated by the vanities of wealth,  
 Name, fame and learning,  
 They do pompously perform the sacrifices only in  
 letter,  
 Without conforming to the spirit of the ordinance.



Self-arrogant, proud of their abilities and strength  
 Enslaved by lust and anger,  
 These people are malicious against Me  
 Who am the Lord Supreme  
 And dwell as Paramātmā in their hearts  
 As well as in those of others.  
 And out of jealousy they would calumniate the  
 stainless saints.  
 I hurl those envious, cruel hypocrites,  
 Who are the worst of men,  
 Into the most ominous, abject births for ever in the  
 worlds.

**T**HEIR nature demoniacal ever grows from bad to  
 worse

By reason of their devilish activities.  
 Born of ignominious wombs,  
 Birth after birth they are unable to attain Me;  
 Those ignoramuses, O Son of Kunti!  
 Are destined from the low to reach the lowest  
 Until at last they take shelter within Me,  
 Through the grace of noble devotees  
 Who them reclaim from all those hellish births.  
 Lust, anger and avarice  
 Are the triple fatal gates to hell—  
 Destructive of the self.  
 Those who are therefore desirous of eternal welfare  
 Shun them by every means.



O Son of Kunti !stand clear  
Of these three dark doors of hell;  
For man should search for his eternal good,  
And thereby attain to bliss,  
The highest end of human life.

**B**Y leading an orderly religious life  
As laid down by the Shāstras  
For the purpose of realising his pure self,  
Man gradually gains the final goal  
In Sree Krishna-bhakti  
Or loving service to Sree Krishna.  
The true significance of the means and end  
Of Karma and Jnāna Yoga  
That have been mentioned in the Scriptures  
Is that a clear and true conception  
Of the relation of Karma proper and Jnāna  
Leads man to self-realisation.  
This is called Mukti or salvation,  
Which is like a handmaid to Bhakti ;  
Because devotion or eternal function of the pure  
self  
Has its part to play progressively for ever  
Only after reaching the stage of salvation.

**T**HE Scriptural laws are twofold ;  
He who over-rules those ordinances of the  
Scriptures  
And follows the impulse of desire and lust,



Never attains perfection or happiness  
Or the Ultimate Beaitude.  
Inspite of the faculties of understanding,  
Will and emotion of the mind,  
If man does not resort to a strictly moral life,  
He is the worst among mankind ;  
While even if he be endowed  
With all the faculties of the mind and body  
And is ethical in living  
But disinclined to submit to the supremacy of God,  
He nullifies the virtue of those good qualities.

**A** GAIN, even if he fears God,  
But does not follow the practices devotional  
Or acquire transcendental knowledge of the principles  
of life,  
He is not entitled to attain to highest bliss,  
The goal of spiritual existence.  
Bhakti is therefore the object of all Scriptures  
And truly the Ultimate Good of all souls.  
The Scriptures are therefore the criteria  
Of what is duty and what is not duty.  
Thus knowing Bhakti to be the purport of the  
Scriptures,  
Be thou fit and ready to perform thy present Karma,  
Fighting for a righteous cause as the duty of a  
Kashstriya.

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## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### *FAITH*



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### FAITH

**A**RJUNA said : "O Krishna ! having listened to  
Thee so far,

I have now another doubt.

Thou hast said , 'Only those who have faith attain  
Jnāna.'

And again Thou hast shown

That those who over-rule the Scriptural Ordinances

And follow the impulse of desires and lust,

Never attain to happiness or perfection or final  
beatitude.

Now the question is : What happens, if faith be  
cherished,

Whilst setting aside the injunctions of the  
Scriptures ?

Will such a person with anti-scriptural faith

Attain the purification of his heart

And be established in self-realisation

Which is attainable by the practice of Jnāna ?

Tell me therefore clearly, O Krishna !

Whether scrupulous performance of offerings in  
all faith

Whilst denying strict observance of the scriptural  
injunctions

Is either Sāttvik, Rājasik or Tāmasik ?"



**S**REE Bhagavān said: "The natural faith  
 Of the engrossed jiva is threefold  
 According to his individual character—  
 Sāttvik, Rājasik and Tāmasik.  
 First listen to Me about the faith  
 Of those who do not infringe the scriptural laws,  
 And then I shall tell thee about that  
 Of those who violate them.  
 O Bhārata ! to every heart belongs its faith  
 Fashioned according to its nature.  
 Every man's habit varies  
 According to his faith.  
 A sāttvik heart has a sāttvik faith,  
 A rājasik is endowed with rājasik faith  
 While the tāmasik heart is possessed of tāmasik  
 faith.

**J**IVA is essentially My separated and infini-  
 tesimal part  
 And hence its normal tendency lies beyond  
 The triple qualities of Māyā.  
 He began to be influenced by these triple qualities  
 When he forgot his relationship with Me.  
 From the beginning of his fallen state  
 When his soul eternal fell asleep,  
 He cultivated saguna temperament ;  
 And from the temperament, modified by one of  
 Māyā's qualities,



His heart must accordingly be shaped.

This heart is called sattva.

Purification of such a heart is necessary;

The faith of a heart thus purified

Is the seed of Bhakti.

The faith of a non-purified heart is qualitative—

Influenced by the triple qualities.

While faith remains unpurged of Māyā's qualities,

Or does not aim a stage beyond them,

It is known as lust.

**M**EN of sāt̥tvik faith worship the gods and  
deities.

The rājasika worship the Yakshas and Rakshas,

While those of tāmasik faith

Worship the Pretas and Bhutas.

Those who transgress the scriptural laws have a  
demoniacal faith.

The severe austerities not enjoined by Shāstras

Are full of lust and anger and power.

The self-assertive, egotistic and the vain

Adopt them in their life.

Those who enervate or enfeeble the bodily elements

By such severe austerities

And thus torment the inner self,

Which is My separated part,

Have demoniac faith.

Know them to be of āsurik character.



**T**HE food of man is also divided into three groups:  
 According to the sattva-rajas-tamas qualities.  
 And so are also classified sacrifice, austerity and  
 charity.

Hear thou about their differences.

The sāt̥tvik foods, which are delicious to the people  
 of sāt̥tvik nature,

Enhance longevity and enterprise,

Energy and strength, health, felicity and cheerful-  
 ness,

They are succulent and oleaginous, substantial and  
 agreeable.

Food that is excessively bitter or sour,

Too saline, too hot or very pungent,

Very dry, and burning, is favoured by the rājasika.

Such foods bring forth but pain, grief and disease.

The tāmāsik people are fond of such food

As has been cooked some hours previously,

Which they do partake of when it has grown stale  
 and tasteless,

Which is the refuse of other's meals

Excepting that of the spiritual preceptor and  
 superiors,

As well as foods which are impure

Like fish, flesh or meat, eggs and intoxicating  
 drinks,

And are addicted to smoking opium and tobacco.



**C**ONSIDERING all this, those who desire their  
well-being

Should partake of sātṭvik food.

But the case of devotees is very different.

They decline to eat tāmasik, rājasik and even  
sātṭvik food.

Nothing is acceptable to them

Which has not first been offered to the Lord.

Foods which are not influenced by any of the triple  
qualities

May be offered to God,

And after such offering the devotees accept them  
gratefully

As the Grace of the Supreme.

Purity of food does purify the heart;

And when the heart is purified,

Perennial contemplation is possible.

Foods have their internal and external impurities;

The external are causal,

Being contaminated by dirt, hair, sweat or saliva.

The internal impurities are twofold—

By nature and from the source.

By nature such foods as meat, flesh, fish,

Eggs, onion and wine which create passion

Are not offerable to God;

Foods also are reckoned as impure

According to the source from where or whom they  
are received,



Namely, food received from the unholy  
 Or the miserly or those of demoniac character  
 Or hideous diseases  
 Or cooked or served by any such people.

**A** sāt̥tvik Yajna is that which is performed  
 In accordance with injunctions of the Laws  
 scriptural  
 By men with fixed resolve who desire no reward in  
 return.

O thou best of the Bharatas!  
 Know thou that a rājasik sacrifice  
 Is made pompously with a fruitive motive  
 And for the sake of ostentation.  
 That is said to be a tāmāsik Yajna  
 Which does not follow the scriptural Laws,  
 In which no food is distributed,  
 Without any mantrās or holy incantations and  
 hymns,  
 In which no sacrificial fee or gift is offered  
 And which is bereft of any faith whatever.  
 In this case, this tāmāsik faith  
 Is not regarded as any faith at all,  
 Inasmuch as it greatly diverges  
 From the centre of conception of the true self.

**R**EGARDING the differences in austerities :  
 The bodily austerities comprise the worship of  
 the gods,



Brāhmins and preceptors and the wise ;  
 Purity, simplicity, chastity and inoffensiveness,  
 The austerities that cause no pain.  
 Truthful, pleasant, yet beneficial words and conduct  
 As well as the study and practice of the Vedas,  
 Are called the austerities of speech.  
 Cheerfulness, serenity of heart,  
 Sincerity, silence, self-control  
 The purification of mind and a guileless demeanour  
 Appertain to the mental austerities.  
 When a person devout,  
 Keeping in view the faith and with no selfish  
 motive,  
 Performs these three austerities,  
 His practice is known as sāt̥tvik.  
 That is said to be rājasik tapas  
 Or austerity which is performed with vanities and  
 pomp,  
 With the intention of gaining honour,  
 Self-glory and eulogy.  
 This rājasik austerity is transitory and unstable.  
 From foolish ignorance and at the risk of man's own  
 self-torture,  
 The austerity that is performed  
 With a view to bringing destruction upon others,  
 Is known as tāmāsik austerity.

**T**HE differences in charity are these:  
 Out of a sense of duty,



Charity that is offered to a righteous person  
 At the right time and in the right place  
 With the will to do good service unto him,  
 Expecting nothing in return,  
 Is known as sāt̥tvik.

When a man reluctantly bestows charity upon  
 another

With expectation of reward for what he gives  
 Or with a view to attaining the celestial region,  
 It is called rājasik.

Charity that is bestowed in such a place  
 And at a time when there is no need for it,  
 And when it brings no good to any one,  
 Or when it is bestowed upon a wrong and undeserving  
 person,

Is tāmāsik charity.

If charity be handed out disdainfully  
 Even to a deserving holy person,  
 Such charity should also be considered tāmāsik.

**A**USTERITY, Yajna or sacrifice, charity and food—  
 Each of these is classified into three groups  
 According to the sattva-rajas-tamas qualities of  
 Māyā.

The faith that is inherent  
 In the performance of these practices  
 In the conditioned state,  
 Though classified as good, bad and worse,



Is, after all, saguna—influenced by the Māyā-qualities,

Hence trifling. But again when all these are performed

With strong and singleminded faith

That aims at devotion pure,

They tend to purify the heart,

Which alone is fit to be the shrine of God.

All the Scriptures are at one

In prescribing duties and Karma

With a selfless and pure faith

That leads man to devotion.

**T**HE Vedas have used the three words—  
'OM, TAT' and SAT—

To designate Brahman, the Neuter-God;

The Brāhmanas, the Vedas and the Yajnas are referred to also.

The faith that discards the injunctions of the Scriptures.

Is influenced by Māyā and is defective.

It does not seek out the Brahman

But is the mother of desire.

Pure faith is therefore the key-note of all Scriptures.

Ignorance is the cause of doubt in faith and Scriptures.

For this reason, Brāhmanas perform their sacrifices

And austerities, and offer gifts, and take food



With the utterance of 'OM' in the beginning—  
 Indicating that they aim at the Brahman in all they  
 do.

Keeping in view the TAT—'That is',  
 Which is beyond the ATAT—'That is not that',  
 In other words, aiming at the Positive Reality  
 Beyond the Negative Changeability,  
 Perform thou without desire for their fruits,  
 The sacrifices and austerities,  
 Charities and other duties,  
 In order to release thyself from worldly bondage,

**T**HE Word 'SAT' refers to Brahman  
 And those who aim at identification with  
 Brahman;

The Word is also used, O Pārtha! during the auspicious ceremonies,  
 Such as the 'Sacred-thread' and marriage.  
 The Word 'SAT' also signifies  
 The external existence of God  
 And the devotees of God, as well as the devotional performances.

The Word 'SAT' has its significance  
 With reference to sacrifice,  
 Austerities and charities  
 As well as steadiness in their performance  
 To the satisfaction of the Brahman;



Otherwise, they are regarded as ASAT or changeable.  
Sat means eternal, Asat means transitory.

**A**LL mundane activities are antithetical  
To the normal function of the pure soul;  
But when they are centred in Brahman  
In order to waken the aptitude devotional,  
Then those activities help to purify the heart,  
So that the jiva is fit to proffer  
Eternal loving service to the Lord Sree Krishna.  
Transcendental faith is thus the only source of pure  
devotion.

Whatever is sacrificed or given or done,  
Or austerities performed without that nirguna faith,  
Is called 'asat', ephemeral.

Such practices are beneficial neither in this nor in  
the next world.

The Scriptures therefore do encourage man to  
transcendental faith,

Which is the seat of Bhakti, devotion and love  
divine."



**CHAPTER EIGHTEEN**

***RECAPITULATION***



## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

### RECAPITULATION\*

**A**RJUNA said: "O Mighty-armed !  
O Hrishikesa—the Lord of the senses !  
I wish to know, Keshi-sudana—Slayer of Keshi !  
The difference between sannyāsa—selfless Karma-  
Yoga,  
And Tyāga—non-attachment to fruitive actions."  
Sree Bhagavān said: "Renunciation of fruitive  
Karma  
And performance of the causal actions  
With reference to the mind and body  
Is said by the sages to be sannyāsa;  
While the wise call Tyāga the renunciation of all  
results,  
Though performing all daily and causal duties."

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\* The first Six Chapters of the Geetā deal with Bhakti as the highest aim and end of action; the second six deal explicitly with the nature and functions of pure Bhakti which transcend the influence of the triple qualities of Māyā; and the last six chapters have established the most exalted results from Bhakti after considering and cotrasting Jñāna, renunciation, discriminating intelligence and the mundane attributes, and those that are beyond them. The sages of yore have thus explained the esoteric meaning of the Geetā. All these have already been discussed in the foregoing seventeen chapters, and the eighteenth chapter is more or less a recapitulation of all that has been said.



A class of scholars like the Sāmkhyas maintain that,  
 In view of their defective nature,  
 All actions should wholly be abandoned.  
 Whereas the philosophers like the Mimāṃsakas  
 Hold that Karma such as sacrifices, charity, austerities etc.,  
 Must not be given up.  
 "O best of the Bharatas ! O Chieftain of men !  
 Know then for certain that there are three kinds of  
 Tyāga.

**T**HE performance of sacrifices, charity,  
 Austerities should not be evaded—  
 They are indeed to be performed by fallen souls.  
 They should be followed for the purification of the  
 self,  
 O Pārtha ! My conviction and advice concerning  
 this abandonment  
 Is that those actions should be performed  
 As duties without thy being attached to them  
 Nor hankering after their results.  
 Truly speaking, the abandonment of such daily  
 duties is improper;  
 Such abandonment proceeding from a lack of  
 knowledge true  
 Is tāmasik tyāga.  
 The sannyāsins might as well ignore fruitive actions  
 altogether



If they do not feel the need of Karma.  
 But if for want of knowledge of the Scriptures  
 There be any negligence in the performance  
 Of the daily duties, it is called a *tāmasik tyāga*;  
 The result is that it leads man but to ignorance  
 And not to the desired end.  
 It is therefore evident that both *sannyāsa*  
 And *tyāga* purport to be identical  
 When they aim at the relinquishment  
 Of fruitive action and subjective egotism.

**T**HE abandonment of daily duties  
 For fear of pain and other earthly troubles  
 Is *rājasik tyāga*;  
 Such a person never gets the fruits of his *tyāga*  
 Which is pure knowledge.  
 O Arjuna! the performance of daily duties for duty's  
 sake  
 After forsaking the subjective egotism  
 As well as relinquishment of all attachment  
 And of all fruits, is *sāttvik tyāga*.  
 The wise *sāttvik tyāgin* neither hates evil actions  
 Nor is attached to the good and pleasant ones;  
 His doubts are cut asunder.  
 It is not possible for a conditioned soul  
 To give up action altogether;  
 He is therefore really a *tyāgin*  
 Who has abandoned all fruits of action.



Those who have not abandoned the fruits of action  
 Have to encounter the triple results  
 Of heavenly enjoyment, hellish pain and mixed  
 pleasure and pain.  
 But the true sannyāsins are immune from those  
 results,

**O** mighty-armed ! listen to Me.  
 According to the Vedānta, the five causes  
 Of the process of Karma have been arrived at.  
 Adhithāna or body, Kartā or the subjective  
 egotism.

Karan or the five senses,  
 Chestā or the various activities and attempts,  
 And Daiva or the Indwelling Regulator of all actions:  
 No Karma or action is possible without these  
 fundamental causes.

Whatever man does by his body, mind and speech,  
 Whether it be right or wrong,  
 He does with the help of these five causes.  
 He who thinks his own self  
 To be the only subjective agent of all his actions  
 Possesses an uncultured understanding  
 And hence is evil-intentioned,  
 Ignorant and too blind to see the truth.

**O** Arjuna ! the infatuation with which thou wert  
 overcome  
 With reference to the fight



Was due to thy subjective egotism.  
 If thou hadst known the foretold five causes  
 To be the source of all actions,  
 Thou wouldst not have then been thus infatuated.  
 Hence, he whose intellect is not polluted  
 By the mire of egotism does not kill anybody  
 Though he may seem to kill a number  
 And therefore does not reap the consequences of the  
 act of killing,  
 Since he has no intention of killing or of saving.

**K**NOWLEDGE, knower and the known—  
 These three are the stimuli to actions;  
 Senses, deed and the doer are the three factors of  
 Karma's subject-matter.  
 All possible actions on the surface of the world  
 Are guided by these two principles—  
 The stimuli to action and the subject-matter of  
 action.  
 The principle that is adopted  
 Before an action is performed, is the stimulus;  
 This impetus to action is the subtle conception  
 That exists first in the mind  
 Which is afterwards translated into physical  
 performance.  
 Every act in its incipient stage  
 Is characterised by its knowledge, the known and  
 the knower.



When the action is performed,  
 It has its three concomitant factors :  
 The instruments or the senses,  
 The subject and the object of the action.

**N**OW listen to the three kinds of knowledge,  
 Action and the agent, divided according  
 To the triple qualities of sattva-rajas-tamas.  
 The same jiva moves on from one discarded body  
 To a new one in a later birth  
 In order to enjoy or suffer  
 The fruits of his actions in this or in previous births.  
 The jiva is immortal  
 Though temporarily existing in the mortal coil.  
 All jivas though they have their individual  
 differences  
 Are identical in their spiritual nature.  
 Such knowledge is sāt̥tvik.  
 The knowledge that jivas in different bodies,  
 Whether celestial, human or animal,  
 Are different from one another,  
 That their normal nature is different,  
 That they have their quantitative  
 And qualitative differences, is rājasik.  
 He who is attached to eating and other gross physical  
 enjoyments,  
 Thinking these physical exploits of sensual  
 enjoyment



To be the be-all and end-all of life,  
 Possesses a tāmasik jñāna.  
 Such knowledge is derogatory,  
 Insignificant, ephemeral, irrational.  
 This knowlegde is untenable and worthless  
 As it is conducive of no real wisdom.  
 The purport is that knowledge of the real unalloyed  
 self is sāttvik,  
 That of Nyāya-philosophy and other such scriptures  
 Teeming with divergent theories, is rājasik,  
 While secular knowledge dealing mostly  
 With physical and mental amelioration, is tāmasik.

**A**N action which is ordained free from any  
 attachment

And is performed with neither love nor hatred  
 By one who is not desirous of any fruit from it  
 Is said to be sāttvik Karma.

A rājas-Karma is that abounding in desire  
 And carried out with egotistic vanities and great  
 exertion.

That is said to be tāmasik Karma  
 Which is blindly followed by the worldly-minded.  
 As a duty, without due consideration  
 For future troubles, infringement of socio-religious  
 rites,

And abject malice tending to self-annihilation.



**A** sāt̥tvik agent is he who is free  
 From all relative associations,  
 Void of vanities, full of patience and enthusiasm,  
 And unconcerned with failure or success.  
 He is said to be a rājas agent  
 Who is addicted to actions,  
 Ardent as to their results,  
 Worldly-minded and injurious,  
 Impure and subject to pleasure and to pain.  
 He who is fond of unrighteousness,  
 Prone to inordinate materialism,  
 Whimsical, fraudulent, accustomed to disparage  
 others,  
 Indolent, always sulky and sullen  
 And dilatory in his habits, is a tāmāsik agent.

**O** Dhananjaya ! let Me now tell thee fully and  
 distinctively

About the three kinds of discrimination  
 As well as fortitude

According to their triple qualities.

O Pārtha ! that buddhi or intelligence is sāt̥tvik  
 Which makes a nice distinction between inclination  
 And disinclination; that which ought to be done  
 And what ought not to be done ;  
 Between fear and safety, bondage and freedom.  
 A rājas intelligence is one which, O Pārtha !



Can but imperfectly distinguish  
Between virtue and vice, duty and non-duty.  
O Pārtha ! the tamas intelligence is that  
Which is shrouded in ignorance;  
Confounds falsehood, shadow or irreligion  
With truth, substance or religion,  
And accepts every thing pervertedly.

**T**HE fortitude that is upheld, O Pārtha ! by a  
steadfast Yoga  
And by which the functions of the mind,  
The life-breaths, senses and actions are held fast,  
is sāt̥tvik.

O Pārtha ! the rājasik fortitude is that  
With which man holds fast virtue,  
Wealth and desire, together with their fruits.  
A tāmāsik fortitude is one which is foolish  
In not abandoning excessive sleep,  
Dreams, fear, grief, sadness and inebriation.

**O** Bharatarshabha ! now listen to the three  
distinctive pleasures.

The fallen souls, due to their repeated practices  
Enjoy them in some cases as a habit,  
While in certain other cases  
The cessation of that enjoying mood  
Brings to an end their worldly miseries.  
A sāt̥tvik felicity is that which is



Painful in the beginning, like poison  
 But wholesome like nectar in the end,  
 Arising out of approbation for self-realisation.  
 The happiness which arising  
 Out of union between the senses and phenomena,  
 Appears to be ambrosial at the start  
 But poisonous at last,  
 Is called a rājasik pleasure.  
 A tāmasik pleasure is one which,  
 From the beginning to the end  
 Is delusive of the self proper,  
 Owing to its sleepy, indolent and inebriating nature.

**T**HERE is no human being in the world  
 Nor is there any god in heaven  
 Who is really free from the triple attributes of  
 Māyā.  
 The followers of Jñāna and Karma are bound by  
 them.  
 The spiritually intelligent devotees  
 Alone accept them in so far as they do help  
 The transcendental services to the Lord Supreme  
 So long as they remain in this world.  
 Though apparently they seem to be engrossed by  
 them  
 They are not essentially so overpowered.  
 The conditioned souls, though fettered by the triple  
 qualities,



May gradually attain to freedom from them  
By worshipping the Lord Supreme  
According to their class and status  
Assigned to them by Scripture.

**T**HE qualities of sattva, rajas and tamas  
Are inherent in the nature of the fallen souls.  
O Parantapa ! the respective duties  
Of the Brāhmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras  
Have been determined according to the qualities  
innate in them.

The duties of a Brāhmin are of a sāṭtvik nature.  
The control of the inward and outward senses,  
Austerities, purity, forgiveness, simplicity,  
Knowledge of the self, and the true conception of  
God

As interpreted in sacred Scripture  
Are the characteristic qualities and actions of a  
Brāhmin.

The duties and qualities of a Kshatriya  
Are of a sattva-rajas nature.  
Heroism, pomp and boldness,  
Patience, dexterity and charity,  
Bravely to face his enemies in the battle-field,  
And governance, are the normal qualities and  
duties of a Kshatriya.

The duties and qualities of a Vaisya  
Are of rajas-tamas nature.



Cultivation of the soil, keeping herds of cattle,  
And carrying on trade, are the natural duties of a  
Vaisya;

While to serve the three superior classes  
Is the duty of him who is a Sudra by nature,  
Classification of these castes is thus based  
On the natural qualities and actions  
And formed not on the basis of birth-right.

**N**OW listen to how a person whose duties  
Have thus been assigned to him,  
According to his natural qualities and character  
Can attain success in life  
By the performance of such duties.  
Man attains success by dedicating  
All his natural and innate actions  
Together with their fruits  
To the Lord Supreme Who pervades the universe  
Both as the Unit-Soul, the Indweller of every  
individual  
And the Aggregate-Over-Soul,  
Who is the Bestower of fruits of man's actions  
Which stimulate him in accordance with his  
previous desires.

**B**Y swa-dharma is meant man's own duty  
According to his nature and qualifications.  
Incomplete performance of swa-dharma



Is better than para-dharma nicely done  
Or duty that is not innate and natural to man's own  
true self.

Though imperfectly performed,  
Universal good accrues from swa-dharma,  
And there is hardly any chance of incurring sin  
By the performance of such duty ordained by his  
normal nature.

O Son of Kunti ! duties assigned  
According to the nature and quality of the man,  
Should even when faulty, by no means be shunned ;  
Action is ever defective in the beginning.  
Just as fire is not free from smoke,  
So also human enterprises are more or less blemi-  
shed by shortcomings.

Leaving aside the darker view,  
The bright aspect of the Karma born of man's own  
nature  
Should be resorted to, for the purification of the  
heart.

**I**N the first stage of sannyāsa or renunciation,  
A Jñānin should relinquish his subjective egotism  
As well as any hankering after fruitive action.  
In the maturer state of Yoga,  
Sannyāsa's second stage,  
Abandonment of all fruits of action is the thing  
needful.



The final success in selfless Karma  
 Is achieved by a Jnānin when he wholly abandons  
 All idea of a sense of duty,  
 His discriminating intelligence being free  
 From all worldly attachments,  
 When his self is conquered,  
 And his heart is fully unconcerned with earths'  
 desires  
 And thus essentially renounces all his Karma.

**N**EXT listen to how a jiva attains to Brahman,  
 The crowning point of Jnāna.  
 After attaining success in selfless Karma.  
 What is meant by the realisation of Brahman?  
 The first stage in realisation is to attain  
 True knowledge, by performance of selfless Karma,  
 Then follow this attainment  
 By devotional service unto Me,  
 Having acquired a true conception of My Real  
 Self.

A person, who does not misidentify  
 His body with his own true self,  
 And has realised the difference between the two,  
 Has no more affinities with worldly relativities;  
 He has complete cessation from sensual enjoyment  
 Of sound, sight and touch  
 And has attained a pure intelligence;  
 He has controlled his mind by fortitude



And is beyond all mundane likes and dislikes;  
Love and hatred;  
He has a tendency towards solitude;  
Temperate is he in diet, restrained in body, mind  
and tongue;  
He has taken to meditation and a genuine  
asceticism;  
He is completely absolved from egotism,  
Might, pride, lust and anger;  
He is kind, unselfish and very mild.  
One who is thus qualified, is able to realise  
Brahman.

**T**HE characteristic feature of a Brahman-realised  
soul

Is that he is freed from physical and mental  
bondage.

A soul realises Brahman only in his unalloyed  
existence.

Such a person is happy in himself;

Possesses a calm and equitable vision;

He neither grieves, nor longs for any mundane  
object.

Established in Brahman,

He gradually attains pure Bhakti in Me

Which transcends all qualities of Māyā

And truly begins after that stage when Brahman is  
realized.



**I**T is only by means of pure Bhakti  
 That an individual unalloyed soul  
 Can truly realise essentially Who I am  
 And what is My Real Nature—  
 My Transcendental Qualities and Deeds.  
 A soul can 'enter in Me' with the help  
 Of true knowledge or Jnāna concerning My Subjective  
 Existence;

This is one of My confidential teachings to thee ;  
 This is called the attainment of the stage of  
 Brahman

By the performance of selfless Karma-Yoga ;  
 The climax of this realisation is non-qualified Bhakti  
 or. Prema—Divine Love.

'Enters in Me' does not mean that folly of dry  
 wisdom

Which leads man to contemplate self-annihilation.  
 It really means the freedom of a true self or soul  
 From his earthly bondage

And the attainment of his transcendental nature  
 Which is akin to My Real Self.

This realisation also is akin to pure Love Divine.

**S**ELFLESS Karma-Yoga leads man to Jnāna ;  
 Jnāna-Yoga advances him to Bhakti.

This is the Vedic Path.

Of the three processes that I have mentioned to  
 thee,



This one is the first.

Now I shall tell thee about the second means of worshipping Me.

He who takes shelter in Me even with a selfish motive,

Dedicating all his daily, causal

And secular duties unto Me,

Who am the Supreme Lord,

And thereby becomes single-minded in his devotion.

Attains non-qualified devotion by My Grace

As his highest, eternal and transcendental End.

I have already told thee that Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān

Are My threefold Manifestations.

As thou art not yet a pure devotee

Neither art thou selfish,

Thou mayst now take the middle course

By dedicating all thy duties and actions,

Assigned to thy class and station as a Kshatriya,

Unto Me as Paramātmā,

And with a steadfast application of thine intelligence,

Turn thy full attention and thy heart

Towards Me, in all thine activities.

**I**F thou dost turn thus unto Me

In all thy doings in this world,

Thou wilt, by My Grace, surmount all obstacles

Standing in thy way to a life devotional.



If on the contrary, thou dost misidentify thyself  
 With thy body and thy mind, and cling to thy  
 perverted ego,  
 Thinking thyself to be the doer or master of the  
 happenings of the world,  
 Then thou wilt be drawn away  
 From the Fountain-source of divine nectar  
 And wilt bring ruin upon thyself  
 By turning out to be a worldling.  
 If thou thinkest, 'I will not fight'  
 Under the fatal influence of that false egotism,  
 Vain will be thy resolve ;  
 Because the nature of a Kshatriya will give thee an  
 impetus to fight.  
 Out of infatuation thou art unwilling now to fight,  
 O Son of Kunti ! but thou shalt do so against thy  
 will,  
 Being overpowered by the natural instincts of the  
 warrior caste.

**I** alone as Paramātman,  
 Am the Indwelling Monitor of all hearts:  
 Paramātman is the Regulator of all jiva-souls.  
 As are the actions of a jiva  
 So are the fruits bestowed on him by Paramātman  
 Just as a wire-puller manipulates the puppets  
 From behind the screen by wires,  
 So the jivas imprisoned in gross bodies



Are driven in this world  
 By His deluding Potency Māyā  
 To act in conformity with her dictation.  
 Propelled by the Inner Monitor  
 Thy natural proclivity will stimulate thee to fight  
 As a result of thy former deeds."  
 Here Paramātmā is the Efficient Cause  
 And Māyā is the material cause  
 Of jiva's action in bondage.  
 "O Bhārata ! take absolute shelter  
 In That All-pervading Paramātmā.  
 Thou wilt then attain perfect peace  
 Or complete freedom from empiric knowledge and  
 ignorance  
 And will ultimately attain My Spiritual Realm by  
 My Grace.

**T**HE knowledge of the realisation of Brahman  
 That I have previously told thee  
 Is secret;  
 The knowledge about Paramātmā  
 That I have just described to thee  
 Is more secret still.  
 Think seriously about them,  
 And adopt thou what thou likest best.  
 If thou shouldst desire to attain Brahman  
 As a result of Jñāna derived from selfless Karma-  
 Yoga



And if thou wilt will for gradual attainment  
 Of non-qualified Bhakti for me,  
 Fight thou without any selfish aim.  
 Or if thou shouldst take refuge in Paramātmā,  
 Then in that case also thou shalt have to fight  
 Consecrating the results to Him,  
 Being prompted by Him from within  
 To be guided by thy natural Kshatriya aptitude for  
 fighting.

Then only My Indwelling Spirit as Paramātmā  
 Will gradually endow thee with My unalloyed  
 devotion.

So, whichever principle thou mayst adopt,  
 Fighting is beneficial to thee under all circumstances.

**I** have told thee about the secret and more secret  
 Principles regarding Brahman and Paramātmā;  
 Now I shall impart to thee  
 The most secret knowledge of Bhagavān.  
 Listen to the supreme thing I have to say.  
 This is the most essential of all My instructions.  
 Because thou art very dear to Me, I tell thee for  
 thine eternal good.

Be devoted to Me Who am Bhagavān,  
 And offer thy heart unto Me;  
 Think not of Me in the same way as a Karma-  
 Yogi  
 Or a Jñāna-Yogi or a Dhyāna-Yogi.



In all thine activities,  
 Worship My Transcendental Form Supreme of  
 Bhagavān,  
 Decrying all personal pride.  
 I promise thee that in that case  
 Thou shalt attain to My eternal service.  
 Thou art very dear to Me,  
 And that is why I tell thee about this pure Bhakti.

**F**ORSAKE all socio-religious systems  
 Of caste and stations in earthly life,  
 Renunciation of Karma or action,  
 Abandonment of the fruits of Karma,  
 Rigid austerities in order to control the inner and  
 outer senses,  
 Meditation, concentration of attention,  
 Obedience to the grandeur and lordliness of Iswara  
 And all such things that have been told before  
 In order to gain knowledge of Brahman and  
 Paramātmān.  
 Shun them all;  
 Take absolute refuge in Me, Who am the Highest  
 Divinity—  
 The Supreme Lord of all gods.  
 Then shall I deliver thee  
 From all the bondage of this world  
 As well as from offences and all sins and penalties



That may arise from thy abandonment of all those  
duties

That are enjoined thee by the Scriptures.

Mourn not for omitting these thy relative duties.

**W**HEN unalloyed devotion is directed unto Me,  
Then the true soul's normal health is easily  
recovered.

There is then no further need

Of practising religious duties, or austerities,

Or of cultivating Jñāna, Yoga or Dhyāna.

In thy fallen state, thou must conform

To all thy physical, mental and moral duties;

But while performing all those actions,

Incline not overmuch to My Negative Aspect in  
Brahman,

But think, dream, act and meditate on the Eternal  
Beauty

And the Supreme Sweetness of My Bhagavān-Form.

Shelter thou in the Beauty and Sweetness of My  
Love Divine.

**W**HEN the engrossed jiva performs any action for  
his livelihood,

He does it in view of the threefold lofty aims

Of Brahman, Paramātman and Bhagavān

Or for the sake of his own sensual enjoyment.

When the sensual enjoyment is in view,



He takes to Akarma and Vikarma—sources of great evils.

Whereas, all that he performs in relation to caste and station

And socio-religious duties

Assume a particular form in pursuance of Brahman, Paramātman or Bhagavān.

When he aims at Brahman,

His actions take the form of Karma and Jnāna ;

When he aims at Paramātman,

His conduct assumes the nature

Of consecrated selfless Karma-Yoga or Dnyāna-Yoga ;

While, when his aim is centred in Bhagavān,

His actions become pure services devotional.

This Bhakti is therefore the most esoteric principle,

And Prema or Divine Love

Is the most confidential final aim

Within the sacred Temple of the inner heart of all the jivas."

**T**HIS is the highest and most fundamental principle

In the Teachings of the Geetā.

Though there is a semblance in the external life

Of a Karmin, Jnānin, Yogin and a Bhakta or devotee,

Yet their distinctive predilection

And their goal, constitute a wide gulf of difference between them.



The Teachings of the Geetā are not meant  
 For those who are devoid of self-control,  
 Lacking in devotional aptitude, or those who are  
 unwilling  
 To serve the Supreme Lord and any of His devotees,  
 Or those who are envious of the All-Blissful  
 Transcendental Form of Krishna,  
 That is, those who regard as a product of Nature  
 His Eternal and All-loving Form  
 Ever-resplendant in all its glory  
 Transcending all earthly conceptions of human  
 beauty.

**H**E who will impart these confidential  
 teachings  
 To My devotees, will without doubt  
 Attain Me through his pure devotion unto Me.  
 None is there among the men of this world  
 So dear to Me as he;  
 No better loving service to Me, than such preaching.  
 He who will study these sacred discourses of ours,  
 Shall worship Me with Jnāna-Yajna;  
 This is My assurance.  
 He who, though not My devotee,  
 Yet faithful is, and free from malice,  
 Studies these teachings,  
 Shall gain the region  
 Of the pious, relieved of all his sins.



**O** Pārtha ! hast thou listened to this with rapt attention ?

Hast thou expelled thine ignorance, O Dhananjaya ?”

Arjuna said : “O Achyuta ! by Thy Grace,

The veil of my illusion is removed.

I have recovered my lost memory

And now remember that a jiva is Thy eternal servant ;

O Krishna ! my doubts are gone.

At Thy Holy Feet—

For complete surrender is the essential function of a jiva-soul,

I shall ever follow Thy Divine Injunctions.”

**S**ANJAYA said : “O Majesty ! thus did I hear This solemn discourse between Vāsudeva and great Pārtha—

A discourse that makes one tremble with awe and wonder.

Through the grace of Vyāsa have I heard

The secrets of this most secret Yoga system,

Delineated by Sree Krishna Himself,

Who is the Supreme Lord of all Yogas.

O Majesty ! remembering this wonderful and sacred discourse

Between Kesava and Arjuna

For ever more shall I rejoice.

O Majesty ! I am astounded at the recollection



Of that most wondrous Form, Sree Hari;  
And with remembrance comes joy  
Increased at every moment.  
Wherever is Shree Krishna, the Supremest Lord of  
Yoga,  
Wherever is Arjuna the noble archer,  
There are the fortunes of victory, and superhuman  
power,  
Success and polity;  
Such is my firm conviction."

— THE END —





**Swami B. H. Bon**