THE BHAGAVAD GITA

Original Stanzas—Split up Reading—Transliteration—Word for Word Translation—a Lucid English Rendering and Commentary

BY

Swami Chidbhavananda
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THE PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The Tamil version of this book was first published in 1951. Since then it continues increasingly popular among the Tamil-knowing public. The eighth edition of 10,000 copies is now on sale.

A request came to the author from several quarters that his Tamil commentary on the Bhagavad Gita might also be rendered into English for the benefit of the larger non-Tamil-knowing public. He has responded to the request and therefore we are enabled to bring out this English version. In order to cater for an extensive demand in India, we have chosen to sell it at a nominal price much less than the actual cost. Three impressions of 10,000 copies each were sold at Rs. 6-00. Due to steady raise of the price of paper, the price of the succeeding impressions were raised to Rs. 7/- and Rs. 7/50. Now for the same reason we are constrained to sell the sixth impression at Rs. 9/-.

Those who have a missionary zeal for spreading the message of the Gita, are invited to co-operate with us in this holy service.
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The Scriptural Trinity

Scriptures are indispensable to all religions. They save religions from mutation and from extinction. That faith which has no gospel for its guidance gets lost in a series of transformations. Finally it disintegrates and loses its individuality. But a faith that draws sanction and inspiration from a sacred book is able to hold its own. It has in such a holy document authoritative statements to encounter the opposition and meet the attacks of the heterodox. All the religions of the world that have endured the ravages of time and of transformation have their own scriptures for anchorage. That the Bible is the scripture of the Christians is well known even to those beyond the pale of the Christendom. The Qur-aan remains ever associated with the followers of the Islamic religion. The scripture of the Buddhist is the sacred collection of all the enlightened utterances of the Buddha, known as the Dammmapada. The followers of all the other important religions may also be said to be more familiar with their sacred
books than with their kith and kin. But the case of the Hindu is different. Among the followers of different paths, he alone is bewildered in regard to this question. He does not know which book he may term his scripture. If a mention is made of the Vedas he confesses he has never had occasion to see or handle such books as these, let alone the question of getting acquainted with their contents. Many a Hindu, may mention with some hesitance this or that as the sacred book from which he draws inspiration and guidance. But one who is widely read in the Hindu lore wavers before making a pronouncement of this kind. This dilemma is due to the immensity of the Hindu scriptures. The popular conviction is that the Vedas are the direct or indirect sources of all the sacred books pertaining to Hinduism. Several portions of the Vedas are said to have become extinct in the march of time. But the cream of the Vedas is the Upanishads, and these have been piously guarded both against extinction and mutilation. All the systems of philosophy in India derive their inspiration and authority from these Upanishads. They are also called the Forest Books because of the environment in which they became revealed to the sages, popularly known as Rishis. A synopsis and classification of the contents of the Upanishads goes by the name of the Brahma Sutras or the Vedanta Sutras. These Sutras are aphorisms elucidating the Vedanta Philosophy. These aphorisms are somewhat abstruse and unintelligible. Without a commentary it is rather difficult to follow them. But the position of the third book called the Bhagavad Gita
is different. It is the essence of the Upanishads, not in the sense that it is all condensed into terse form, but in the sense that the Vedanta Philosophy is made easy of understanding. When the Upanishads are compared to cows, the Bhagavad Gita takes the position of their milk. When one has plenty of milk at one's disposal one need not undergo the laborious task of maintaining cows. One who has studied and understood the Bhagavad Gita may be said to have caught the cardinal teachings of the Upanishads.

These three books, namely the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita are called the Scriptural Trinity—Prasthanatrayam. They constitute the final authority on scriptural matters. There is no conflict of views among these three. The elucidation of the ultimate Reality and the means of realizing It are categorically stated in these books. If a question is raised as to which is the scriptural authority in Hinduism, the answer is this trinity. There is not a single cardinal point in Hinduism that is not touched in these books. Elaborate treatment of particular aspects of spirituality such as Bhakti and Yoga may be found in other books. But they are mere explanations of what are pithily stated in the Scriptural Trinity. If ever a conflict arises between the statements in the Prasthanatrayam and other sacred books, the verdict of the former alone is traditionally accepted as final.

Enshrined in the Mahabharata

The Mahabharata or the Great Epic is held to be the fifth Veda. The Bhagavad Gita finds a place
in this stupendous record of human activities, aspirations and achievements. Chapters twenty-five to forty-two of the Bhishma Parva constitute this immortal discourse. It contains, therefore, eighteen chapters. The verses number seven hundred. Among modern scholars there are those who hold that the Bhagavad Gita is an interpolation in the Mahabharata. But the internal evidence does not bear any testimony to this contention. Both in diction and in development of the subject there is homogeneity running all through. The philosophy of the Gita explained and expanded becomes the Mahabharata. Conversely, Mahabharata condensed into philosophy becomes Gita. What the heart is to the human body, the Gita is to this Great Epic. So any attempt to trace a separate origin to the Song Celestial serves no purpose.

**God's grace versus Earthly Power**

The period of exile was over for the Pandavas. They had faithfully fulfilled all the hard terms imposed on them for the sin of gambling. They were now entitled to get back the extensive empire legitimately belonging to them. But the covetous Kaurava cousins bluntly refused to part with even an inch of land. Sri Krishna, the universally revered One, came to intervene as a mediator. He, the impartial One, pleaded with the Kauravas to be fair to the heirs-apparent to the throne. He even reminded them of the deadly consequences of a ruthless war if it should ensue. But greed born of blindness and covetousness would not see eye to eye with fairness. Persuading
the usurpers to take time and reconsider, Sri Krishna, the well-wisher of all, returned to Dwaraka, his capital.

Conciliation seemed well nigh impossible. Vigorous mobilization started on either side. Finally, the rivals had recourse to the very Person who came to mediate. Being omniscient Sri Krishna could know that they were both hastening to seek his help. In his turn he hastened to stage a setting befitting the occasion. In his bed chamber he posed a slumber. A solitary chair was placed behind his head. Arjuna was the first to enter. He could have occupied that seat; but he did not do so. He preferred to stand reverentially beside the Lord’s feet until he woke up. Duryodhana, the head of the uncompromising Kauravas, appeared next. With characteristic arrogance he occupied the vacant chair. Now Sri Krishna woke up. It was but natural that his eyes should fall first on Arjuna. Then followed an eventful conversation between them, in which help was promised to the Pandavas. The presence of Duryodhana in the chamber was then made known to the Lord who was still in a reclining posture on the cot. He sat up, turned round and welcomed that sworn enemy of the Pandavas. In his turn Duryodhana also sought help from Kesava. Strangely enough he was also assured help. Sri Krishna’s entire manpower and material resources were placed on one side, and he himself unarmed offered to be on the other side. Now the belligerent brothers were allowed to choose between the two, each according
to his inclination. Arjuna’s choice fell on Sri Krishna, solitary and unarmed though he was. Now the other applicant breathed a sigh of relief because he could get exactly what he wanted. He believed entirely in armament and mobilization; whereas Arjuna and his brothers subordinated power of arms and prowess of man to God’s grace. The consequences of these differing choices are too well known to require elucidation. Those who believed exclusively in the sinews of war and in earthly possessions perished along with them. But those who surrendered themselves to the will of God and acted for His glory gained both the here and the hereafter.

Life beset with Problems

Until he made his appearance on the battle-field Arjuna was actually panting for a deadly encounter with the wicked. He was erstwhile a stranger to doubts and despair. Just as an arrow darts through a cobweb, he had easily waded through several meshes in life. The calibre he was made of knew no problem that could not be solved. Even the combat that he was once obliged to have with Mahadeva, the Great God was no strain to him. Vijaya or born-conqueror as he was, he was wont to take all issues easy. He had not for a moment stopped to ponder over the consequences of the impending dreadful war. His conviction was that the man who dared to oppose him opposed righteousness itself. Impatiently he asked Sri Krishna to drive his car in between the two arrayed armies so that he might have a glance at those who were on the side of the
sinful war-mongers. The unswerving Charioteer took this opportunity to put to test the valour as well as the power of understanding of this accredited 'bull among men.' He drove the chariot just in front of Bhishma the grandsire and Drona the revered preceptor. They were both, till then, persons worthy of veneration to Arjuna. Was it possible to switch on to a counter attitude at a moment's notice? Arjuna was between the horns of a dilemma. He became perplexed. To fight or to flee was the question which he could not decide. Life always bristles with problems of varying magnitude. They are as incessant as waves on the sea. Individuals solve them, each according to his discernment and ability. This process of surmounting problems constitutes progress in life. But sooner or later a major crisis crops up, proving itself insurmountable. Valour and worldly wisdom are of no avail to meet it. Self-knowledge inspired by Divine Grace alone can equip a person to overcome the crisis. Arjuna, magnificently equipped as he was for the battle of life, now found himself unequal to the challenge of the situation. He was therefore now obliged to seek that enlightenment which would help him probe into the mystery of life and tide over the difficulty.

Allegory

The Mahabharata warfare allows itself to be viewed allegorically. Laws of nature are eternal and uniform. What happens once is bound to repeat itself under similar circumstances. The Law of Incarnation of God is equally uniform. It
is not selective and solitary as some people would have it. It happens whenever and wherever a necessity arises. The entire universe, sentient and insentient, has come out of God. An Incarnation is a special manifestation of His. He bodies Himself forth as a human being in this mundane world in order to clarify the highest of the spiritual and moral laws governing life. Sri Krishna's earthly career had a grandeur of its own. Through the drama of human life, He demonstrated the divine principles which are irrevocably linked with progress in life. On the battle-field of Kurukshetra human endeavours reap their corresponding results. That historic spot is itself a symbol of the human frame. Body-centred life is itself a kind of warfare. Parallel to the Pandavas and Kauravas at Kurukshetra there are the good and the bad tendencies lodged in the human structure. The teeming bad tendencies do very often out-number the good ones. Strangely enough, these good and bad tendencies are like cousins because of their common origin. Man is constitutionally a combination of good and bad inclinations. Evil habits are born of blind ignorance, whereas good inclinations originate in the whiteness of purity. Opposed to each other as they are, these two sets of tendencies try to dominate the bodily domain. The evil ones among them are ever adepts at mobilizing in their favour all possible resources of nature.

God is supremely above virtue and vice. There is no need for Him to entangle Himself in action
of any kind, good or bad. He is merely the changeless Witness. In His Presence activities take place in nature. Though Himself actionless, His Grace is ever in favour of the good. Sri Krishna’s agreeing to be an unarmed charioteer to the Pandavas signifies this great truth. Further, God is ever the Great Charioteer residing in the hearts of all. His presence as Conscience within the embodied beings is perceptible to the virtuous, but to the wicked His inner presence remains clouded.

The one great wielder of all actions in the Mahabharata warfare was Sri Krishna. The activities of all other heroes and participants put together were hardly a fraction of Sri Krishna’s work. In the midst of intense activity, He remained supremely serene and unaffected. The great catastrophe left no more impress in His mind than a reflection does in a mirror. Nothing in the universe could distract Him from His wonted poise. For this reason He is called Achyuta by the sages. The gist of His teaching is “Fight the battle of life. Let the virtue in you vanquish the vice. Any useful work that falls to your lot gives you enough of opportunity for self-discipline, emulation and emancipation. The Divinity within is your ever available guide. Attuning yourself to It, do your job as splendidly as you can. Every hero is obliged to wage the Mahabharata war in and through his own life.”

Life and Message Inseparable

Among the saviours of mankind there is an exemplary trait which is common to all. Their
life embodies the message they bring to mankind. Their precept is primarily through their personal life. What they practise in varying situations counts for everything. Their conduct is the core of their teaching. There is a belief that Sri Krishna's case does not come under this rule. The sponsors of this view contend that humanity will do well to emulate Sri Rama and Sri Krishna in two different ways. Imitate the life of the former but imbibe the instructions of the latter, dare not imitate the actions of Sri Krishna. This, in short, is their contention. But this idea is born of an imperfect understanding. Some Incarnations of God were obliged to wipe off the face of the earth thousands of wicked people. But this was an extraordinary deed under extraordinary circumstances. Extraordinary actions are not uncommon even with ordinary people. Today we do witness pious individuals walking on fire unscathed. Occasionally an individual is found to bear the weight of an elephant on his body. These are out of the ordinary. It is not necessary that every man should be endowed with such unusual powers. But in these human beings endowed with exceptional powers there may be many other rare qualities which we may emulate with profit. Now the question is what particular aspect of Sri Krishna's character defies imitation. Many a puerile moralist holds that Sri Krishna's relationship with innumerable Gopis stands on an exclusive footing, and that no mortal dare copy it. In other words, he maintains that actions of this kind are sanctionable in a divine being like Sri Krishna but not in ordinary mortals
like us. But this position of the pseudo-moralist arises from an imperfect understanding. There is not in this episode any trace of taint which the moralist would have us behold. Sri Krishna, the enchanter of the Gopis had just seen nine autumns when he had concluded his sports with the milkmaids of Brindavan. Is it ever possible for a boy of eight or nine to have any kind of conjugal relationship with thousands of women? Does the plan of nature admit of such a possibility? And it must be noted that those milk-maids proved themselves faithful to the core to their husbands. Those Gopis were inviting the entire lot in the township to go and join them in their mirth with the divine lad. Carnality has exclusiveness as its characteristic. This communion of the Gopis with Krishna is just the opposite of it.

And Sri Krishna is adored as Hrishikesa. The meaning of this appellation is that He is the lord of the senses. We, ordinary mortals, are slaves of the senses, whereas this Divine Being had complete sway over them. As long as one is body-bound and is prone to body-consciousness one cannot hope to taste supreme beatitude. This was the lesson that the boy Krishna had taught the Gopis. The goal of human life is to transcend body-consciousness. All through his earthly career Sri Krishna was delivering this message, poised in divinity. His victorious encounters with the wicked demons were extraordinary. In the midst of these deeds of valour He was ever established in His Supreme Self.

More
through living than by precept. He was delivering the message of poise to the poiseless humanity.

Wicked and sensuous rulers were in those days styled Asuras. It became imperative for Sri Krishna to do away with several of them. Every time he put an end to one of them he had perforce to give protection to a large number of women captives who were under the clutches of that villain. The deliverer of the innocent was in duty bound to give protection to thousands of the forlorn among the fair sex. His harem was thus swelling in number. He became their husband in the sense that he weaned them from moral depravity. The superhuman task that the present day Indian Government does in regard to the reclamation of abducted women gives us a glimpse into the humanitarian work that the Lord Hrishikesa had to do in those days. All living beings are, according to a religious concept, viewed as brides and the Lord as the only Bridegroom capable of espousing and guiding them. Sri Krishna literally demonstrated this position during his earthly sojourn.

Sages Nara and Narayana

In days of yore there were two Rishis known as Narayana and Nara. Tradition has it that towards the end of the Dwapara Yuga these sages incarnated themselves as Sri Krishna and Arjuna. In both these cases they embodied in themselves the principles of the Paramatman and the Jivatman. The relationship between God and man is elucidated in several other ways, in the Upanishads. The allegory
of two birds is well known. Seated on the same tree were two birds, one superior and the other ordinary. The superior one was established in its own glory. The other partook of the sweet and bitter fruits in the tree, thereby subjecting itself to pleasure and pain. Whenever it was overwhelmed with pain it beheld with admiration the other bird that happened to be poised in beatitude. The emulation that ensued was of great consequence. Every experience of bitterness drove the afflicted bird to the necessity of taking a hop towards the serene bird above. As the distance between the two narrowed, its afflictions were thinning away. In the proximity of the superior bird all pain was eradicated, and bliss emanated from within. What was more important was that the bliss-seeking bird realized that it was merely a reflection of the bliss-emanating original one. Finally the reflection got itself merged into the original.

The consummation of the Jivatman in the Paramatman has been construed in the Upanishads in this manner. The same principle is explained through the relationship that existed between Sri Krishna and Arjuna. They were inseparable chums. Time and again Arjuna had a difficulty to overcome. He was also in need of something to enrich his earthly life. On all such occasions Achyuta came to his rescue. In fact, he seemed indispensable to Arjuna in all matters of importance. Arjuna got His guidance in education, enthusing in play, support in contests and protection while drudging in exile. In all situations Sri Krishna was the friend, philosopher and guide of Arjuna. He had even given away his sister Subhadra.
in marriage to his friend. Finally when the great war broke out He chose to play the charioteer to His chum. It was on this momentous occasion that He imparted to his friend His supreme teaching immortalized as the Bhagavad Gita. A greater help than this could not have been rendered.

The relationship between the individual soul and the Cosmic Reality has thus been personified. Through countless births and deaths the former is a ward to the latter. Enthroned as it were in the heart of the Jivatman, the Paramatman escorts him through a series of earthly experiences. The mundane wants are appropriately supplied. The embodied soul is privileged to own all that is grand and useful. Finally ensues a crisis which puts earthly splendours to test. Pomp, power, property, pedigree and all such coveted endowments do then seem empty and purposeless. Understanding becomes clouded. Mind becomes overwhelmed with despondency. Life then seems a phantom. Sooner or later, in a greater or a smaller measure such an experience comes to every soul. There is no escape from it. Knowledge of the Supreme is the sovereign remedy in such a crisis. It is to the man of Self-knowledge that the plan and purpose of life become revealed. The basis of existence, the goal of action, the imperativeness of death—these mysteries of nature become self-evident to the man of Self-knowledge and to none else. Time was ripe for Arjuna to be enlightened on these fundamentals. Till then he had enough of worldly enjoyment and experience. Next he had to go into
the root-cause of everything. The Lord undertook to carry the Divine Light unto him.

Intended for People of Arjuna’s type

Of the five brothers Sri Krishna chose Arjuna in particular for his disciple. There was a significance in this act of His. If waging the war was the main issue there was Bhima ever thirsting for it. He was only awaiting sanction from his elder brother, Yudhishthira. If he had been called to duty he would have plunged headlong into it. On the other hand, if the issue was the vindication of righteousness, there was Yudhishthira, the very embodiment of it, who could have been made the main defender. But neither of them was chosen by the Lord. Arjuna the archer was deliberately selected for this purpose. Animal impetuosity was still dominant in Bhima. Such a man was not quite a fit agent for the practice of yoga. He would neither enquire into yoga nor translate it into action.

On the other side, a person of Yudhishthira’s calibre was already fairly well established in yoga. He could well have been called a yogi. Any further enlightenment carried to him would have been a superfluity. But Arjuna’s attainments stood somewhere between these two extremes. He had definitely outgrown animal propensities. At the same time he had not yet entered the domain that was divine. Only the ordinary human elements were predominant in him. In a normal man both virtue and vice are found intermingled in varying degrees. To eschew the lingering vice and to get well drilled in
the growing virtue is the purpose of life. Arjuna represented the normal man. To a person of his type the message of the Gita was bound to prove most fruitful. Any person endowed with normal human traits is competent both to study and to put into practice, the teachings of the Gita.

Why preached on the Battle-field?

Vedanta or Self-knowledge is born of śānti, peace. The Rishis of yore resided in forest retreats and made calm inquiries into the principles governing life. The Upanishads had their origin in the seclusion of the forest. But the Bhagavad Gita among the Scriptural Trinity occupies a peculiar place. It did not emanate in the woods. Warfront was the place of its origin. An exciting setting was deliberately chosen by the Lord. The common notion that Vedantism was concomitant with quietism was repudiated. That passivity or escape-mentality was the goal of virtuous life was given the lie. Vedanta is as much the science of action as it is the science of actionlessness. Equilibrium of mind can be had as much in a sanguinary battle-field as in the solitude of a cave. Vedanta is the sovereign science of human life at all its levels. People in every walk of life profit by putting the Vedanta philosophy to practice. The application of Vedanta energizes man and unfolds the best in him.

Sri Krishna sets an example in regard to the attitude one should assume towards one's earthly career. Long before he commenced his teens his sprightly sports at Brindavanam had all been
completed. He viewed this world as a huge playground. Life here is a delightful game. One ought to be a willing and gay participant in this play. Sri Krishna's boyish and innocent indulgences are indications of this attitude. One is expected to enter into life in the spirit in which a sportsman enters into his game. To such a person this earth is a mansion of mirth. But to him who plays his part with reluctance or disgust, this earthly career is a painful burden. This is the message of the boy Krishna of Brindavanam.

In the later part of his life he became the Kurukshetra Krishna. Then He threw light of another hue on life. Mundane existence is a veritable warfare. Nothing here on earth is achieved without a fight. He who has not learnt to wage the war of life does not inherit anything here or hereafter. The indulgent child cries to its mother for every trifling thing that it desires to own. That is a kind of battle befitting a baby. In order to secure a post or a job, a workman exhibits his talents and dexterity. That is an engagement of another pattern in the battle for existence. Building empires and strengthening them are the outcome of various kinds of warfare. Statecraft itself is a strategy in war. If man has taken a forward step in any field, it means he has successfully fought for it. Sri Krishna has himself demonstrated how to face baffling situations in life. His earthly career viewed from this angle is an endless warfare. His practice and precept go to corroborate this viewpoint. Bhagavad Gita teaches one to equip oneself for the battle of life,
Without self-preparation the warfare called life cannot be waged successfully. A battle-field like the Kurukshetra was therefore chosen as the proper pulpit for delivering this message.

Who recorded?

This dialogue transpired between Sri Krishna and Arjuna right on the battle-field. It was no assembly of learned men intent on intellectual or spiritual pursuit. How was it possible for anybody to get a record of this private conversation? It is but pertinent to raise a question of this type. Whenever a Divine Personality incarnates with a supreme mission in life, a talented sage also makes his appearance on earth with a holy commission. His sacred duty is to make a faithful record of the great events associated with the Divine Personality. It is only through the explanation given by the sage that the Divine Descent and Divine Sport become somewhat discernible to the man of ordinary understanding. Sage Valmiki came along with Sri Rama and expounded his exploits. Similarly Sage Vyasa accompanied Sri Krishna and drew a genuine pen picture of His earthly sojourn, thrilling as it was with miraculous events. Vyasa was endowed with unique intuitive vision. Space was no barrier between him and Sri Krishna. This sage had the spiritual potentiality to reflect the mind of Sri Krishna, the God-man. Nay, he revealed something more. He had the yoga power to bestow temporarily on Sanjaya this faculty of intuitive knowledge. Seated before Dhrtarashtra, the blind king, that fair-minded minister in his turn
accurately reported to him all that he saw and heard from the distant war front. In this manner three blessed souls simultaneously shared the privilege of partaking of the ambrosia of the Bhagavad Gita. While Arjuna was the immediate recipient, Vyasa and Sanjaya got access to it from two different places. Vyasa went on recording it while the other went on relating it to the inquisitive blind monarch. Into Dhrtarashtra's ears, however, these words of wisdom fell as empty words. Strangely enough there was in him a mental blindness to match the physical.

It will not be out of place here to point out the difference between the radio and the intuitive faculty. The function of the former is merely to catch, broadcast and reproduce the sound. Its effect is public. It is shared by all who lend their ears. Intuitive knowledge on the other hand is personal and private. All cannot share it. But it has the power to transform the experiencer into a sage. Even without the medium of language ideas can be caught by enlightened people. Vyasa had this spiritual capacity. By recording the divine message of the Lord, he has conferred a great boon on humanity.

Gospel of slaughter

It is possible to come across people who object to the study of the Bhagavad Gita. They hold that the dialogue was intended to drag Arjuna somehow into the carnage. Arguments had to be invented in order to justify that nefarious act. And Sri Krishna proved himself an adept in the art of making a virtue of needless killing. What ensued was a wholesale
massacre. Without compunction Arjuna did away with his grandsire as well as with his preceptor. Killing is undoubtedly a heinous sin resorted to by wicked people. Religion is quite against it. Just as darkness does not co-exist with light, religion is incompatible with bloodshed. Those who are pious and intent on practising the tenets of religion should scrupulously eschew pseudo-religious books which advocate destruction. In this manner charges are found levelled against the Bhagavad Gita.

But what actually is the position of the Gita? It does not stop half way. It goes to the very core of this issue. It proclaims that the panorama of nature is an interminable battle-field. Both the macrocosm and the microcosm are permeated with life. A drop of water contains countless atomic life germs. They are atomic and insignificant when viewed from our angle of vision. But when judged from their own standpoint they are as much important as we claim we are. In the air contained within our closed fist an equally extensive world of living beings exists. The same is the case with a clod of earth. Minute and imperceptible life units muster earth, air and water. Life is all pervasive. When a human being breathes once, millions of atomic life units are done away with. A growing plant is constantly consuming bacteria in millions. And each bacterium is a life unit by itself. There is no food which is not constituted of organic matter. This means that life subsists on life. To live is to live out. New forms of life are built at the cost of old ones.
Destruction is involved in construction. Unalterable is this scheme of Nature. Not a moment passes without destruction taking place. Recognizing this truth in its nakedness is the first step in understanding the plan of Nature.

Creation, preservation and destruction are the three phases of ceaseless activity going on in Nature. These may be termed the triple purpose of cosmos. What is sunrise to one place is sunset to another. It is simultaneously the setting sun as well as the rising sun. Birth into a new body is putting an end to the old worn-out body. Seed dies in order to give birth to a seedling. Beings perish in their old bodies prior to their reincarnation in new ones. The interval between a creation and a destruction is called preservation. Even as the sides of a triangle are interdependent these triple activities are interrelated. If, of these, destruction or death is truly understood the other two become self-evident.

It has to be admitted that Nature is an extensive slaughter-house. Relentlessly she wipes out the unwanted ones. There is science as well as art in this act of Nature. The Bhagavad Gita recognizes this hard fact and assumes the position of the science of destruction. While one depends on nature for subsistence, killing can no more be avoided than heat while residing in the sun. Having gained entrance into this arena, the Gita exhorts, “Do the job that is incumbent on you, as a religious act.” All attempt to avoid destruction is futile. Waver not as a vegetating renegade. A weakling has no place here or
hereafter. In the great cosmic plan of action play your part as a hero. Wake up to the reality of this world. Fight the battle of life. Fear nothing. Do not falter in your duty. At the same time be not a slave to duty either. Perform your duty for its own sake. It is by working in freedom that you rise to the realm of worklessness. To a knowing one, duty such as warfare is as sacred as worship in a sanctuary. This being the message of the Gita it has to be accepted as a gospel of carnage as much as a gospel of preservation of social solidarity. In this world of mutual destruction, practise the science of destruction as religiously as the science of mutual help. He alone is able to save the world who has learnt to slay the wicked in a spirit of worship. In unmistakable terms the Gita exhorts man to sanctify slaughter into a holy act. For this reason the Gita may be proudly proclaimed as the gospel of carnage. Virtue consists in wiping out the wicked.

Book of dissension and disruption

Positive service is rendered by a wind that brings rain-bearing clouds; but a dust storm has only a nuisance value. There are not wanting people who classify the Gita with the dust-raising whirlwind. Conflicting commentaries, they say, have cropped up round this book. They have led to endless dissension and verbal warfare. Had Sri Krishna been precise in his pronouncement, this oft-recurring pettifogging could have been avoided. Interpretation of the Gita has resulted in purposeless and endless argumentation.
There is yet another charge brought against this book. It affords scope for reactionaries and revolutionaries to thrive and create dissension in a peace-loving and law-abiding society. This book is like gunpowder to those who want to create an explosion. It encourages youth to revolt against respectable elders. That the killer is no sinner and that in no way he transgresses the moral law is the core of the teaching of the Gita. It states that man is not bound by his action. The worst of all of Krishna's statements is that he is 'the art of gambling among gamblers.' Can there be a greater encouragement to perversion? Are these not sufficient clues to misguide the perverted ones in society? The seed of social disruption lies hidden in this so-called scripture. Charges such as these have to be met and answered.

Really there is no room for confusion of issues in the Gita. Yoga Sastra that this book is, it does not countenance disruption and dissension of any kind. The commentators of the Gita were not men of empty talk and purposeless living. In their own way they have been pillars of society. The tree is known by its fruit. The contribution to social welfare and solidarity that the commentators have made through their personal lives is incalculable. They were the real lovers of society. No trace of self-seeking or exploitation could be found in them. On the other hand culture was enshrined in them, and codes of conduct found expression in and through them. When such sterling characters had drawn inspiration from the Gita, it cannot be easily disposed
of, as a book of dissension. Each system of philosophy traces its origin to the Gita, thereby claiming sanctity for itself and adding to the glory of the Gita. Various systems of philosophy go to enrich man's spiritual life. These systems supplement and complement one another. They are not empty wrangles as the thoughtless would have it. Even as Nature is the material for various branches of knowledge, Gita is the source of inspiration for the various systems of philosophy.

It is no fault of a sacred book if it happens to be misunderstood by the uninitiated. Ambrosia can be mishandled and turned into poison. Because of this possibility it is not proper to condemn it. If men of evil tendency resolve to read their meaning into the Gita it is no fault of that sacred book. It has been the source of inspiration to thousands of holy men in their path to perfection and it will continue to be so for ever. Time will have no adverse effect on this book. It is an eternal and infallible spiritual guide. Persons bereft of sense-control, devotion, detachment, austerity, self-abnegation and a passion for service will not be able to draw the right inspiration from this book. In unmistakable terms the Gita proclaims the unity and sanctity of existence and exhorts man to resort to right action in order to realize this fundamental oneness.

Change-over from the Pleasant to the Good

Sri Krishna and Arjuna are eternal companions. They are kith and kin. A closer relationship than theirs cannot be conceived of. It is indeed an objec-
tive representation of the relationship between the Paramatman and the Jivatman. In whatever stage of evolution the individual soul happens to be placed, its origin from and connection with the Cosmic Soul can in no way be gainsaid. Support, sustenance and inducement to self fulfilment come constantly and in abundance from the Cosmic Self to the individual self. This cosmic function is reflected in these two personalities. Sri Krishna continues to help Arjuna at all levels whenever he stands in need. If Arjuna distinguishes himself in education, culture, administration, statesmanship, the art of averting danger, combating the enemy, accumulating wealth and such other accomplishments, the contribution that Sri Krishna makes in all these respects is not of a small measure. Sri Krishna's sister Subhadra is snatched away by Arjuna. Though the entire family is up against him for the time being, Sri Krishna alone is a party to the elopement. Thus directly or indirectly Sri Krishna is behind every step in the progress that Arjuna makes.

All that Arjuna has gained so far is termed Preyas—things that bring prosperity, pleasure, power and glory to life. Souls incarnate many times in order to acquire and enjoy these pleasures. Thus enjoyment has a place in the cosmic plan.

Sooner or later comes a turning point in life when the individual self sees the vanity and emptiness of Preyas, and hankers after something permanent. The slow, steady, and imperceptible mental evolution that Arjuna underwent, the transitory
nature of the earthly pleasures that he enjoyed, the conviction that came to him of the vanity of earthly splendour, the all-destroying effect of the cruel war—all these contributed to Arjuna's change over from Preyas to Sreyas.

All human endeavours fall under two categories, the Preyas and the Sreyas. Among the human acquisitions and experiences there is not a single aspect that lies outside the pale of these two. Pleasures that are sense-bound and prone to mutation come under the category of Preyas. The generality of mankind are seekers of Preyas. To them anything beyond the ken of the senses and the intellect is unbelievable. Any endeavour to obtain Sreyas, cannot be looked for in them. But there are a rare few who aspire for the transcendental, hard though it is to achieve. Scriptures designate this transcendental experience as the Sreyas. All virtue, strength, self-denial and sublimity are born of Sreyas. Arjuna was till then the seeker of Preyas. The crisis had now brought a sudden transformation in him. Sri Krishna had patiently waited for this turning-point in his life. All that came under Preyas might be imparted to one who claimed kinship and equality of status with the teacher. But that kind of relationship was not sufficient for bestowing Sreyas. The reverential attitude of a disciple was quite essential for it. Now Arjuna has perforce taken to the attitude of a true disciple. Sri Krishna is happy over it. With love and compassion he imparts the Sreyas to him. Yoga and spiritual enlightenment are all contained in this Sreyas.
The sacred act of conferring the Srevas does not take place piecemeal. It comes as a sudden outburst of illumination metamorphosing the recipient into a divine being. At the outset this experience may seem to daze the disciple. But worthy of the enlightenment as he has become, he gets spontaneously attuned to it. As a newly hatched duckling takes to water, the enlightened soul identifies itself with the Cosmic Whole. The Upanishads are intended to awaken cosmic consciousness in the aspirant. One of their revelations runs as follows: “What is beyond the universe is Infinity, what has apparently become the universe is Infinity. Infinity alone is in the manifested and unmanifested states.” These sacred books aim at driving home this all-consuming truth in the mind of the novice. In varieties of pattern it is this grand truth that is proclaimed by one and all of them. A student who has undergone the required mental purification catches the message in an instant and merges his individual consciousness into the Cosmic Consciousness, which is Reality.

In this process of imparting Self-knowledge the Bhagavad Gita has a uniqueness and a sublimity of its own. The first chapter in it is merely the setting. No utterance of the Lord finds a place there. But in and through the second and third verses of the second chapter His message in its entirety is delivered. It runs as follows: “At this crisis, wherefrom has this dejection come upon you, O Arjuna, depriving you of your manliness, debarring you from heaven and debasing your earthly
career? Son of Pritha, yield not to cowardice. It ill becomes you. Scorcher of foes, cast off this base faint-heartedness and wake up."

The clue is hereby given to a life of triumph and conquest. This is the core of the teaching of the Gita. Each of the subsequent chapters in the book is an elaboration of this idea from a particular angle. The strong and the virile alone are fit for a life of great consequence. Achievements both here and hereafter are born of competence and manly action. Strength nurtures life. Weakness wears it away. Potency drives away disease; debility aggravates it. Virtue and righteousness are the outcome of strength. Vice and wickedness have their origin in weakness. Cowardice creates crookedness; it is the feeble that resort to foul play. Action born in manliness leads to freedom, and its opposite to bondage. Strength and Sreyas are identical. This is the teaching of the Gita.

The Bhagavad Gita Upanishad

The Upanishads have their origin in the Vedas. The belief is that the Vedas are without a beginning. For this reason great sanctity is attached to them. But the Bhagavad Gita is an integral part of the Mahabharata, an epic that came into being only the other day. Notwithstanding its recency, the Gita occupies a place on a par with the Upanishads. The reason is not far to seek: The essence of all the Upanishads is contained in the Gita. If those ancient books are cows, the Gita is their milk. Cows are of various hues and of differing stature. But the milk yielded by them is
the same. Maintaining cows may not be possible for all. The laborious art of milking is not also commonly known to all. But to partake of milk is the privilege of one and all. The choice of converting this milk into curds, butter and ghee is again in the hands of all. In similar manner, the Gita may be treated as an easily available guide for life here and hereafter. Besides, the cow cannot be taken wherever one chooses to go. In a preserved form milk may be transported anywhere. The idea is that one who has imbibed the teachings of the Gita need not take the trouble of probing into the rather terse contents of the Upanishads. Sri Krishna was gracious enough to clarify the abstract teachings of the Upanishads. Arjuna’s craving for enlightenment was the immediate cause of this gracious clarification. Love of the calf induces the cow to secrete and yield milk in plenty. That bounteous supply goes to benefit many other parched mouths. This is the case with the Bhagavad Gita also. Milk may be consumed in proportion to one’s digestive power. From the athlete down to the ailing, all can have recourse to it as a wholesome food. The utility of the Gita is equally all-ranging. It is an indispensable guide to a novice who has just commenced his spiritual career. Even to an adept who is at the proximity to the goal it has a message to deliver. Life both in its secular and sacred aspects gets abundantly enriched by the application of the tenets of the Gita. For these reasons a status is conferred on the Bhagavad Gita equal to that of the ancient Upanishads.
Innumerable are the sciences that have come into being in the march of time. New branches of them are taking shape day after day. Man's knowledge in all its phases is rapidly on the increase. In the midst of this growing knowledge man is becoming vividly aware of another fact. The more he probes into the mystery of Nature, the more he is able to realize that the unexplored aspects of it happen to be numberless. What is already known is infinitesimal, and what is yet to be known is evidently infinite. This is the case with the scholar as well as with the beginner. Taking this limitation of the human intellect into account, an ancient sage raised a question: "What is it, knowing which, man need make no more search for knowledge? What is it, knowing which, the secrets of Nature do all become revealed?" Bold and indomitable enquiries were made. The doors of Nature were persistently knocked at. Relentless searches were made within and without. This superhuman attempt did not go in vain. The sages of yore had met with enormous success in their profound enquiry. They came face to face with Truth. They intuited the Basis of the elusive and fleeting phenomenal world. The Substratum having been contacted, all mysteries got themselves revealed and explained. This knowledge of the Substratum is known as Brahma Vidya. It is eulogized in terms of other names as well. Theologians have their own terminologies applied to It. Sivajnanam, Atmabodham, Paravidya, the Kingdom of Heaven, Nirvikalpa Samadhi, Nirvanam, Allah —
these are some of the appellations applied to It. The metaphysicians call It the Being in contrast with Nature, which because of its constant state of flux is called the Becoming. The purpose of the Gita is to impart the Brahma Vidya, above everything else. Arjuna merely wanted to know whether he was to fight or beat a retreat. Instead of deciding the immediate issue, why did Sri Krishna digress into a dissertation on that profound subject? Yes, there was a supreme purpose behind it. Offering immediate solutions to immediate problems is one kind of enlightenment. But when ignorance is rooted out all problems get solved once for all. With the dawn of Brahma Vidya the mist of nescience vanishes. Sri Krishna chose to impart this Supreme Knowledge. Among the gifts bestowed on human beings, Brahma Vidya reigns supreme. When the recipient becomes worthy and competent, Enlightenment inevitably comes from the Supreme.

Yoga Sastra

Every science has its twin aspects — theory and practice. Intellectual grasp of a subject is theory, its application is practice. Many a student of Vedanta or any other system of philosophy runs the risk of being entangled in mere theorizing. He may derive some intellectual pleasure in such wrangles. But life remains untouched. On the other hand, Brahma Vidya is what touches and transforms life. It is intensely practical. When applied to life it is called Yoga Sastra. This is one of the appellations by which the Bhagavad Gita is known. If a wage
carner applies the principles of the Bhagavad Gita to his life, he will become a better wage-earner. A farmer will equip himself better if he only translates the Gita principles into action. A merchant is bound to thrive in his business by putting these tenets to practice. An officer will execute his duty more efficiently when he becomes a yogi. A teacher will throw brighter light on his subject by his taking to the practice of yoga. To sum up, man becomes well equipped for life by taking to yoga. An efficient man is otherwise called a yogi.

All the eighteen chapters in the Gita are designated, each as a type of yoga. The function of the yoga is to train the body and the mind. Progress of any kind in yoga is not for him who is given to weakness or depression. The sorrowing one takes himself off the path of yoga. Patanjali, the great author of Yoga Sastra, makes it plain that yoga is not for him who is given to dejection or worry. Poise and a blissful attitude are indispensable for the practice of yoga. But these were exactly what were not found in Arjuna on the eve of the war. A sense of frustration had overtaken him. In the place of an indomitable calibre of mind, dejection and despondency had marked him for their own. That was just the opposite of the mental make-up required of a man of yoga. Still the first chapter in the Gita is designated a system of yoga. It is called Arjuna Vishada Yogam—Yoga of Arjuna’s Dejection. This is no more apt than calling darkness light. Why then is this chapter recognized as a system of yoga?
Distress and dejection are of two kinds. One kind pertains to earthly desires. There are those who languish because they have not amassed in abundance. That kind of lamentation wears away personality. Valour is thereby set at naught. In a victim to despondency a cloud of ignorance collects more and more. But the dejection that comes over Arjuna on the battle-field does not fall under this category. In fact he dispenses with worldly desires. Even suzerainty over the three worlds has no attraction for him. He is not able to see what exactly his duty is— to wage the war or to go into the wilderness. It is this conflict that perturbs him. The plan and purpose of life become more mysterious. Life becomes an unbearable burden. So he yields to a breakdown. This attitude bespeaks detachment from worldly concerns. A sort of spiritual anguish has overtaken him. The Messengers of Light advocate this kind of distress as a prelude to spiritual enlightenment. Here it prepares Arjuna for yoga. Blessed are the distressed in heart; they shall be comforted in enlightenment. This is the law of life. Hence this distress of Arjuna is also called a system of yoga.

All the eighteen yogas contained in the eighteen chapters may be reduced to four – the Karma Yoga, the Raja Yoga, the Bhakti Yoga and the Jnana Yoga. Tradition holds that spiritual life begins with Karma Yoga and goes on evolving into the other three respectively. That the sequence of the chapters in the Gita bears testimony to this is their contention.
There are others who compare these four Yogas to the bud, the tender fruit, the unripe fruit and the fully ripe fruit. But neither Sri Krishna's life nor his utterances lend any support to this kind of gradation. It is true that the development of the subject in a chapter leads to the theme of the next. Nevertheless this does not warrant holding that one System of Yoga is anterior to another. All through the discourse the Lord equates Karma with Supreme Jnana. In several places Bhakti is placed on a par with Jnana. Elsewhere Raja Yoga gets a footing parallel to Bhakti. In Him these Yogas suffer no gradation; neither is there anything like evolution of one into the other. These seemingly different Yogas may be said to be various readings of the same phenomenon—the moral and spiritual growth of the individual. While playing the part of the charioteer, Sri Krishna reined four white horses yoked to the chariot. They symbolize the four Yogas yoked to the human career. Those snow-white steeds suggest purity as the basis of all the Yogas. Their combined effort is necessary to draw the chariot forward. All the four Yogas together stimulate life with spirituality. Since Sri Krishna handles all the four Yogas with equal importance he is called Yogeswara.

Method of Teaching

Incarnations of God as a group have made their teachings as simple as the air we breathe. Children as well as the uneducated are able to grasp their gospels with ease. Abstract principles and abstruse
ideas are brought by these messengers within the ken of the common man. Any commentary on their teachings is superfluous. On the other hand commentators as a class have tried to read their own cults and creeds into the inspired utterances of the Incarnations. Intellectual sinews such as logic and disputations are required by philosophers and creed-mongers. But the Messengers of God have given their spiritual food to humanity with natural ease and simplicity. Their message is to the aspiring souls what the mother's milk is to the hungry babe. The utterances of Sri Rama, Buddha and Jesus require no clarification or elucidation. They directly appeal to the heart and the head.

The Bhagavad Gita is also easy to understand. A faithful translation into a known language is all that is required. A devoted and repeated reading of chapter after chapter will reveal to an ordinary student all the sublime ideas contained in that sacred book. Abstruse statements are just a few, interspersed here and there, and they have no direct bearing on practical issues. They are intended merely to provide the philosophical background. The teachings of the Gita are as simple as the air we take in and at the same time as profound as the cosmos around us. It is appropriate that Sanskrit serves as the medium of expression. There is precision as well as profundity in this language. There is elegance as well as elasticity. All the same the simplicity of its mode does not preclude philosophical subtleties. Many shades of thought get
themselves expressed in a single statement. Because of its elasticity the Gita does not lose its individuality in a multiplicity of thoughts. Without undergoing any change within itself, a mirror faithfully reflects all faces presented before it. Such is also the speciality of this Gospel. It offers inspiration to all cults and creeds, points out the harmony among them, and itself remains supremely above them all.

There is another speciality in the Gita. It clarifies principles and types of personalities who embody certain principles. But this clarification is not done exhaustively at a stretch in any particular setting. Various aspects of a theme are brought to light in varieties of pattern under varying circumstances and from various points of view. As an article of food is best utilized and assimilated when prepared in different forms and combinations, spiritual disquisitions in the Gita are made quite palatable through a variety of presentations. One or two examples will drive home the point. "A Pandita or a wise man is he who mourns neither for the living nor for the dead." This definition gives us an insight into the characteristic of such a personality. Elsewhere comes another fitting definition supplementing the previous one. "Same-sighted is the wise man towards creatures high and low." Here our conception of the Pandita gets a little more widened. In two more places the word Pandita serves to enlarge our idea of him. If we piece these distinctions together we get a complete picture of the Pandita type of personality. Let us examine one more example — yoga.
Perhaps this word occurs most often throughout the discourse. We shall however content ourselves with two or three typical definitions of it. "Yoga is the very dexterity of work," is a very telling statement. "Even mindedness is yoga," is another equally important definition. "Disentanglement from contact-born misery is known as yoga." This is yet another statement in explanation of it. Yoga in its entirety is in this manner elucidated stage by stage.

To a superficial reader it may seem that quite a number of pet ideas are repeated in the book to the point of boredom. But a close study of the book is bound to disprove this view. Profound ideas allow themselves to be approached, applied and verified from different angles of vision. We may take the word yoga again for enquiry. In the first six chapters it connotes Karma Yoga in all of its aspects. In the course of the second six chapters it applies to Bhakti with its numerous implications. The trend of the last six chapters is towards the elucidation of Jnana through the use of the same word, yoga. The definition of yoga is capable of kaleidoscopic changes from the standpoints of action, devotion and knowledge. The principle of the ego may also be said to have various shades of meaning. Coloured by different settings it subjects itself to several readings. These multi-readings do not, however, in any manner mutilate the simplicity and directness of the terminology. They only help comprehend the meaning lucidly and in as deep a
manner as possible. Now we shall take up the word Atman. In the course of the first six chapters of the book it connotes Existence. In the next six chapters this word applies to Bliss in particular, while in the last six chapters it leans towards Knowledge. When these points are borne in mind the question of repetition of the same ideas does not arise. The Gita suffers neither from extravagance nor from meagreness of statements of fact. All salient points are proportionately and exhaustively dealt with. A clear and exhaustive exposition of Existence - Knowledge - Bliss or Sat - cit - anandam is the theme of this book.

Sruti and Smriti

The popularity that the Gita enjoys is indisputable. The reason for this is patent. It occupies simultaneously the position of the Sruti and Smriti. What these two types of scripture are has to be understood first. The Upanishads come under the first category. For generations together they have been preserved by accurate verbal transmission by an unbroken succession of masters and disciples. Notwithstanding this seemingly tedious process, these sacred books have suffered no mutilation. The original inspired utterances and the ideas enshrined therein have all been preserved in tact. These fundamentals continue to be to the spiritual men, what multiplication tables are to students of mathematics. Neither of these can be modified or altered. Spiritual tenets are eternal verities.
While *Sruti* means what is heard, *Smriti* means what is remembered. Social laws, usages, customs and manners and moral codes do all come within the purview of Smriti. It may be styled as applied sociology. Authentic Smritis have always had their basis in Srutis. Among the oft-quoted Smritis those of Parasara and Manu may be said to be typical. But these Smritis are not held veritable and inviolable. According to times, places and circumstances they undergo modification. An individual or a body of law-givers create these Smritis periodically according to social needs. The Constitution that the Free Republic of India has made for itself may in a way be termed as the latest among the Smritis. These books are religio-social codes undergoing changes corresponding to the changes in the order of society.

In the Bhagavad Gita the *Sruti* and the *Smriti* get themselves blended. Because of its being an exhaustive collection of spiritual laws, the Gita is called the *Sruti*. These spiritual laws when applied to life are called the Sanatana Dharma—eternal order and righteousness. The Gita may therefore be treated as a manual of the Sanatana Dharma. It is a Directory on social fabric and social growth. It further points out how the eternal verities can be applied in modified forms under changing circumstances. A parallel may make the point clear. Gold is ever a valuable metal. But the mint it undergoes varies in different reigns. Coins of one reign may not gain currency in another, but the value of gold
is not affected thereby. Sanatana Dharma is like
the gold while its varying applications are like its
mintages. Smritis also have their limitations like
the minted coins. But among the Smritis the mintage
of the Gita is unique in itself. Its currency is not
affected in any manner by extraneous changes. The
duties of man enjoined in it are of a universal nature.
Problems pertaining to life, individual as well as
collective, are solved in it on the basis of fundamen-
tal principles. In this perishing world there are
many problems which are of a persisting nature.
The function of the Gita is to handle these persisting
problems. Life has two aspects—the changeful
and the changeless. The Bhagavad Gita is the master-
key to both the aspects. It correctly reveals the
phenomenal and the noumenal. For this reason
this book is called the Smriti among the Smritis. It
remains unalterable under all circumstances.

Exposition of the Sentence Sublime

There is a tenor common to all the great scrip-
tures of the world. Directly or indirectly they are
all exponents of the mahā-vākyam, the Sentence
Sublime. Now, what is this mahā-vākyam? It proclaims
the relationship between God and man. The
Vedas contain four such proclamations. They are
regarded the most sacred among inspired utterances.
The most popular one among them is ‘Tat tvam asi’
This sentence contains three words. When literally
translated it means ‘That thou art’. In prose order
it is ‘Thou art That’. That you are not alien to
God is the purport of this sublime sentence. In
some form or other this idea is contained in all the scriptures. That book which does not deal with this supreme idea is no scripture. The Bhagavad Gita is from beginning to end a grand commentary on the sublime statement—Thou art That.

There are eighteen chapters in the Gita. They are conventionally called the Three Sixes the triṣṭakam. The first six chapters elucidate the word thou in the mahā-vākyam. The word stands for the Jivatman or the individual soul with its potentialities and possibilities. The seeming limitations of the individual soul, and how they could be overcome to the point of perfection are fully delineated here. Chapters seven to twelve form the second sātkam. This portion deals with the word That indicating God or the Ultimate Reality. What is called Nature is none other than that Reality contacted through the senses and the intellect. The Self that is immanent in Nature, that which transcends Nature and that which is the Absolute—all these are the same Cosmic Personality viewed from different grades of intuition. The third sātkam contains the last six chapters. The predicate art gets explained in this portion. The inviolable relationship between the Cosmic Reality and the individual soul is well established in this part of the book. In this manner the three aspects of the mahā-vākyam have an equal number of chapters allotted for the elucidation of each of them. Giving equal weight to all the three is another speciality of the Gita. Indeed it seems that this book has been divinely
planned solely for the purpose of the exposition of the *maha-vakyam*.

**Commentaries**

The function of a commentary is to expand, explain, expound and extol the contents of a great book. It is but natural that numerous commentaries crop up round divinely inspired books. Several are the commentaries on the Scriptural Trinity—the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita. If a person desires to extol or establish a particular creed or school of thought, it becomes his first and foremost duty to derive authority and sanction for it from this Scriptural Trinity. Otherwise his creed or cult runs the risk of being rejected as heterodox. The commentaries that have come up so far do often suffer from one serious disadvantage. Consciously or unconsciously their authors have tried to read the meaning of their own creeds and cults into these three sacred books. Among these three books again, it is easier for them to read their own particular philosophy into the Bhagavad Gita than into the other two books. This being the case, the largest number of commentaries now available are naturally on the Gita.

Translation is another important consideration. The popularity or usefulness of a book is not to be judged by the number of languages into which it is translated. The one solitary book that has been rendered into almost all the languages in the world is the Holy Bible. But an achievement of this type need not in itself be a hallmark of divine perfection,
Political power, missionary zeal and material resources are factors capable of creating popularity for anything under the sun, not to speak of a book like the Holy Bible. Christendom has had the benefit of all these three simultaneously. But the position of the Bhagavad Gita is different. The propagators of this book have never exploited extraneous powers for their purpose. The translators of this book were actuated by the noble urge that the great ideals contained in it were highly beneficial to humanity. Propagation of dogma, cult and creed comes under one category and the propagation of ideals and principles under another. That the Bhagavad Gita is an embodiment of life principles which are supremely above all cults and creeds is self-evident. The influence that it leaves in the mind of its student bears ample testimony to this fact. Let us take a striking case for example. The first English rendering of this book was done by the East India Company. Warren Hastings, the then Governor-General, had contributed a foreword to it. Happily his exact words are available to us. "These (writings of the inhabitants of India) will survive when the British Dominion in India shall have long ceased to exist, and when the sources which it once yielded of wealth and power are lost to remembrance." He alone can make this significant utterance, who has known the Law that governs human life. And the Bhagavad Gita teaches just those Laws and principles that govern human life. These Laws and principles require no patron or defender. Even without the aid of
propagators these principles ever propagate themselves in the scheme of Nature.

The commentators on the Gita were those who had the least to do with pomp, power or wealth. They had their minds anchored on things sacred. There is a monument to their devout labours erected at Kurukshetra. A temple dedicated to the Bhagavad Gita is today found in that holy place. It is claimed that this was the actual spot on which this immortal utterance was made by the Lord. In that temple are enshrined as many as three hundred commentaries on the Gita, belonging to different periods of time. The writers of these commentaries were themselves men of sterling character and deep erudition. The Bhagavad Gita was the common source of inspiration to one and all of them. This Fountain of Life does not get exhausted with the flow of time. To the spiritual aspirants it is as inspiring today as it ever has been. Because of its eternal value and appeal new and modern commentaries are naturally cropping up.

The Best among the Commentaries

Among this multiplicity of commentaries, is there not the possibility of a student getting stranded as in a forest? As they run into hundreds, which of them is to be accepted and which, rejected? This is a question that may well baffle a novice. The sunrise has a beauty and charm of its own and it can be extolled variously by various branches of science. Astronomy, astrology, medical science, natural science, mathematics, meteorology, biology and
several other sciences are capable of viewing this phenomenon, each from its own angle of vision. The sun is the one source of inspiration to all these viewpoints. As the same rising sun provides scope for being variously viewed, so does the Bhagavad Gita allow itself to be commented on, in varieties of ways. It gives inspiration to innumerable cults and creeds; and at the same time it is supremely above them all. A point may now be stated which goes to proclaim the glory of the Gita in an effective manner. There is a commentary which may be claimed to have been the fore-runner of the Gita itself. We may go a step further in our pronouncement and make bold to say that the life of Krishna is the grand source out of which the Gita has emerged. The life that Sri Krishna lived is the most sublime embodiment of Vedantic principles. The greatest contribution that an Incarnation of God makes to the world is His life and career. He is necessarily a man with a message. His deeds and exploits, even more than His utterances deliver that message in unmistakable terms. Through the force of His character He exerts an abiding influence on those who come in contact with Him. His demeanour under varying circumstances teaches humanity more eloquently than His declamation, if any. But Sri Krishna did speak on quite a few occasions. The best among His discourses is of course the Gita on the battle-field. But the contents of this talk were constantly demonstrated in His career. He preached nothing but what He put into practice all through His life. There-
fore the greatest ‘commentary’ on the Gita is the life of its author.

The first and foremost of His mandates to Arjuna was—Kṣudram hi daya daurbalyam tyaktvottisṭha paramātapa—“Rise, O hero, casting off your petty faint-heartedness.” More significant than this mandate was Madhusudana’s remaining firm as a rock under many a catastrophic circumstance. His action proved itself more effective than his words. Feebleness found no more quarter in his mind than darkness finds in the sun. He exhorted Arjuna to heroic action, and he was himself an embodiment of superhuman achievements. Parthasarathi that He was, He put it to His disciple to pour forth love in abundance to all. And for His part He was Love incarnate. “A champion of righteousness makes no distinction between friend and foe” was the statement made by Sri Krishna. He proved himself an embodiment of that teaching. He behaved in the manner in which fire does. It burns them who ill-contact it and serves them who handle it properly. A righteous man’s concern is to uphold virtue and to wipe out its opposite. This was the very act that was found exemplified in Govinda’s earthly career. “Nature is the embodiment of activity; Atman, the Substratum behind it, is unaffected by action.” This is one of the cardinal teachings of Sri Krishna. This principle stood supremely illustrated in the Teacher himself. All the other characters in the epic of the Mahabharata rolled into one did not do a quarter of the work that Sri Krishna did. While the physical
aspect of his was engaged in such intense activity, the Pure Consciousness of the Great Self in Him was ever established in Its Sublimity. Unlike an ordinary mortal he never wept or shed tears. There was nothing in the world to cause him any disappointment. No event did ever spring a surprise on him. Care and anxiety could no more find quarter in him than mist in the solar blaze. He was ever established in the beaming bliss of Self Perfection. Limited as the human intellect is, it cannot fully comprehend the core of Sri Krishna's Personality. But to the extent to which one understands Krishna, one understands the Gita as well. The best commentary on the Gita, therefore, is Sri Krishna Himself. As time and disposition permit, a student may read any number of commentaries. But their merit can be rightly measured only with the yardstick of the spiritual glory of Sri Krishna.

Classification of the Commentaries

Commentaries on the Gita being very many in number, there is the possibility of their contradicting one another. Can contradictory ideas be at the same time soul-elevating ideas?—This is the question that naturally rises to one's mind. In the midst of seeming discord, some kind of concord perhaps lies hidden deep below. If the position of a mirror is granted to the Gita, the commentaries are the various reflections cast on it. Everybody sees his own face reflected therein. The reflecting mirror alone is the factor common to all of them. Even so the ideas which are basic to all the commentaries
are found in the Gita. If the basic idea is not there in the Gita, the commentary then becomes heterodox. Whichever commentary dares to transgress the bounds of the fundamental principles, runs the risk of being rejected as unorthodox. Varieties of views are permissible within the bounds of orthodoxy. One may view the Gita as the philosophy of love. Another may maintain that it is a manual of pure knowledge. A third may with equal vehemence contend that the Gita expounds the philosophy of yoga. We may come across a commentator who clings to the view that mundane matters receive no mention at all in the Gita. It is also possible for us to come by an opponent who holds a view diagonally opposite to the above-mentioned commentator; according to him the sole concern of the Gita is with this mundane world where one is expected to live a rich and intensive life; the hereafter may severely be left alone to take care of itself. Students of politics there are who find political philosophy occupying the foremost place in the Gita. Warriors have not lagged behind the others in proclaiming that the Gita is solely a science of warfare. The commentaries enumerated so far, come under no particular classification; each of them stands by itself.

The accredited commentators are usually grouped into upholders of three systems—Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita. Their respective convictions and dispositions are made manifest through one or the other of these three systems. The expositions
of the Gita they make, take their colourings from these three schools of thought. It cannot, however, be maintained that the views held by all the Advaitins are all of the same pattern. Several of them have expressed varying shades of opinion. Even in regard to the very definition of Advaita they do not all agree. Turning now to the Visishtadvaita we find the position to be more or less the same. Within the jurisdiction of this system of philosophy divergent ideas can be traced. The position of the Dvaita is in no way different. Within its fold its adherents have their own peculiarities. Each commentator maintains a missionary zeal to propagate his favourite ideas. Among the champions of the Advaita system, Sankara stands foremost. To the Visishtadvaitins the uncontested leader is Ramanuja. The Dvaitins in their turn look up to Madhva for guidance. These three Acharyas have been recognized as the chief promulgators of the three systems of philosophy. Their commentaries on the Gita form the basis of this classification. Sri Krishna is the embodiment of broadmindedness, deep wisdom and great tolerance. A true student of the Gita and a loyal commentator are expected to approximate to Him.

Vedanta

The principles enunciated in the Scriptural Trinity go by the name of Vedanta. The word is a compound of Veda and Anta. It means the end or culmination of the Vedas. The teachings of the Vedas deal with the mundane world. They give us the relative knowledge. What pertains to the senses
and the intellect is relative knowledge. But the scope of Vedanta transcends this relative world and relative knowledge. It leads the aspirant to transcendental knowledge and finally to absolute knowledge. The limitations of the senses and the intellect have to be got over in order to reach that higher knowledge.

Vedanta is the repository of all the spiritual principles contained in all the religions that have evolved in India and elsewhere. It may be asserted that no religion or theology contains a spiritual law that is not found in the Vedanta. For this reason Vedanta may be viewed as the mother of all religions. Ultimate Reality may be connoted by any appellation, says Vedanta. Controversies in religion centre round names and descriptions. But Vedanta exhorts us not to be name-bound and dogma-bound. It leads the enquirer into the Reality behind names and forms. There is the stuff that quenches thirst, variously called aqua, water, pani and jal. Quarrels arise in regard to nomenclature. Earnest enquirers into the ultimate Reality do not get entangled in schism and dogma. Creeds and cults are prone to misguide seekers after Truth. They create confusion too. But Vedanta always holds aloft the torch light of enquiry above all schisms, and focusses attention on the realization of Truth in Its nakedness.

The core of the Dvaita, Visishtadvaita and Advaita has to be known. Three categories of Reality are presented to us by them. Jagat or the universe we live in is one category. Jivas or the individual
souls that live in the universe form the second category. The Substratum behind the universe and the innumerable souls is the third category. This third one is the repository of all knowledge and power. Not only does It sustain, but also govern and control the destiny of the Jagat and the Jivas. Enshrouded as the Jivas are in the Jagat, they subject themselves to countless births and transmigrations. Through transmigration they either evolve to higher orders of life or involve to the lower ones. Virtue and righteous acts help them go upwards. Vice and sinful acts drag them downwards Mukti or emancipation is effected by giving oneself away in toto to God. Complete disentanglement from the meshes of the world is thereby obtained. Mukti is the goal of all Jivas. This fundamental position is common to all the three systems of philosophy. The specialities of the three systems may now be gone into.

According to Dvaita, the universe, the individual souls and God are three separate and everlasting entities. God rules over the universe and the souls. The souls in their ignorance are entangled in the universe. Through devotion to God and through His mercy obtained thereby, the souls are to free themselves from the bondage of the world and attain the realm of God. This state of living with God in Heaven is termed Mukti. There the Jivas are eternally in the presence of their Lord. Their individuality is not lost because of Mukti.

Visishtadvaita literally means ‘qualified nondualism.’ God alone exists, according to it. The
cosmos is His body. The Jivas exist as innumerable life-cells in that cosmic body. As the rays of the sun are inseparable from it, the individual souls cannot be separated from God. With the dawn of intuitive knowledge, the Jiva realizes that the Paramatman (God) is the whole and he an infinitesimal part of It. The attainment of this knowledge leads to emancipation. Complete self-surrender is the means to the attainment of this goal. In the state of Mukti the Jiva is ever aware that he is a limb of the Lord.

Advaita literally means non-dualism. What are termed Jagat and Jiva and Brahman are not really separate entities. Reality is one without a second. It is Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Infinite. It has intrinsic power to manifest Itself as the Jagat and the Jiva. This inherent power goes by the name of Māyā. Brahman and Māyā are inseparable. This is the implication of the word Advaita. It is because of his ignorance that the Jiva fancies that he is separate from the universe and the Substratum behind it. With the dawn of knowledge this feeling of difference vanishes. The Reality alone exists. Because of Its Māyāsakti It manifests Itself as the Jiva and the Jagat. Resolving this sakti into Itself, It also remains unmanifest. In Its kinetic state it is Saguna Brahman (Conditioned Reality), in the static Nirguna (Absolute Reality). As the wave subsides into the ocean the individual soul dissolves into the Absolute. This is emancipation according to the Advaita system of philosophy.
Evidences are available in the Scriptures in support of all the three systems of philosophy. Human life itself is a composite of these three systems. In the wakeful state man moves about and transacts. He is then in the plane of Dvaita. The world he lives in and the persons he contacts are all entities independent of him. Then comes the next state. The experiencer of this world of multiplicity goes to sleep. The world of variety vanishes. The dream-world comes into being. The same plurality is experienced again. But the men and world found in dreams are different from those found in the waking state. One has external reality while the other is a phantom of the mind. The dream world of plurality exists nowhere except in the mind of the experiencing individual. Here there is a perception of dualism while actually it is all monism. This is the position of the Visishtadvaita. Then there is the coveted dreamless sleep. Contentless consciousness alone persists there. Naught has the power to obstruct the continuity of this consciousness. The self that is in the waking and dream states continues to be in the dreamless slumber as well. This is the position of Advaita—one without a second. Mutually exclusive though these are, these three experiences—wakefulness, dream and dreamless sleep—are indispensable to a man entangled in the meshes of the world. And all these three types of experiences are the mundane counterparts of the stages of experience in intuitive knowledge. The contention among the commentators is in regard to the relative validity of these three forms of
experience, each commentator maintaining that his experience alone constitutes the Ultimate Truth.

The way of Sri Krishna

The knowers of Truth have equated Sri Krishna with Reality or Paramatman. The plan and purpose of Vedanta is to lead the aspirant towards the Reality. Seemingly man is encaged within a mortal coil. His physical frame seems to be caught within the clothings; but the putting on or off the raiment does not in fact affect the body. Thereby it neither gains nor loses in stature. Such even was Sri Krishna's identification with His body. For the guidance of the world, He had just assumed that mortal frame as if in play. While ordinary mortals lean towards one or the other system of philosophy, in Himself Krishna was not a Dvaitin, Visishtadvaitin or Advaitin. He was not touched by the wranglings of the philosophers. These three schools of thought, on the other hand, ever pay homage to His Personality. Each system attempts in its own way to contact and create a relationship with Him according to its convictions. Sri Krishna is ever Himself. Inspired by His Proximity, His Presence and His Personality these three systems of philosophy have vied with one another in glorifying His Exuberance.

The Bhagavad Gita does not exhort anyone to be a dualist, a qualified monist or a monist. "Wake up to your supreme consciousness. Be established in your divine nature. You are omnipotent in your sphere. Perform your duty with ease and spontaneity. You have not come into this world to drag
on a wretched existence. There is an inviolable and holy relationship between you and this world. It is yoga to make this relationship operative. Do achieve this in a magnanimous manner. Through effective functioning — let all of your faculties pay homage to your ever-expanding consciousness. As the blossom sends forth its fragrance, let your love become all-embracing and inspiring. Like the blazing sun, may your intellect throw lustre on all that you contact. When you wake up to this spiritual eminence, Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita take their respective places and function in the hierarchy of your enlightened personality.” In this manner the yogeswara exhorts the souls to become yogis.

It is remarkable that Sri Ramakrishna followed in the footsteps of Sri Krishna. He was not concerned with the relative merits of religions. Neither did he ransack his brains to find subtle differences among the multifarious systems of Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita. His entire attention was focussed on transforming life into a spiritual dynamo. He was seized with God-intoxication. If he ever made any physical effort, it was for the worship of the Supreme. The thoughts and feelings that crowded in his mind came in as a result of his search for God. Nothing in the world was alien to his all-embracing divine love. Apart from God he claimed none as his associate, kith or kin. The grace of the Lord was the only fortune that he inherited in superabundance. With characteristics such as these, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was
the embodiment of all the traits of perfection mentioned in the Gita. But he was not given to the study of the Gita or any other scripture. He was an antipode to all book-learning, sacred or secular. What he expounded to others were none other than his personal experiences that came to him as a result of his prolonged and intense spiritual life.

In this commentary have been incorporated such of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna as seem in tune with the trend of the Gita. This venture, we know, is far from perfection. Pondering over the utterances of these two mighty spiritual giants, one feels that there is endless scope for striking parallels between them. Creeds, cults, dogmas and philosophical disquisitions are all kept out of this commentary. To make the various kinds of spiritual practices explicit and practicable is the endeavour made in this commentary.

Definition of God

God in His absolute state is beyond the ken of mind and speech. He is indefinable. But when He is immanent in the universe, He is denoted as Sat-cit-ānandam—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. There is no other connotation which is as appropriate as this. A more comprehensive and exhaustive definition than this cannot be had. That which is not affected by time, space and causation is Sat or Reality. But all the same, Reality puts on the appearance of getting entangled in time, space and causation. Limiting adjuncts—Upādhis—are thereby created. It is because of these limiting adjuncts that the individual
souls or the Jivatmans have come into being. The Jivatmans are the manifestations of the Reality, the Paramatman. These individualized souls are moreover given to ceaseless activity. Karma is concomitant with Jivahood. As light and heat happen to be part and parcel of the blazing sun, karma is inherent in Jiva. Between the Jiva and his karma, the explanation of one necessarily contains the explanation of the other. The first six chapters of the Gita do therefore deal concurrently with the principles of the Karma Yoga and the category of the individual soul. Thought or mentation is a subtle form of karma. For this reason the sixth chapter of the Gita which deals with meditation, is given a place in the first section.

Verily each activity is actuated by will. There is no karma independent of the will. Man wills to walk, to eat, to sleep, to wake up and so on, and as a result action ensues. The gross manifestation of the will is action. The entire creation is the manifestation of the cosmic will. All forms of will resolve themselves ultimately into the will to live. It is the innate desire to preserve life that transforms itself into innumerable activities. Existence, not extinction is the essential nature of the soul. God is Life. Souls have emanated from God. So they attempt to assert life in the midst of the seeming extermination imposed on them by the play of Nature. Preserving life in the face of death and seeking permanence in the midst of perdition, are the workings of the will to assert existence. This assertion of existence is called Sat. And God is defined as Sat.
The first six chapters of the Gita are devoted to the elucidation of *Sat* or Existence aspect of the Reality.

Machines turn out work and man also turns out work. But there is a sharp difference between the two. Man feels, but machines do not. Feeling is concomitant with life. It undergoes several modifications. Like and dislike, friendship and enmity, fulfilment and frustration, admiration and jealousy, support and opposition—these are all manifestations of feeling in various forms. Expressions such as like, friendship, fulfilment, admiration and support are all the positive aspects of the faculty of feeling, while dislike, enmity, frustration, jealousy and opposition are all its negative expressions. The positive aspects of emotion promote growth and evolution. Negative ones retard. To sublimate emotion to the highest pitch is the summum bonum of life.

Chapters seven to twelve of the Bhagavad Gita are devoted to the definition of God, and the cultivation of devotion. Purified emotion is Bhakti or devotion. Allegedly impure emotions become pure when directed towards God. Man's love of God increases in direct proportion to his being soaked in His glory. As iron is attracted towards a magnet, a man of devotion is attracted towards God. And God is Love. Pure Love generates sweetness. It also expresses itself as bliss. Supreme bliss is divinity itself. *Anandam Brahman*—Bliss is Reality. It is in search of this Bliss that souls struggle and hug life. But for its bliss, life would not be tolerated
even for a moment. It would be voluntarily liqui-
dated. Out of the fully blossomed flower of emotion
flows the nectar of *anandam*. The second part of
the Gita exhorts man to feast on It.

Inert matter exists, a living being also exists.
The difference between the existences of these two
has to be taken note of. A living being is aware
of its own existence while the other is not. Aware-
ness is born of cognition and it is self-evident. A
living being knows that it exists. This act of know-
ing is cognition. There is a variation in the inten-
sity of cognition. Highly evolved beings have more
of cognition while those in the early stages have it
enshrouded in inertia. The difference between one
life and another is in the degree of cognition. This
difference is one of degree, not of kind. A mounting
release of cognition as well as a condensed inten-
sification of it, is the plan of nature.

Between emotion and cognition there is a link.
When iron is heated it melts and becomes soft.
Instantly it gives out lustre. Emotion in living
beings may be equated with the melting process in
iron. The next point that has to be admitted is the
equation of lustre in the melted metal with cognition.
This parallel of the molten state growing lustrous is
drawn from inert matter. Now let us turn to living
beings. In them emotion and cognition coexist,
when emotion gets purified, cognition gets sharpen-
ed. Love and sympathy between two persons lead
to an understanding better than the one that is
commonly found among casual acquaintances. And
to the extent men understand each other affinity develops. This link between love and knowledge can be made use of to strengthen the relationship between God and man. Love of God leads to a knowledge of Him. The more one understands God the more one loves Him. Love and knowledge are the obverse and the reverse of the same fact of Godhood. The inter-relation between emotion and cognition is indeed patent in all stages and phases of life.

Intelligence, awareness, cognition, consciousness, conscience—these are terms indicating the same faculty. Chapters thirteen to eighteen of the Gita delineate the path of knowledge. By becoming brighter and brighter a burning lamp reveals itself and its surroundings in an increasing measure. It also begins to throw increasing light on the objects brought to its presence. Let us suppose that the lamp is placed in a glass case, coated with dirt. Bright though the flame is, its brilliance is seemingly tarnished. To the extent the glass undergoes cleansing, brilliance becomes patent. The divine lamp of Intelligence is enshrined in the temple of the human frame. As the faculty of understanding undergoes purification, the inner Light begins to shine with greater glory. The processes of cleansing the faculty of understanding are presented in the third section dealing with the path of knowledge. God is Light. It is ultimately realized by the seeker that what shines through the human frame is none other than the inextinguishable Cosmic
Light The yoga of knowledge contributes towards the purification of the faculty of understanding until it reaches its culmination in intuitive knowledge Sat-cit-ānandam or Life, Light and Love are the inseparable three phases of the same Reality Karma Yoga postulates Sat, Bhakti Yoga postulates ānandam and Jnana Yoga, cit All the three systems of yoga culminate in Yogeswara The aspirant is expected to follow all these three systems of yoga simultaneously until they find fulfilment in him as well Perfection in him then becomes complete He becomes one with God and God gets defined in him

The Scripture Universal

Certain criteria contribute to make a book universal in its character The language in which it happens to be couched is not in itself of great consequence The Bhagavad Gita has come into being in Sanskrit, a sacred medium no doubt But this book does not derive its sanctity and importance from this fact as such Neither does the fact of its translation into a number of languages add to its merit With modern facilities it is easily possible for a book to run into an enormous number of impressions in the press and to find a ready market all over the world On these grounds men of wisdom do not attribute universalism to a book The fact that thousands or even millions pour over the pages of a particular book day after day does not necessarily establish a claim to universalism for that book The sanctity of a book does not depend upon a census of its readers The most extensively read
printed matter is the newspaper. Almost every other man reads it, but it becomes a back number then and there. In contrast to this, literature on the path to perfection is studied by hardly a few at a time. What is more, this sacred study is put into practice by a fewer still, while those who attain perfection as a result of such study and practice are very rare indeed. On this ground of fewness and rarity the search after perfection should not be dismissed as something of no import. Its value is at par at all times and with all people. The inviolable law that governs life is that all have to attain perfection at one time or another. That book alone is of universal value which reveals this Path to Perfection.

There are sufficient grounds to grant universalism to the Bhagavad Gita. In unmistakable terms it upholds perfection as the goal of life. Books that point the way to perfection stand on a pedestal of their own. Self-perfection is the acme of human aspirations. Sooner or later all have to pay homage to it and attain it. The Gita is a Clarion Call to this goal.

Self-perfection is the goal in life. Yoga is the means to it. Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga get their due place in the Bhagavad Gita. A bird requires two wings and a tail for its flight. The soul is endowed with Bhakti and Jnanam to serve as two wings. Karma Yoga serves as the tail that maintains the balance. All spiritual practices are a part and parcel of these three yogas. Scriptures pertaining to religions are innumerable, but they are
seldom all-inclusive in enunciating the Laws that govern life. There are books which, while giving all attention to the life hereafter, ignore our earthly existence altogether. There are yet other books which aim at pinning all our attention to life in this mundane world only. They assume indifference if not antipathy to existence that transcends the senses and the intellect. But the Bhagavad Gita is perfectly balanced in its outlook. It exhorts the aspirant to make the best of the mundane world, and also to prepare himself to draw inspiration from what is beyond. The Gita further contends that proper attunement with the mundane leads to yoga or union with the supermundane; the reverse of it equally holds good; in other words, a spiritual man alone is best equipped for worldly life.

It is customary with people to divide human activities into two distinctive types—the spiritual and the temporal, the sacred and the secular. But the Bhagavad Gita makes no such artificial distinction. Life pertaining to this world is in no way different from the spiritual. There is continuity and homogeneity in life in all its stages. Man will be in the hereafter none other than what he is here and now. Change of body effects no more change in the personality than does change of clothings. Mode of action it is that makes a person what he is. But action by itself is neither sacred nor secular. The attitude with which it is performed brings about a magical change in it. All actions become sacred in the hands of a spiritual man. On the contrary a
man with a material outlook drags down even a sacred act to the vulgar plane. Because of his earth-bound outlook, the uninitiated one fouls sacred acts into secular, whereas the message of the Gita is to metamorphose all actions into liberating sacred ones. This distinctive feature makes the Gita a book of universal application.

Will, emotion and cognition are the three aspects of the phenomenon of the mind. Nought exists in psyche beyond the realm of these three functions. A healthy and wholesome mind has a universal value. Nothing on earth or in heaven can compare with a fully evolved mind. He owns everything who owns a fully developed mind. A harmonious development of the will, emotion and cognition goes to constitute a perfect mind. The slightest inequality among these three functions will, to that extent, result in imperfection in the formation of character. The Bhagavad Gita has laid emphasis on this all-important factor. In order to stress the equal importance of the three phases of the mind, the eighteen chapters in the Gita get themselves equally divided and are devoted to the development of the will, the emotion and the cognition. Because of its masterly exposition of this all-absorbing issue of human life, to the Bhagavad Gita may be assigned the unique status of the Scripture Universal.

The plan and purpose of the Gita is to evolve out of man, a personality that is perfect from all points of view. A strong body and a virile mind form the material of which such a personality is
built. Efficiency to the core is the criterion of a powerful personality. It is efficiency that makes character. To do good and to make others do good is possible only to the powerful in body and mind. The next great factor in the formation of personality is love. All living beings are endowed with love, though the degree of it may vary. And this love can be purified as well as intensified. From pure love emanates sweetness in all its excellence. It has the power to bind all beings in affable unity. The third and final factor is the intellect. It may be equated with the broad blazing sun, which reveals everything in its true light. But for the intellect, the higher qualities of things remain unrecognized. It is the intellect again that guides beings to right action. To a person endowed with an efficient hand, with a loving heart and with a clear head nothing more remains to be added. He becomes a complete personality verging on Divinity. Perfection marks him for its own. A harmonious development of the hand, the heart and the head is patent in such a personality.

The Gita is the perfect guide to those who aspire to build a perfect personality.

Every student of the Gita is a potential Arjuna. May he receive Light in his own way from the Scripture Universal.
Very few understand that the aim of human life is to see God.

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All that can be learned by going through the whole of the Gita can be as well accomplished by repeating "Gita," "Gita"—Gita-gi-ta-gita, ten times; it virtually comes to be "Ta-gi" "Ta-gi"—a modification of "Tyagi," "Tyagi," which means one who has given up the world both outwardly and from the mind.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Those who work without any consciousness of their lower ego are not affected with evil, for they work for the good of the world. To work without motive, to work unattached, brings the highest bliss and freedom. This secret of Karma Yoga is taught by the Lord Sri Krishna in the Gita.

— Swami Vivekananda

If one reads this one sloka—"Yield not to unmanliness, O son of Pritha! Ill doth it become thee. Cast off this mean faint-heartedness and arise, O scorcher of thine enemies!"—he gets all the merits of reading the entire Gita; for in this one sloka lies imbedded the whole Message of the Gita.

— Swami Vivekananda
GITA DHYANAM

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिवेदिनां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं व्यासेन प्रथितां पुराणमहविना मध्ये महाभारतम्।
अहिंसासार्थवर्णिनीं भगवतीं अद्याद्वाध्यायिनीं
अंव त्वामहुन्त瑜伽स्मि भगवद्विते सवद्रेपिष्टिम्॥१॥

Om pátháya pratibodhitām
bhagavatā nárāyaṇena svayam
vyāsena grathitām purāna muninā
madhye mahābhāratam

advaitāṁrta varṣiṁ bhagavatīṁ
aśtādaśa adhyāyīṁ
amba tvāṁ anusandadhāmi bhagavadgitē
bhavadvēśiṁ ॥

ॐ Om (the monosyllable indicative of Supreme Brahman) पार्थाय प्रतिवेदिनां पार्थाय प्रतिवेदिनां with which Partha (Arjuna) was enlightened भगवता bhagavatā by the Lord नारायणेन nārāyaṇena by Nārāyaṇa स्वयं svayam Himself व्यासेन vyāsena by Vyāsa प्रथिताम् grathitām incorporated पुराणमहविना purāna muninā by the ancient Muni मध्ये महाभारतम् madhye mahābhāratam in the midst of Mahābhārata अहिंसासार्थवर्णिनीं advaita amṛta varṣiṁ bhagavatīṁ the showerer of the nectar of Advaita भगवतीं bhagavatīṁ the Divine Mother अद्याद्वाध्यायिनीं aśtādaśa adhyāyīṁ the in the form of eighteen chapters अंब अम्बा affectionate Mother त्वाम् tvāṁ Thee अनुसंद्यामि anusandadhāmi I meditate भगवद्विते bhagavadgitē O Bhagavad Gita भवद्रेपिष्टिम् bhavadvēśiṁ destroyer of rebirth
Om, O Bhagavad Gita, with which Partha (Arjuna) was enlightened by the Lord Narayana Himself and which was incorporated in the Mahabharata by the ancient Muni Vyasa—the Divine Mother, the destroyer of rebirth, the showerer of the nectar of Advaita and consisting of eighteen chapters—upon Thee, O Bhagavad Gita! O affectionate Mother! I meditate.

नमोस्तु ते व्यास विशालबुद्धे पुक्तारविन्दायतपत्रनेत्र ।
चेन तवया भारतेन्दृष्टाभ: प्रज्ञालितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः ॥ २ ॥

"namo 'stu te vyāsa visāla buddhe
phullāravindāyata patra netra ।
yena tvayā bhārata tailapūrṇaḥ
prajvālīto jñānamayaḥ pradīpah ॥"

नमः namah salutations बस्तु astu be ते te unto thee
व्यास vyāsa O Vyasa विशालबुद्धे visāla buddhe of
profound intellect कुंद aravinda अयतपत्र netra
phulla aravinda āyata patra netra with eyes like the
petals of a full-blown lotus चेन yena which तवया
tvayā by thee भारतेन्द्र पूर्ण bhārata taila pūrṇaḥ full
of the oil of the Mahabharata prajvālītah lighted ज्ञानमयः
pradīpah consisting of wisdom प्रदीपः pradīpah lamp

Salutations to thee, O Vyasa of profound intellect and with eyes like the petals of a full-blown lotus, by whom the lamp of knowledge, filled with the oil of the Mahabharata, has been lighted.

प्रथमपारिजाताय तोप्रेतव्रैकपाणयेः ॥
ज्ञानमुद्राय इण्णाय गीतामुद्रात् नमः ॥ ३ ॥
prapanna pārijātya totravetraika pānaye
jñāna mudrāya kṛṣṇāya gītāmṛta duhe namah

प्रपन्न पारिजाताय अर्थात् तत्र रविश्वः पानये
ज्ञान मुद्रये कृष्णये गीता अम्रत दुहे नमः

Prapanna pārijātya the Parijata, or the Kalpataru the bestower of all desires, for those who take refuge in Him लोक वेत एक पाण्ये totra
vetra eka pānaye who holds a cane in one hand ज्ञान सुद्राय jñāna mudrāya the holder of knowledge symbol भ्रष्टाय kṛṣṇāya to Krishna गीता अम्रत duhe gītā
amṛta duhe the milker of the Gita-nectar नमः namah salutations

Salutations to Krishna, the Parijata or the Kalpataru, the bestower of all desires of those who take refuge in Him, the holder of the cane in one hand, the holder of Jnanamudra (the symbol of knowledge) the milker of the Gita-nectar.

सर्वोपनिषदो गायो द्रष्टाय गोपालनन्दनः
पार्थो वत्स: सुधीभोक्ता दुर्थ जीतास्ततं महत्

sarvopanisado gāvo dogdhā gopāla nandanah

पर्थो वत्सः सुधिर भक्ति दुग्धं हम्मितम् गीताम्

pārtho vatsah sudhir bhok tái dugdham gītāmṛtam

mahat

सर्व उपनिषदः sarva upanisadāh all the Upanishads
gāvah the cows द्रष्टाय dogdhā the milker gopāla नन्द महत्
gopāla nandanah Krishna, the cowherd boy पार्थः pārthah Partha वत्सः vatsah the calf सुधी sudhī महत्

men of purified intellect भोक्ता bhok tái the drinkers

dugdham the milk जीताय gītā Gita अम्रतम amṛtam nectar महत् mahat the supreme

All the Upanishads are the cows, the milker is Krishna, the cowherd boy, Partha is the calf, men of
purified intellect are the drinkers, the milk is the supreme nectar of the Gita.

वसुदेवसुतः देवम् कंसचापूरस्तदनम् ।
देवकीपरमानन्दं कुष्ठं बन्दे जगदुर्स्मृ॥ ५
vasudeva sutam devam kamsa caṇuṛa mardanam ।
devaki paramānandam kṛṣṇam vande jagad gurum ॥

वसुदेव उत्तमः vasudeva sutam the son of Vasudeva
deval god कं स चापूर मदनम् kamsa caṇuṛa mardanam the destroyer of Kamsa and Chanura देवकी परम
भानन्दम् devaki parama ānandam the supreme bliss of Devaki (mother of Krishna) कुष्ठम् kṛṣṇam to Kri-
श्ना बन्दे vande I salute जगद्दुर्स्मृ jagad gurum the world teacher

I salute Lord Krishna, the world teacher, the son of Vasudeva, the destroyer of Kamsa and Chanura, the supreme bliss of Devaki.

भीष्मद्रोणतदा जयद्रथजला गान्धारस्तीलोतपला
लत्याधावती कृपेण वहनी कृपेन वेलाकूला ।
अथत्थामविचरणेनरकश्च दुर्गोघनान्तिनी
सोत्तीर्णा ससु पाण्डवे रणनवी कृत्तकं। कृत्तकं। कृत्तकं। ॥

bhīṣma drona tāṭa jayadratha jalā gāṇḍhāra nilotpala
salya grāhavati kṛpeṇa vahani kṛpeṇa velākūla ।
asvatthāma vikarna ghora makarā duryodhanāvartint
sottṛṇā khalu pāṇḍavai raṇa nādi kavartakah

kesavaḥ ॥

भीम द्रोण तदा bhīṣma drona tāṭa with Bhishma and
Drona as the banks जयद्रथ जल jayadratha jalā with
Jayadratha as the water गाण्धार तर्क gāṇḍhāra
nīla upalā with the king of Gandhara as the blue water-lily रत्न माहकती salya grāhavan with Salya as the crocodile Sucīr banghī krpena一辆 with Kripa as the current कण्या चेल आकृति karnena vela ākulā with Karna as the billow अभ्यधाम विकर्ण घोर मुनि asvatthāma vikarna ghora makarā with Asvatthama and Vikarna as the terrible alligators duryodhana अवर्तिनी duryodhana āhartuni with Duryodhana as the whirlpool तः sah that उत्तरीण uttirnā crossed over khalu khalu indeed पाण्डवस by Pandavas रणदी rana nadi the battle-river कैवर्तकā kavartaṇaḥ the ferry-man केतक kesavaḥ Kesava (Krishna)

The battle-river whose banks were Bhishma and Drona, whose water was Jayadratha, whose blue-lily was the king of Gandhara, whose crocodile was Salya, whose current was Kripa, whose billow was Karna, whose terrible alligators were Asvatthama and Vikarna, whose whirlpool was Duryodhana—even such was crossed over by the Pandavas, with Kesava as the ferry-man.

पाराशयवच: सरोजममलं गीतार्थन्योऽवतर्क्षते नानाभ्यायनकेसरं हरिकथासंगोथनायोवितम्।
लोके सजनपदपूज्यं दैवेद: पेपीयमाः गुद्दा भूयाधारस्तपदहं कल्लिम्प्रथ्यांतिन: श्रेयसे ॥ ७॥

pārāśyavach: sarojamamala gītārthasyoaśvatthakte
nānābhyayanakēsara hārikathasāṅgōthanāyaḥvitiṃ.।
loke sajanpadpadērharah: pepyamān guḍda
bhūyādārasṭapāhau kallimprathyanthin: śreyase ॥ ७॥

pārāśyavach: sarojamamala gītārthasyoaśvatthakte
nānābhyayanakēsara hārikathasāṅgōthanāyaḥvitiṃ.।
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bhūyādārasṭapāhau kallimprathyanthin: śreyase ॥ ७॥

pārāśyavach: sarojamamala gītārthasyoaśvatthakte
nānābhyayanakēsara hārikathasāṅgōthanāyaḥvitiṃ.।
loke sajanpadpadērharah: pepyamān guḍda
bhūyādārasṭapāhau kallimprathyanthin: śreyase ॥ ७॥
loke sajjana śatpadair aharahāh
pepiyamanām mudā
bhūyād bhārata pāṅkajām kalimala
pradhvamsiṇāh sreyase||

parasātm pārāśarya vaśaḥ sarojam born in
the lake of the words of the son of Parasara (Vyasa)
amalam spotless जीता अर्थे गमन जलद्य गिताय artha
gandha uktām sweet with the fragrance of the
meaning of Gita नाता अल्पमानक केसरम् nānā ākhyānaka
kesaram with many stories as its stamens हरिकथा
sabhodhana abodhitam fully opened by the discourses on Hari लोके
in the world सत्यजन पदपदे satjana śatpadaiḥ by the
bees of good men भु: भु: ahaḥ ahaḥ day by
day देवीमानम् pepiyamanām drunk मुदास mudā joyously
भूसात bhūyāt may be भारत फलक्षय bhārata pāṅkajām
the lotus of the Mahabharata जिसमें प्रस्तेलित: kalimala
pradhvamsiṇāh of the destroyer of the dirt of Kali
(to us) ढेखसे sreyase for the supreme good

May this lotus of the Mahabharata, born in the
lake of the words of the son of Parasara (Vyasa), sweet
with the fragrance of the meaning of Gita, with many
stories as its stamens, fully opened by the discourses
on Hari, the destroyer of the sins of Kali, and drunk
joyously day by day, by the bees of good men in the
world become the bestower of good to us.

मूकं करोति वाचारं पुञ्ञं रहस्यते गिरिम्।
यत्क्षया तपस्वं वद्ये परमानंदमाधवम्।।
mukam karoti vācalam panguhin langhayaṁ girim ||
yatkapā tam ahaṁ vande paramanandamādhavan ||
GITA DHYANAM

मूक्म् मिकाम the dumb वेष्टविलिन karoṭi makes वाचात्म् vācālam eloquent पुम् पंगुम the cripple लघुयाते crosses गृहः guṁ mountain यस्त्रुण yatkrpā whose grace तम् tam that अहम aham I वन्दे vande salute परमानन्दगाधरम् paramānanda mādhavam Madhava, the Source of Supreme Bliss

I salute that Madhava, the Source of Supreme Bliss, whose grace makes the dumb eloquent and the cripple cross mountains.

यं महां चर्कोऽद्रश्मरतः स्त्र्यान्ति दिन्येः स्तवेः
केवः साह्यपद्ममोपलिप्दगौतिन् यं सामगः
ध्यानवक्षितः तद्रतेन मनसा परमीति यं योगीना
र्ल्यान्तें न विद्युः सुरासुरगणा देवाय तस्मै नमः

यं brahmā वरुणेऽध्वं brahma marutah
स्तुवंति divyaṁ stavaṁ
vedaṁ sāṅga pada kramopanisadāṁ gāyanti
yam sāmagāḥ
dhyānāvasthītā tadgatena manasā
pasyānti yam yogino
yasyāntam na vidūḥ surāśuragāṇā
devāya tasmāi namaḥ

यम् yam whom स्र्वस्म brahmā Brahma वरूण VARUNAH
Varuna इद्र इद्र इद्र indraḥ Indra र्च indraḥ Rudra महतः
marutah the Maruts स्तुवंति stuvanti praise दिन्येः
divyaṁ divine स्तवेः stavaṁ with hymns केवः vedaṁ by
Vedas स अंगः पदक्रमम् उपनिषदः sa anga padakrama upanisadāṁ with their Angas in the Pada and Krama methods and by the Upanishads गायनं gāyanti sing यम् yam whom सामगः sāmagāḥ the Sama-chanters ध्यान धवस्वित
Salutations to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts praise with divine hymns, whom the Sama-chanters sing by Vedas and their Angas, in the Pada and Krama methods, and by the Upanishads, whom the yogis see with their minds absorbed in Him through meditation, and whose end the hosts of Devas and Asuras know not.
Salutations to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and the Svetasvatara praise with divine hymns, whom the Seva-dhātus sing by Vedas and their Angas, in the Pāli and Krama methods, and by the Upanishads, whom the yogis see with their minds absorbed in Him through meditation, and whose end the hosts of Devas and Auras know not.
THE BHAGAVAD GITA
अर्जुनविषाद्योगः:
ARJUNA VISHADA YOGA — THE DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA

CHAPTER 1

Dhrtarashtra's Query — Sanjaya Defines the Arrays — Arjuna’s Inpatience — Arjuna Beholds the Venerable Ones — Arjuna’s Conflict — Arjuna’s Folly

Dhrtarashtra's Query — 1

पुर्वेष्ठे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता सुयुत्सवः ।
मामका: पाण्डवार्थवं किमुक्त्वत सञ्जयः ॥ १

पुर्वेष्ठेन कुरुक्षेत्रे सन्नेता सुहृत्सवः ।
मामका पाण्डवा न एव किं कर्त्तव्य सञ्जयः ॥

dhrtarāstra uvāca
dharmakṣetre kuruścetre samavetā yuyutsavah ।
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavās ca tvā kim akurvata samjayaḥ ॥

Dhrtarashtra said

पुर्वेष्ठे dharmakṣetre the field of religions kuruścetre kurukṣetre at Kurukshetra समवेता samavetāḥ gathered together yuyutsavah desirous to fight मामकाः my people पाण्डवाः pāṇḍavāḥ the sons of Pandu च ca and एव eva also किं kum what akurvata did do सञ्जय samjaya O Sanjaya

Dhrtarashtra said

Gathered together at Kurukshetra, the field of religious activities, what, O Sanjaya, did my war-inclined sons and those of Pandu do?
Sanjaya is the name of Dhrtarashtra’s minister. Literally the word Sanjaya means: he whose victory is decisive. True to his name, this minister had mastery over his mind and senses. He was not given to partiality or predisposition. Truthfulness and straightforwardness were his characteristics. Because of these virtues the sage Vyasa temporarily bestowed on him, the power to cognize intuitively all that took place at the war-front and he communicated them faithfully to his blind monarch. This was why Dhrtarashtra put this question to Sanjaya.

The conflict between the contending cousin-groups was too sharp to be squared up. One stood for righteousness and possessed legitimate claim to the kingdom. The other was out to usurp it, the rights of the rival, by foul means. In this circumstance, war became inevitable. Dhrtarashtra knew this; but blind as he was physically, in mind also he was such. He, therefore, resorted to wishful thinking. The field of Kurukshetra has had many holy sacrifices performed on it. It was therefore saturated with a spiritual atmosphere; and so there was the possibility of Yudhishthira, the eldest of the Pandava brothers, being influenced by this divine atmosphere and beating a retreat into the forest in preference to a sanguine warfare. In that case, the odium of usurping the kingdom and waging an unrighteous war would not fall on his covetous and deceitful sons. This was the mental climate in which this fond question was raised by Dhrtarashtra, the embodiment of indiscrimination.
However long a stone may remain immersed in a river, it does not allow even a small particle of water to percolate into it. Even so the man steeped in worldliness does not permit any ethical or spiritual feeling gain access to his heart.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Sanjaya Defines the Arrays — 2 20

सन्जय उवाच
dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavāṇikam vyūḍham duryodhanas tadā cāryam upasamgamyā rājā vacanam abrant

सन्जय उवाच sanjaya uvāca Sanjaya said

न्द्वा dṛṣṭvā having seen tu tu indeed pāṇḍavāṇikam the army of the Pandavas vyūḍham in battle array vyūḍham duryodhanah Duryodhana tadā then cāryam the teacher upasamgamyā having approached rājā the king vacanam speech abrant said

Sanjaya said

Now seeing the Pandava army arrayed properly, the Prince Duryodhana drew near his preceptor Drona and spoke these words:

It is but natural that a frightened child hastens to his parent for protection and encouragement. Even so, Duryodhana drew himself at a psychological moment to his preceptor who was held by him, like a parent.
There was a purpose in Sanjaya’s pointedly using the word ‘seeing’. Duryodhana was fancying all along that it might not be possible for his rivals to mobilize an army strong enough to face his own huge force allied with those of several other kings. But what had happened was contrary to his calculation. He was a bit perturbed and unnerved over the position. The name Duryodhana has the implied meaning ‘he who is hard to combat with.’ But his guilty conscience had started a moral conflict within him. Mental defeat in him was a prelude to the actual defeat that came in the war.

पश्चितः पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महति चसोमुः।
व्युहां दुपदुप्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता॥ २॥
परशु एताः पाण्डु-उत्ताणाम् आचार्य महतिम, चसोमुः।
वि-रजवम्, दुपद-पुले तव शिष्येण धी-मता॥

pasyai ’tāṁ pāṇḍuputraṁ ācārya mahatīṁ camūm vṛūḍhāṁ drupada putreṇa tava sīsyena dhīmatā ॥

परशु pasya behold etāṁ this pāṇḍu-putrāṇām of the sons of Pandu ācārya O teacher mahatīṁ great camūm army vṛūḍhāṁ marshalled duṇḍuṣṭeṇa drupata putreṇa son of Drupada tava sīsyena by your disciple dhīmatā talented

Behold, O master, this mighty army of the sons of Pandu, marshalled by the son of Drupada, your talented disciple.' 3

Duryodhana flings words of insolence at his preceptor even as a scorpion would sting its saviour.
The perturbed prince means to say that his master had made a silly mistake in having chosen to teach archery to the sons of Pandu and that of Drupada. They have now arrayed themselves, determined to fight and vanquish none other than their own master. But for Drona’s blunder this mishap might not have come about. This is how Duryodhana laments over the unexpected development.

The army mobilized by the Pandavas seems in the eyes of Duryodhana, larger than what it actually is, due to his being disturbed over the coming catastrophe. This did not augur well for him.

astra sura mahesvasa bhima rjunasamam yudhi
yuyudhano virata ca drupadasa ca maharathah

astra astra here sura sura peers mahesvasah mighty archers bhima rjunasamah equal to Bhima and Arjuna yudhi yudhi in battle yuyudhanah Yuyudhana virata ca and drupadasa Drupada ca and maharathah mahaparvatah of the great car.

Here are mighty archers, peers in warfare to heroic Arjuna and Bhima; Yuyudhana, Virata and Drupada the great chariot-warrior.
dhrṣṭaketuṣ cekitānāḥ kāśirājas ca vīryavān
purujit kundibhojas ca saibyas ca narapūṁgavah

Dhrṣṭaketuṣ, Chekitana and the valiant King of Kasi, Purujit, Kundibhoja and Saibya, the best among men;

yudhāmanyuṣ ca vikrānta uttamaujās ca vīryavān
saubhadro draupadeyās ca sarva eva mahārathāḥ

The courageous Yudhamanyu, the brave Uttamauja, Subhadra and the sons of Draupadi - all being great chariot-warriors.
asmākam tu visistā ye tān nibodha dvivottama
nāyakā mama sainyasya samjñārtham tān bravīmi te

asmākam ours tu also distinguished chiefs ye who tān those nibodha know (thou) dvivottama (O) best among the twice-born nāyakā the leaders mama my sainyasya of the army samjñārtham for information tān them bravīmi I speak. tē te to thee

Know you, O the best of the twice-born, all those who are our distinguished chiefs, the leaders of my army; I name them for your information.

Duryodhana censures his master in a subtle and concealed manner His reprimand comes to this ‘However capable you may be in teaching the science of warfare, you are after all, a Brahmana, given to peaceful life, and a bit timid too, by nature It is too much to expect of you to be courageous in this war with the Pandavas Still, be not afraid ‘We too have mighty warriors on our side’

भवानु भीष्मक कर्णक उपश समितिस्य: ।
अक्षत्तामार विकर्णक सौयन्तितिस्थवै च ॥ ८
भवानु भीष्म न कर्ण च वृज च समितिं जय ।
अक्षत्तामा विरुण न चौमदुलि तथा एव च ॥

80-6
bhavān bhīṣmaś ca kārṇaś ca kṛpaś ca samitiṁjayaḥ  
asvatthāmā vikarṇas ca saumadattis tathai'va ca ||

Svān bhavān yourself Śīmaḥ: bhīṣmaḥ Bhishma  
ca and karnāḥ Karna ca and kṛpaḥ Kripa ca and  
samitiṁjayaḥ victorious in war āsvarthāmā Asvatthama, son of Drona  
vikarṇaḥ Vikarna ca and saumadattīḥ the son of Somadatta tatha tathā thus eva even  
ca ca and

Your venerable self, Bhishma, Karna, Kripa the  
victorious in fight, Asvatthama, Vikarna and Sauma-  
datti as well.

Duryodhana now feels that, in his excitement,  
he has transgressed the limit in censuring the precep-  
tor. As if in atonement for it he places Drona first  
in the list of the heroes on his side, relegating  
Bhishma, the Field Marshal himself, to the second  
rank. Further he designates Kripa, the brother-in-law  
of Drona as, the fierce in fight. The thoughtful Prince  
now quickly resorts to flattery, the last infirmity of  
even great men, to square up the awkward situation  
created by himself.

अन्ये च वहनः शूरा मद्ये त्यक्तजीविता: ।
नानायास्रङ्गहरणाः सवें युद्धविशारदः: ॥ ९

अन्ये च वहनः शूरा:  
नाना-स्रङ्ग-प्रहरणः:  
सवें युद्ध-विशारदः: ॥

anye ca bahavaḥ sūraḥ mad arthe tyakta jīvitaḥ ।
nānā sastra praharaṇāḥ sarve yuddha viśāradāḥ ॥
anye anye others ca ca and vah: bahavaḥ many  
shura: sūraḥ heroes mad arthe for my sake
And there are yet other heroes well trained in warfare, who, equipped with manifold weapons and missiles, are ready to lay down their lives for my sake.

Multitudinous is our army marshalled by Bhishma, but meagre is the army of theirs marshalled by Bhima.

Vainglory is paramount in the demoniac when the days of their destruction draw near. Words of self-aggrandizement they egotistically indulge in, contain very often a meaning derogatory to themselves. This tragic irony of fate is found in the utterance of Duryodhana. He is right in estimating the valour of Bhishma superior to that of Bhima, his
sworn enemy. But he unwittingly spells ruin to himself when he delights in depicting Bhima’s army as meagre while praising that of Bhishma as multitudinous. He uses the terms *paryāptam* and *aparyāptam* respectively. *Paryāptam* not only means meagre, it also means limited, compact and well disciplined. *Aparyāptam*, on the other hand, means unlimited, unwieldy and indisciplined. This makes a world of difference between the two forces. The strength and victory of an army do not depend on its bulk, but on its training and team-spirit. Though limited in number, the Pandava forces are trim and equal to any eventuality. The Kaurava forces are on the other hand, promiscuous and placed together pellmell. Duryodhana’s boast, therefore, stands self-condemned.

Again, the ethical excellence of Bhishma ever remains beyond the ken of the worldly-minded Duryodhana. This divinely-gifted and invincible man has no doubt consented to wage war wholeheartedly for the Kauravas. There is no sacrifice greater than this that an upright man can make. But at heart he knew that dharma alone was going to triumph in the end. Still, true to his word, he chooses to champion the cause of the wicked, only to prove that no power on earth or in heaven can make adharma victorious. Bhishma is in no way tainted by taking sides with the wicked, because of his being supremely above selfishness. The tenet ‘be active in the world, but be not of the world,’ is exemplified in his perplexing character.
As a corollary to the utterance of Duryodhana, there is a fact to be taken into account, in regard to the lives of nations. That nation thrives best, which is compact, well-knit, trained and tuned to an ideal. The other nation, which is multitudinous, loosely-knit and divergent in outlook, lingers and vegetates.

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।
मीषमेवाविरहस्तु भवन्तः सर्वे एव हि ॥ ११

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथा-भागम वास्तविना ।
मीषमेव एव अभि-रक्षस्तु भवन्तः सर्वे एव हि ॥

ayaneṣu ca sarveṣu yathā bhāgam avasthitāḥ
bhīṣmam evā 'bhirakṣāntu bhavantaḥ sarve eva hi

abhिसमेव in the divisions of the army च
ca and सर्वेषu sarveṣu in all यथा भागम् yathā bhāgam
according to division अवस्थिता: avasthitāḥ being
stationed मीषमेव bhīṣma Bhishma एव eva alone
अभि-रक्षस्तु abhi raksantu protect भवन्त bhavantaḥ ye
सर्वे sarve all एव eva even हि hi indeed

Now all of you assume positions in your respective divisions and protect Bhishma alone, by all means.

Words always take the colour of a person's mind, wholesome or unwholesome. Duryodhana's instructions, put in other words, come to this: 'Since you all have no initiative and are even undependable, at least take directions from me and be of some use.'
tasya samjanyan harṣam kuru vṛddhaḥ pitāmahah
simha nādam vinadyo ucchāh sankham dadhmau
pratāpavān

In order to embolden Duryodhana, Bhishma the mighty grandsire, the oldest of the Kurus, now raised a lion’s roar and blew his conch.

There is no statesmanship whatsoever in the impudent remarks of the unimaginative Duryodhana. He brags impertinently and drifts towards damping the war zeal of his allies and comrades. The prudent Field Marshal Bhishma takes note of this deteriorating situation and comes to prompt rescue. He roars like a lion and blows the conch indicating that war is declared. This act, calculated to induce spirit in the mind of Duryodhana, amounts to, according to the codes of warfare, aggression by the Kauravas.
tataḥ sankhāḥ ca bheryas ca pañavanaṅaka gomukhāḥ sahasaś vābhyaḥanyanta sa sabdas tumulo bhavat

tataḥ then śṛṅgā: sankhāḥ conchs ca and mṛkeḥ: bheryaḥ kettledrums ca ca and pañava ṣaṅkak gomukhāḥ: pañava ḍaṅka gomukhāḥ tabors, drums and cow-horns sahasaś eva quite suddenly, abhyahanyanta blared forth saḥ that śṛṅgā: sabḍaḥ sound tumulaḥ tremendous abhavat was

Then suddenly blared forth conchs and kettledrums, tabors and trumpets and cow-horns; and tremendous was that noise.

This is the uproar created by the warriors of the Kaurava group.

tataḥ śvetair hayair yukte mahati syandane sthitau mādhavaḥ pāṇḍavaḥ caiva divyaḥ sankhau pradadh-matuḥ

tataḥ then śṛṅgā: śvetadh with white hreś. hayair horses yukte yukte yoked mahati magnificent syandane syandane in the chariot śṛṅgā sthitau seated maḍbhavah Madhava Pāṇḍava: pāṇḍavaḥ Pandava the son of Pandu ca ca and eva eva also śṛṅgā śṛṅgā śṛṅgā sankhau conchs pradadh-matuḥ blew
Then, seated as Madhava and Pandava were in their magnificent chariot yoked to white steeds, they gracefully blew their divine conchs.

Madhava is one of the thousand names attributed to Vishnu the preserving phase of Brahman. mā is Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity; dhava is the groom or the owner thereof. Vishnu is thus the Lord of Lakshmi. Madhava here refers to Sri Krishna, the embodied aspect of Vishnu. The grace of the Lord of Lakshmi has now come upon the Pandava brothers. It indicates that this righteous group will very soon have Vijaya Lakshmi—the goddess of victory and Rajya Lakshmi—the goddess of kingdom bestowed on it by the grace of Madhava.

Pandava means the son of Pandu. Any one of the five brothers may aptly be addressed as Pandava. Here this appellation applies to Arjuna in particular as he is always associated with Sri Krishna. The mythology of Bhagavatapurana has it that the sages Nara and Narayana of yore later incarnated as Arjuna and Sri Krishna.

pañcabajanyam hṛṣṭkeso devadattaṁ dhanaṁjayaḥ
paunḍram dadhimau mahā sankham bhīma karmā
vyākodaraḥ

pañcabajanyam (the conch named) Pan-
chajanya hṛṣṭkesaḥ (the Lord of the senses)
Krishna देवदत्तम devadattam (the conch named) Devadatta धनान्य dhananyayah (the victor of wealth) Arjuna पौण्ड्रम paundram (the conch named) Paundra दध्मो dadhmau blew महासंक्षम् mahā sankham great conch भीमकर्मो bhima karmo doer of terrible deeds व्रकोदरोऽ vrkodaraḥ (having the belly of a wolf) Bhima

Panchajanya was blown by Hrishikesa, and Devadatta by Dhananjaya. Vrikodara of terrible exploits blew his great conch, Paundra; 15

Hrishikesa means the Lord of the mind and the senses. This term connotes Sri Krishna in particular. He is ever the master of the mind and the senses. In no act of his, has he been carried away by the turbulent senses. He alone who is the master of the senses is capable of executing any undertaking nobly and virtuously.

The word Dhananjaya means conqueror of wealth. Arjuna went round the country and appropriated the hidden and stagnant wealths of the inactive rulers, and utilized them for public weal. He is therefore rightly addressed Dhananjaya.

Vrikodara literally means one having the belly of the wolf. Here this term refers to Bhima, because of his wolf-like characteristics. The wolf’s belly is concave and not bulged out. This beast is noted for its keen hunger and great digestive power. And Bhima too has these traits, and so he is called Vrikodara. A person of strong digestive power is very smart in all his doings.
Anantavijayaṁ rājā kuntī putro yudhiṣṭhirah
nakulaḥ sahadevas ca sughoṣa manipuspakau

The King Yudhishthira, the son of Kunti, blew Anantavijaya; Nakula and Sahadeva blew Sughoṣa and Manipushpaka.

Yudhishthira is a king to the core. Being seated on the throne or being sent into exile in the forest makes no difference in his bearing. Under all circumstances he manifests royal grace and magnanimity. He is therefore described as Rājā. He is now the uncrowned king on the battle-field.

kāsyah parameśvāsaḥ sikhanḍī ca mahā rathaḥ
dhrṣṭaduryumno virātas ca sātyakīs ca 'parājitaḥ

Kāsyah Kasya, the King of Kasi ca and parameśvāsaḥ (paramēśvāsaḥ)
an excellent archer जिसपर्वी sikhāndi Sikhandī च ca
and महारथ maha rathah mighty car-warrior भृगुरुमन dhrstadyumna Dhrishtadyumna विराट virātah Virata च ca and सालकि sātyakī Satyaki च ca and अपराजित aparājitaḥ unconquered

And the Ruler of Kasi, the adept archer and Sikhandī the great chariot-warrior, Dhrishtadyumna and Virata and Satyaki, the invincible; 17

Sikhandī being a eunuch was devoid of beard and moustache Bhisma had taken a vow that he would lay down arms if he confronted a woman or a eunuch Sikhandī therefore, very soon became the immediate cause of his defeat

Dhrishtadyumna means one who cannot be successfully encountered by anybody

drupado draupadeyāś ca sarvasah prthivī pate I
sabhadras ca mahābāhuḥ sankhān dadhmuh prthak- prthak II 18

dṛpad dṛpadah Drupada dṛpaḍeṣa draupadeyāḥ
the sons of Draupadi च ca and सर्वश sarvasah all
पथिविपते prthivipate O Lord of Earth सौभ्रद saubhadrak son of Subhadra (Abhimanayu) च ca and सहाबाहु maha bāhuḥ the mighty armed रथार sankhān conchs दस्म dadhmuh blew पथक पथक prthak prthak respective
O Ruler of the Earth! Drupada and the sons of Draupadi, and the mighty armed son of Subhadra, all these as well blew their several conchs.

There is a purpose in Sanjaya addressing Dhrtarashtra as ‘O Ruler of the Earth’. To preserve a country ever in peace or to involve it in ruinous warfare, is all in the hands of the ruling monarch. Now the die is cast. Events are heading to a catastrophe. “What is going to be your decision?” This seems to be the implied question.

Filling the earth and the sky with reverberation that tumultuous uproar rent the hearts of the sons of Dhrtarashtra.

Those who feel their cause just, have the courage and muster up for action. The Pandavas exhibit such a disposition through their pealing bugle-call. That uproar seems to be abnormally
pāthe samagre 'sampūrṇe tato 'rdham pātham ācare |
tadā godānajam punyam labhate nā 'tra samstayah ||

If the whole of it cannot be recited, half of it may be recited; through that act the aspirant acquires merit on a par with the gift of a cow. There is no doubt about it. 11

The merit in the gift of a cow consists in giving it to a spiritual man intent solely on Self-culture. Cherishing a spiritual man in this manner is equivalent to cherishing spirituality.

trīmaṃ partamasṭu gajānānaṁkārṇaṁ labde |
paṃḍaṁ Ḫapamāṇaṁ somaṁyāgamkārṇaṁ labde || 12

tribhāgam pathamānaṁ tu gangāṣṇāna phalām labheta
damāsam japaṁaṁ tu somaṁyāgap phalām labheta ||

He who recites a third part acquires the merit obtained by bathing in the Ganges. He who recites a sixth part gets the fruit of the Soma-sacrifice 12

ekā 'dhyāyaṁ tu yo nityam pathate bhakti samyutah |
rudra lokam avāpnoti gano bhūtvā vaseś cīram || 13

He who reads even a chapter a day with devotion gains the Rudra-loka and lives there long having become an attendant on Śiva.

adhyaṇyāṁ slokapādām va nityam yah pathate naraḥ |
sa yāti nartām yāvan manvantaram vasundhore || 14
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THE APPELLATIONS OF ARJUNA
AS DEFINED IN THE GITA

Anagha — the sinless one.
Arjuna — the pure in nature.
Bharatarishabha — the best of the Bharatas.
Bharatasattama —
Bharatasreshta —
Dhananjaya — the conqueror of wealth
Gudakesa — the conqueror of sleep.
Kapidhvaja — he whose ensign is a monkey.
Kaunteya — the son of Kunti
Kriti — he who wears a diadem.
Kurunandana — the joy of the Kurus.
Kurusreshta — the best of the Kurus.
Mahabahu — the mighty-armed.
Mahabahu — the son of Pandu
Pandava — the son of Pritha, Kunti.
Partha — the scorcher of foes
Parantapa — the tiger of men.
Parushavyaghra — one who could shoot arrows
Savyasachin — with the left hand also.
penetrating into the hearts of the Kauravas, because of their guilty conscience. Even the reprimand of a child is bound to touch an offender to the quick.

अथ व्यवस्थितान्द्रशा धृतराष्ट्रान् कपिलवजः।
प्रवृत्ते शास्त्रसम्पाते धनुर्धायम् पाण्डवः।
हपीकेर्ष तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते।

अथ वि-अव-स्थितान् दुष्णा धृतराष्ट्रान् कपिलवजः।
प्र-श्रृते शास्त्र-सम्पाते धनु उद्यायम् पाण्डवः।
हपीके-हेश तदा वाक्यम् हस्यम् आह मही-पते।

atha vyavasthitān drṣṭvā dhārtarāṣṭrān kapidhvajah pravṛtte sastrasampāte dhanur udyamya pāṇḍavah hrstkesam tadā vākyam idam āha maḥtpate.

अथ aha now व्यवस्थितान् vyavasthitān standing arrayed हच्छा drṣṭvā seeing धातराष्ट्रान् dhārtarāṣṭrān Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s party कपिलवजः kapidhvajah monkey-ensigned शहृङ्गे pravṛtte about to begin शास्त्रसम्पाते sastra sampāte discharge of weapons धनु dhanuh bow udyamya having taken पाण्डवः pāṇḍavah the son of Pandu हरितकेसाम् hrstkesam to Hrishiṣekṣa, तदा tada then वाक्यम् vākyam words हस्य्म् idam this आह aha said महीपते maḥtpate O Lord of Earth

Then, O Ruler of the Earth, seeing Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s host being positioned and the fighting about to commence, Pandava, whose ensign badge is Hanuman, lifting his bow spoke the following words to Krishna.
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<tr>
<td>Arisudana</td>
<td>He who destroys the enemies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhagavan</td>
<td>He who is endowed with power, virtue, fame, glory, detachment and freedom.</td>
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<td>Govinda</td>
<td>The knower of the Jivatman.</td>
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<td>Hrishikesa</td>
<td>The Lord of the senses.</td>
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<td>The abode of the universe.</td>
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अर्जुन उवाच

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यातदेवतानिनिर्देशेण्योद्धकामानवस्थितान्।
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राजनयो: उभयो: सबे रथम् स्थापये मेवच्यतु ||

एवत् एतान् निर्देशे योद्धां योद्धाकामानं अवस्थितान्।
कै: मया सह योद्धयम् अभिन्नः रण-समुदयः ||

arjuna uvāca

senayor ubhayor madhye ratham sthāpaya me ‘cyuta ||
yāvad etān nirtkṣe 'ham yoddhu kāmān avasthitān ||
kair mayā saha yoddhavyam asmin raṇasamudyame ||

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

सेनयो: senayok of the armies उभयो: ubhayōk of both मयें madhye in the middle रथम् rathaṃ car स्थापय sthāpaya place में me my अच्छुत अcyuta O Achyuta यात यāvat while etān these nirdhiṣe nirtkṣe behold अहम् aham I योद्धा कामान yoddhā kāmān desirous to fight अवस्थितान् avasthitān standing कै: kaīḥ with whom मया mayā by me सह saha together योद्धयम् yoddhavyam must be fought अभिन्नः asmin in this रणसमुदये raṇasamudyame eve of battle

Arjuna said:

Place my chariot, O Achyuta, between the two armies so that I may behold the war-minded that stand here, with whom I must wage this war. 21-22

Achyuta is a name of Vishnu. Here it refers to Sri Krishna. He who does not deviate from his divine glory—this is the meaning of the word.
Location: The Tapovanam is situated nine miles to the west of Tiruchirappalli on the southern bank of the sacred Akhanda Kaveri. Elamanur is its railway station.

Ideal: Spiritual life as exemplified by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda is its ideal and its practice.

Management: The Tapovanam is a registered society having Sannyasins and Brahmacharis as its main office-bearers. Swami Chidbhavananda is its president.

Activities: Spiritual ministry is done in several ways. Antaryoga or spiritual retreat for the benefit of the public is periodically conducted at the Tapovanam and at several other places including Madras and Bangalore. Spiritual literature in Tamil and in English are released from the Tapovanam. A Tamil monthly called “Dharma Chakram” goes out from here.

The Tapovanam has its branches at Tiruvetkalam in Madurai Dt., Chirachavadi in Coimbatore Dt., Courtallam in Tirunelveli Dt. and at Salem.

Sri Sarada College for Women and its limb Institutions at Salem are under the presidency of Swami Chidbhavananda.

Residential High School: The Tapovanam runs a Gurukula pattern Residential High School for 520 boys. It functions on the public school model.

Residential College: The Tapovanam runs a Gurukula pattern Residential College at Tiruvetkalam near Madurai. It is affiliated to the University of Madurai.

Farms: The Tapovanam owns Agricultural Farms and Dairy Farms both at Tirupparaitturai and at Tiruvetkalam.

For further particulars please correspond with the Secretary.
I desire to discern those that throng here to fight, intent on pleasing in battle the evil-minded son of Dhrtarashtra.

Inordinate zeal is very often the precursor of a soul-damping depression. Arjuna is unwittingly subjecting himself to this unwanted vacillation. Hence his hankering to scan his foes.
Sanjaya said:

Thus requested by Gudakesa, Hrishikesa, O Bharata, having placed the best of chariots in between the two armies; 24

Facing Bhishma and Drona and all the rulers of the earth, spoke, “O, Partha, behold all the Kuru gathered together.” 25

Arjuna is here termed as Gudakesa, which means the one who has control over sleep. When,
where and how long to sleep, were all under the sway of his will. Only he who can manipulate his mind as he likes, can gain mastery over sleep. Even one such is going to succumb very soon to an overwhelming situation. A hint to this effect is thrown here.

tatrapastayat sitaran parsh: pitrunyam pitamahana.
acharyamataulananabrnamu punarnayottaranasakhtiyam || 26
shaurasanu kudabhnv senayorhuyorapi.

tat apastayat sitaran parsh: pitrunyam pitamahana.
acharyamantulananabrnamu punarnayorhuyorapi.

Standing there Partha then beheld in both the armies, paternal uncles, grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, cousins, sons, grandsons, comrades, fathers-in-law and benefactors.
tān samiksya sa kaunteyāḥ sarvān bandhun avasthitān || kṛpayā parayā 'viśto viśīdann idam abravit ||

tān tān these samiksya having seen saḥ he kaunteyāḥ Kaunteya sarvān sarvān all bandhun bandhun relatives avasthitān avasthitān standing kṛpayā kṛpayā by pity parayā parayā deep aṁśāḥ aṁśāḥ filled vīśīdun vīśīdun sorrowfully idm idm this abravit abravit said

He, the son of Kunti, gazing at those kinsmen posted in positions spoke thus in sadness, filled as he was with choking compassion.

A crisis now rapidly brews in the mind of Arjuna. He becomes a victim to a change of attitude. Stout-heartedness gives place to soft-heartedness, manliness to effeminacy. It is therefore apt to style him now as the son of a woman, Kunti. The hero who entered the battle-field with the attitude of the enemy of the wicked, now suddenly develops the attitude of a kinsman. This change over in the disposition is not the outcome of discrimination, but the very lack of it. Loss of discrimination, which is born of ignorance, is verily the gateway to the fall and degradation of man.
Arjuna’s Conflict — 28-30

अञ्जुन उवाच
dṛṣṭve 'mam svajanam krṣṇa yuyutsuṁ samupasthitam||
śidanti mama gātrāṇi mukham ca pariṣuṣyati ṣ||

अञ्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

dṛṣṭvā having seen imāṁ these svajanāṁ kinsmen krṣṇa O Krishna yuyutsuṁ eager to fight samupasthitam arrayed śidanti fail my mama my gātrāṇi limbs mukham mouth and pariṣuṣyati is parching

Arjuna said:

Seeing these my kinsmen, collected here prompted by war, my limbs fail me, O Krishna, and my mouth is parched up. 28

The word Krishna has three significant meanings:—

1. He who is dark blue in colour indicating his infinitude.

2. Krish means existence, and na means bliss. He who is existence - knowledge - bliss is Krishna.

3. He who saves the devotees from distress.
वेपथुष शरीरे मे रोमहर्ष्य जायते ॥ २९
गण्डिवम स्मस्ते हस्ताच्यक्षेत परिद्वाहते ।

वेपथुष: व शरीरे मे रोमहर्ष: च जायते ॥
गण्डिवम स्मस्ते हस्ताच, तवक च एव परि-द्वाहते ।

vepathuṣ ca sartre me romaharsaḥ ca jāyate ॥
gāṇḍīvam sramsate hastāt tvak cai 'va paridahyate ।

वेपथुष: vepathuṣ: shivering च ca and शरीरे sartre in body मे me my रोमहर्ष: romaharsak horripilation च ca and जायते jāyate arise गण्डीवम् gāṇḍīvam Gandiva स्मस्ते sramsate slips हस्तात hastāt from (my) hand तवकः tvak (my) skin च ca and एव eva also परिद्वाहते paridahyate burns all over

My body quivers and my hair stands on end. The bow Gandiva slips from my hand and my skin burns all over.

न च शकौम्यक्ष्यातुं अभास्तित च मे सन: ॥ ३०
निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशन ।

n ca saktomān avasthatum bhramati 'va ca me manah ॥
nimittāni ca pasyāmi vipārtāni keśavan ।

न na not च ca and शकौम सकन्नोmi I am able अवस्थातम् avasthatum to stand अभास्तित इव bhramati iva seems whirling च ca and मे me my सन: manah: mind निमित्तानि nimittāni omens च ca and पश्यामि pasyāmi I see विपरीतानि vipārtāni adverse केशव kesaṇa O Kesava

I am unable to stand; my mind whirls as it were; and Kesava, I see adverse omens.
The name Kesava has three meanings.—

1. The destroyer of the demon Kesin.
2. He who has beautiful hair on the head.
3. K=Brahma, the creator; A=Vishnu; Isa=Rudra.

He who is the embodiment of the Vedic Trinity—the Creator, the Preserver and the Destroyer.

Body and mind are interrelated. Change in the one leads to a corresponding change in the other. Arjuna’s mental calibre has gone down. The trying situation has laid bare the incompleteness within. Signs of it are evident both in body and mind. A change in the subject presents itself as a seeming change in the object. The same world presents itself as good or bad according to the transformation one undergoes within. While militant in attitude Arjuna saw no omens; but while hesitant he sees any number of them. It is all, more subjective than objective, born of confusion.

Omens are not all true, or, all untrue. As forecasting is possible in regard to the weather, foreboding also has its place in nature. It is the way of the weak, the wavering and the vegetating to seek guidance from omens. The active, the dutiful and the discerning have neither the time nor disposition to run after them.

Arjuna’s Fallacy — 31-46

न च श्रेयोद्वेदायेंज्ञानिन्त्यम् हत्वा सत्यनमाहिते ॥ ३१  
न काहे विजयं कुप्पन न च राज्यं सुखानि च ।
I do not foresee any good ensuing from the slaughter of kinsmen in battle. O Krishna, I hanker not for victory or empire or pleasures even.

Indifference to the acquisition of worldly prosperity is an unfailing mark of ethical and spiritual progress. But what has come upon Arjuna is anything but indifference. He has been all along diligently and systematically preparing himself for war. Subsequent delusion in him masquerades as mental attainment. His very perplexed state of mind betrays it.

Of what avail to us is kingdom or enjoyment or even life, O Govinda?
The word Govinda is very appropriate here. go in Samskrit means the living being; and vinda means the knower thereof. This name of Vishnu applies here to Sri Krishna. He being the knower of the minds of people, he alone can rightly solve their life problems.

yeṣāṁ arthe kāṅkṣitam no rājyam bhogāḥ sukhami ca.

Those for whose sake we seek kingdom, enjoy-
ments and pleasures, they stand here in battle, staking life and property.
teachers pitarah fathers putrah sons and tathah thus eva also ca and pitamahah grandfathers matulah maternal uncles evavura fathers-in-law pitah pauruah grandsons svamala fathers-in-law sambandhina relatives and tathah as well as

Teachers, fathers, sons as well as grandfathers, maternal uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other relatives.

etan hantum icchami ghnato ’pi madhusudana
api trailokya rajasya hetoh kim nu mahikrte

etan these na not hantum to kill icchami (I) wish satapi ghnatah api even if killed (by them) madhusudan O Madhusudana api even trailokya rajasya dominion over the three worlds hetoh for the sake of kim how nu then mahikrte for the sake of earth

Though myself slain by them, I would not, O Madhusudana, seek to slay them even for the sake of domination over the three worlds, how then for the earth?

The three worlds refer to the earth, the heaven and the intermediate region. "O Krishna, it is to your everlasting glory that you are addressed as
Madhusudana — the killer of the wicked demon, Madhu. But it would be to my everlasting ignomy as the killer of the kith and kin, if I ever indulged in this warfare” — this is what Arjuna implies.

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान् न: का श्रीत: स्यात्जनादन् ।
पापमेवाभोद्यत्सात् हृतैत्तात्तात्तायिनः ॥ ३६ ॥

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान् न: का श्रीत: स्यात् जन-अर्दन् ।
पापम् एव शा-भोद्यत् श्वासान् हृता एतान् आत्तात्तायिनः ॥

nihatyā dhārtarāṣṭrān naḥ kā pritiḥ syāt janārdana ।
pāpam evaśrayed asmān hatvai‘tān ātatāyinah ॥

nihatyā having slain dhārtarāṣṭrān sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra naḥ to us kā what śrīt: pritiḥ pleasure syāt may be janārdana O Janardana pāpam sin eva only śrāvyaṇaḥ āṣrayet would take hold asmān to us hatvā having killed etān these ātatātāyinḥ atatāyinah felons

What delight can we derive, O Janardana, by doing away with these sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra? Sin only will accrue to us by slaying these desperadoes. 36

Janardana is yet another popular name of Sri Krishna, meaning ‘a person who is worshipped by people for prosperity and emancipation.’

An ātatāyin is here translated as a desperado. There is no criminal offence to which he is stranger. The rival cousins have all been confirmed desperadoes. They secretly set fire to the residence where the Pandavas were expected to be sleeping; they surreptitiously tried to poison the food of
the bitterly hated cousins; with drawn swords openly they attempted murder of the legitimate heirs to the throne; deceitfully they tried to deprive the Pandavas of their kingdom, wealth and wife. Death is the reward that dharma deals to the ātāyins even if they happen to be learned. But Arjuna overwhelmed with sentimental commiseration, seeks to save instead of slaughtering them in open war.

We should not therefore slay the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra our kinsmen; for, how can we, O Madhava, killing our own kinsmen, be happy?
yady api ete na pasyanti lobhapañcata cetasah
kulakṣayakṛtam doṣam mitradrohe ca pātakam

Although these, with understanding clouded by

greed, see no guilt in the extermination of a family,
no crime in hostility to friends,

kathāṁ na jñeyam asmābhīḥ pāpād asmān nivartitum
kulakṣaya kṛtam doṣam praṇaśyadbhūr janārdana

Why should we not learn to recoil from such a
sin, O Janardana, we who see evil in the destruction
of a family?
This Arjuna who pleads so much now for the saving of a family, does not yet know that he himself is going to exterminate that very family in a few days to come. Goaded by greed of kingdom the Kauravas want to kill the Pandavas. Prompted by attachment to kith and kin Arjuna wants to spare the desperadoes. Are greed and attachment the only guiding forces in life?

**Kulakṣaye prajñāṃ tītā kulabhīṃśaḥ sannātanaḥ.** 40

kula-kaśyāy prāṇasyanti kula dharmāh sanātanāḥ dharme naṣṭe kulaṁ kṛtsnam adharmo 'bhībhavatya uta

In the decline of a family, its time-honoured usages perish; with the perishing of sacred rites impiety overtakesthe entire family.
adharmābhibhavāt kṛṣṇa pradyuyantī kula striyah
strīsu dusūṣu vārsneya jāyate varnasamkarah

 Accord with the prevalence of impiety kṛṣṇa O Krishna make corrupt kula striyah the women of the family strīsu in women dusūṣu (being) corrupt vārsneya O Varshneya Jāyate arises varnasamkarah caste admixture

With the growth of impiety, O Krishna, the family women become unchaste; and women getting corrupted, O Varshneya, caste admixture ensues. 41

All these evils which Arjuna foresees would actually come about if the wicked be allowed to thrive in society.

satrānas vā kulāna kulaṣya ca
patantī pitarāt kṣaṇa luskṣeṇo ducakikāya: 11 ५२
samuk-va. narakāyā dhupasāmāna kulaṣya ca
patantī pitar āhī epamā lussaṇad-udva kikāya II

samkarāh confusion narakāya for the hell eva also kulāna kulaṣya ca of the slayers of the family kulaṣya of the family ca and patantī fall pitarāh the forefathers āhī hi verily eva āhī their luskkṣeṇo ducakikāya lupta pindodaka kriyāh deprived of the offerings of rice-ball and water

Hell is verily the lot of the family and family destroyers through caste admixture; for, their ancestors fall deprived of manes-cakes and libations. 42
The departed happen to stay for sometime in the region of the manes, before they resume another birth. Libations offered to them by their descendants have a toning effect on their dormant psyche.

The everlasting caste-virtues and the family-merits get ruined because of the caste-confusion created by the bad deeds of the family-destroyers.

Utsanna kula dharmāṇāṁ manusyaṇāṁ janārdanaṁ
narake 'niyatam vāso bhavati 'ty anusūṣruma

Utsanna kula dharmāṇāṁ whose family religious practices are destroyed.
manusyaṇām of the men जनार्दन janaṁ janārđana O Janardana नरके narakē in hell अनियतं aniyatam for unknown period वाला rāṣaḥ dwelling भवति bhavati is इति iti thus अनुसुश्रुमa anusuṣṭrūmakā we have heard

We have heard, O Janardana, that hell is verily the long lasting abode of the men whose family religious practices have been broken. 44

अहो वत महत् पापम् कतः व्यवसिता चयम्

Yadrājyaṣubhaṁloṣeṇa hantu śvajanaṁ: || 45

अहो वत महत् पापम् कतः विव विव सिता चयम्

वत् rāṣṭya dvaś-loṣeṇe hantu ś-aṇaṁ uddha yata ||

ahobata mahat pāpam kartum vyavasitāh vayam ||
yadrāṣṭya sukha lobhena hantum svajanam udyatāh ||

अहो वत aho bata alas mahat pāpam pāpam

sin katu kartum to do vyavasitāh prepared chayam vayam we yath yat that rājyaṣubhaṁloṣeṇe rāṣṭya sukha lobhena by the greed of pleasure of kingdom hantu hantum to kill śvajanaṁ svajanam kinsmen uvyata udyatāh prepared

Goaded by the greed of the pleasures of a kingdom, we are, alas, bent on perpetrating the great sin of killing our kinsmen. 45

yadī mām pratikāram āśastraṁ śastrāṇāyaṁ:

धातराष्ट्रा rṇa hantu: tannem dhṛśmatē bhavēt || 46

yadī mām kā-pratikāram Śaśaṁ rṇa hantu

धातराष्ट्रा rṇa hantu ruddē me kṣemānāsrū bhavēt ||

yadī mām apratikāram āśastraṁ śastrāṇāyaṁ

dhārtarāṣṭrā rane hanyuk tan me kṣemātaram bhavet ||
Should the sons of Dhrtarashtra with weapons in hand slay me, unresisting and unarmed in the battle, that would indeed be better for me.

The despondency of Arjuna now culminates in desperate resignation. This state is just the opposite of the self-surrender to the Lord.

**Sukham Uvac**

एवमुक्तवार्जुनः: सः जये रथोपसः उपाविषत्।
विस्तुष्य सश्रं चापं शोकसंवियंसानस्।। ४७

Evam ukttvā'ṛjunāḥ samkhye rathopastha upāviṣat|
visṛṣṭya saśaram cāpam sokaśamvignamānasah ||

**Sukham Uvac samjaya uvāca**

Sanjaya said:

एवम् evam thus ukttvā having said अर्जुनः: arjunah Arjuna सः जये samkhye in the battle रथोपसः: rathopasthaḥ on the seat of the chariot उपाविषत: upāvisat sat down विस्र्ष्यa visṛṣṭya having cast away सश्रमः saśaram arrow चापम् cāpaṁ bow शोकसंवियंसानस्: soka samvigna mānasah with a mind distressed with sorrow
Sanjaya said:

So saying, overwhelmed with sorrow in the battle-field, Arjuna sat on the seat of his chariot, abandoning his bow and arrows.

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the first discourse designated:

THE DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA
The Message of Strength — Arjuna Declines to Fight against the Revered Ones — Spiritual Anguish — The Harbinger of Grace — Consistency is Yoga — Atman is Immortal — Nature of Death — Feelings Pertain to Body — The Real and the Unreal — Be not Attached to Karma — Rebirth of the Embodied — Atman is Super-mundane — The Materialistic Standpoint — Atman Transcends Mind and Speech — Swerve not from Duty — Transform Karma into Karma Yoga — The Way of the Worldly — The Key to Yoga — The Enlightened Defined.

Sanjay uvāca

tam tathā kṛpayā'viṣṭam asṛupārnākulekṣaṇam viṣṭdantam idam vākyam uvāca madhusūdano'
Sanjay uvāca Sanjaya said:

tam to him tatha thus kṛpya. kṛpayā with pity āvīṣṭam overcome asṛupārnā śakula tksaṇam with eyes filled with tears and agitated viṣṭdantam despondent idam this vākyam speech uvāca spoke madhusūdano Madhusudana

Sanjaya said:

Madhusudana spoke these words to him who was thus overwhelmed with compassion and drowned in distress, and whose eyes were drenched in tears of despondency.
Though the word kṛpa is translated as compassion, Arjuna is not really endowed with this divine quality. He alone who is the master of his mind can extend compassion to the distressed and seek to allay their sorrows. But now Arjuna himself is in dire need of redemption from distress; the question, therefore, of his showing mercy to others does not arise.

The Message of Strength—2-3

śrī bhagavān uvāca

kutāḥ tva kasmalam idam visame samupasthitam
anāryajustam asvargyam akṛitrīkaram arjuna

śrī bhagavān uvāca Sri Bhagavan said:

kutāḥ: whence tva kasmalam idam visame samupasthitam anāryajustam asvargyam akṛitrīkaram arjuna

The Blessed Lord said:

Whence has this unmanly, heaven-barring and shameful dejection come upon you, at this juncture, O Arjuna?

The Lord who was silent all this while now deigns to speak. The Gita proper, therefore, com-
mence here. In the very first utterance in these two stanzas, the core of the everlasting message is delivered.

Pithily putting the fundamental at the outset is characteristic of a classical literature. An example may be cited.

ॐ पूर्णसद् पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णिक्य पूर्णसाधय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

"Om. The Invisible is the Whole, the Visible is the Whole. From the Whole, the visible universe has come out. The Whole remains ever Itself even though the infinite universe has come out of It." This is the fundamental in the Upanishads. Nothing but the elaboration of this truism is found in all of them. The Lord’s teachings are also after this pattern.

The term ārya in our sacred books does not refer to any race or stock. It only refers to a highly evolved and cultured man. It connotes much more than referring to somebody as a perfect gentleman. An Aryan is one who scrupulously adheres to dharma. Manu Smriti has it that children born of parents imbued with self-control and austerity are Aryans; and those others born of lust are non-Aryans. The function of the Vedanta philosophy is to induce man to become Aryan in all respects. Arjuna in whom manliness was writ large all along, has now suddenly and unexpectedly sunk into unmanliness. The Lord rouses him up from this set-back.
When the defect in a balance is pointed out the weights taken in it get themselves automatically annulled A confused mind is very much like a defective balance. It is incapable of inquiring into truth. Sri Krishna classifies Arjuna's mind as confused. Consequently his utterances are all meaningless. Anyone devoid of discrimination is not an Aryan.

There is neither this world nor the next to the confused and dejected in mind. Kirti or fame attends on one given to a laudable life on earth, but Arjuna's way is unfortunately shameful. For him who is shamefully incompetent for this world, the question of the attainment of heaven does not arise. He is no Aryan who fails to face a juncture, and he is unfit for the here and the hereafter.

क्लेष्य मा स गमः पार्थ नैतच्चचयमुपपदते ।
शुद्र हुदयदैर्घ्यः त्यक्तकोशिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ ३ ॥

क्लेश्य मा स्म गम पार्थ न एतः शिवो उप-पदते ।
शुद्रम् हुदय-दौर्येष्माम् स्थलं दूष-दिनं परम् तप ॥

klaibyam mā sma gamah pārtha

1 naś tat tvayu upapadyate 1
ksudram hṛdaya daurbalyam
tyaktvōttistha paramtapa ॥

क्लेश्यम् klaibyam impotence मा स्म गम मां sma
gamah do not get pārtha O Partha न na not etat
etat this tvayi in thee upapadyate is fitting
śudram ksudram mean hṛdaya daurbalyam
weakness of the heart sākṣi tvaktivā having abandoned
Yield not, O Partha, to feebleness. It does not befit you. Cast off this petty faint-heartedness. Wake up, O vanquisher of foes!

The man who fails to face a crisis, speaking and acting irrelevantly, is denounced as a dolt. But Arjuna is not made of that inferior stuff; the training that he has received is superb. He is literally a vanquisher of foes. Poles apart are the feebleness of a coward and the boldness of Arjuna who successfully combated Siya, the Great God. The Lord simply chides him for the momentary weakness that has come upon his comrade and seeks to make him whole again.

The manifest world is comprised of two categories—Purusha and Prakriti, the noumenon and the phenomenon. One becomes feeble to the extent one depends on the phenomenon; one becomes manly and courageous to the extent one identifies oneself with the noumenon. This identification is Atmabodham. Strength and Atmabodham are identical. Weakness is condemned downright by the Lord.

This Atman cannot be attained by the weak—is the Upanishadic pronouncement. And the message of Sri Krishna is based on this fundamental principle. To be firm of body, formidable of mind, constant of character—excellences like these are all born of strength. This world and the next one too are for the strong alone. Right conduct originates from strength; straightforwardness comes from it;
enjoyment traces itself to it, practice of yoga is possible because of it; attainment of moksha is enabled by it, reaching Godhood is impossible without it, all divine traits have their source in it. In strength lie the key and the clue to all the teachings of the Lord. Exalted life begins with Atmabodham, which expresses itself as strength. Strength is life; weakness is death.

He who is soft and weak-minded like the puffed rice soaked in milk, is good for nothing. He cannot achieve anything great. But the strong and virile one is heroic. He is the accomplisher of everything in life.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Arjuna Declines to Fight against the Revered Ones—4-6

अर्जुन उदाचः
कथं भीष्ममहे सहवे द्रोणं च मद्धुसदनः
इष्टसि: प्रतियोत्स्यामि पूजार्हवंविविधनः
रथम् भीष्मम् भद्रम् सहवे द्रोणम् च मधु स्वदनः
इष्टसि प्रतित-योत्स्यामि पूजा-भैरवः भरि-स्वदनः

arjuna uvāca

katham bhīsmam aham samkhye
dronam ca madhūsūdana
isubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi
pūjārhaḥ arisūdana

अर्जुन उदाचः arjuna uvāca Arjuna said
कथम् katham how भीष्मम् bhīsmam Bhishma अहम्
aham I सहवे samkhye in battle द्रोणम् dronam Drona
ca and मधूसदन madhūsūdana O Madhusudana इष्टसि.
isubhiḥ with arrows प्रतियोत्स्यामि pratiyotsyāmi shall
fight पूजाहें pūjārhaḥ worthy to be worshipped अरिसदन
arisūdana O destroyer of enemies
Arjuna said:

O slayer of Madhu, O slayer of foes, how shall I with arrows counter-attack Bhishma and Drona, who are worthy of worship?

O Krishna, it befits one like you being adored as Madhusudana and as Arisudana; for, your doing away with a demon and a sworn enemy is justifiable. But my position is quite different. I dare not even debate with the venerable elders I behold here. How then shall I give battle to them, with weapons in hand? Will I not be condemned as one who waged war with the worshipful grandsire and with the adorable preceptor?

गुरुन अहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं मैस्थयस्पिह लोके ।
हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरुनिहेव युज्ञिय भोगान्तशिविरस्दिग्धान् ॥ ५

गुरुन अहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं मैस्थयस्पिह लोके ।
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गुरुन the Gurus (teachers) अहत्वा instead of slaying हि hi indeed महानुभावान् mahānubhā-वान most noble श्रेयो sreyah better भोक्तुं bhoktun to eat मैस्थयस्पिह bhaikṣyam alms लोके loke in the world हत्वार्थ hatvā having slain अर्थकामान् arthakāmān wealth and desires tu tu indeed गुरुन Gurus इह iha here पत्र eva also युज्ञिय bhujītya enjoy सोगान bhogān enjoyments रुद्धिराप्रदिग्धान rudhirā-प्रदिग्धान stained with blood
To eat the beggar's bread even is far better in this world than to slay these great-souled masters. But if I kill them, my enjoyment of wealth and desires in this world itself will be stained with blood. 5

Bhishma is verily the embodiment of continence. Chastity gets itself defined in this exemplary person. The boon that he has obtained is that death would not overtake him against his consent. Self-denial is his life-long austerity. The Preceptor Drona is a versatile genius, a man of right conduct. Arjuna owes his skill in archery to this teacher. Kripa is another eminent person on the other side. Arjuna has always been holding these men of merit in high veneration. To treat them as enemies now all on a sudden is well-nigh impossible to the noble-minded Arjuna. And if he should happen to kill them, this earthly life itself would become hell to him.

न चैतिदिम: कतरलो गरीयो यद्रा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयु: ।
यानेय हत्या न जिज्ञीवियामस्तेक्वसिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्रः: ॥ ६

न च एतत् विवा कतरत् न गरीयं यद्रो वा जयेम यदि न जयेयु।
यान् एव हत्या न जिज्ञीवियामं ते भव-स्थिता प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्र।

na caii 'tad vidmah kataran no garityo
yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuk ।
yān eva halvā na jījīvisāmas
tē 'vasthitāh pramukhe dhārtarāstrāh ॥

न na not च ca and एतत् etat this विवा vidmah (we) know कतरत् katarat which न nah for us गरीयं garyah better यद्रो yat that वा va or जयेम jayema we should conquer यदि yadi if वा va or न nah us जयेयuk jayeyuk they should conquer यान jān whom एव eva even हला
hatvā having slain n na not jīvēṣāmaḥ jīvēṣāmaḥ we wish to live te te those abhūṣīnaḥ abhūṣīnaḥ (are) standing pramukhe in face āsyaḥ āsyaḥ sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra

Whether we should conquer them, or they conquer us—I do not know which would be better. These very sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra stand before us, after slaying whom we should not care to live.

Spiritual Anguish—7-8

kārpanyadosopahatasvabhāvah
prcchāmi tvām dharmasammūḍhacetaḥ
yac chreyah syān niscitam brāhi tan me
sisyas te 'ham sadhi māṁ tvām prapannam

kārpanyadocṣa upahatasvabhāvah with nature overpowered by the taint of pity prcchāmi I ask tvām thee dharma with a mind in confusion about duty v yah which śreyah good śaṁ śaṁ may be niscitam decisively brāhi say tat that me for me śiṣyaḥ sisyaḥ disciple te te thy aham I śaṁtma teach saṁsaṁtvām to thee prapannam taken refuge

My nature is weighed down with the taint of feeble-mindedness; my understanding is confused as to duty. I entreat you, say definitely what is good for me.
I am your disciple. Do instruct me who have taken refuge in you.

Arjuna confesses that this crisis has driven him on to the position of a Kripāṇa. It means that he is inclined to grieve; he has become feeble and an object of pity; it also indicates niggardliness. The Upanishad says that he who does not strive for spiritual enlightenment is a Kripāṇa. The man's confession is correct.

Referring to man's strivings the Upanishad declares:

अन्यच्चेद्येंयुद्धुतेऽप्रेयसो जसे मानायेय पुराय सिनिते
ततोऽशय आहुञ्जः साधुमेवत दीयते धर्माः य ए प्रेयो दृष्टिते

"One thing is the good and quite another, the pleasant; being of different requisitions, they both bind man. Holy becomes he who pursues the good, but fails the man from the goal, who chooses the pleasant."

Arjuna finds himself now at the cross-roads between the pleasant and the good. It is Preyas—the pleasant, that he has been blessed with in plenty all along. Learning and culture, wealth, wives, progeny, kingdom—gifts of this kind add to enjoyment. They come under the category of Preyas. Arjuna comes to know now of the fact that they are of no avail to allay the agony caused by a catastrophe. He who was all along the kinsman and comrade of Sri Krishna, now becomes a disciple and supplicates for the gift of Sreyas—the good. He surrenders himself to the Lord. This frame of mind is the prerequisite to the attainment
of spiritual enlightenment. It is a turning point in life. The Lord takes note of it, sympathizes with him and infuses courage into him which is the dire need of the hour. The grace of the Lord is unfailing in its descent on the devotees in the hour of need. What came as Preyas to Arjuna till this critical juncture now chooses to come as Sreyas.

He who seeks to make a sacred study of the Bhagavad Gita and he who desires to translate its tenets into action will do well to chant this verse every time and to evoke in himself the attitude of self-surrender seen here in Arjuna. It is a prayer complete in itself.

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुदान्तः सच्चोक्षुरुच्छोपणमिन्द्रियानां ||
अवाप्य भूमानसपल्लद्य राज्ये सुपापामपि चाभिपत्यम् || ८

न हि प्रपश्यामि मम अप-तुच्छातः यत् शोकम् उद-शोपणम् पद्मिन्यासां ||
अवाप्य भूमान-क्षात्रां मृत्युश्च वाच-योग्यम पद्मस् राज्यम् सुरणाम भर्ति च आधिपत्यम् ||

\[na hi prapasyâmi mamá'panudyâd\]

\[yac chokam ucchośañam indriyâhām||\]

\[avâpya bhúmaâv asapatnam rddham||\]

\[râjyam surânâm api cā dhipatyam||\]

न हि na hi not प्रपश्यामि prapasyâmi I see मम mama अपनुदान्तः apanudâtâ would remove: यत् yat that शोकम् sokam grief सच्चोक्षुरुच्छोपणम् ucchośañam drier up इन्द्रियानाम indriyâhām of my senses अवाप्य avâpya having obtained भूमान bhúmau in the earth असपतनम asapatnam unrivalled क्षात्रां kṣātrāṁ rddham prosperous राज्यम् râjyam dominion सुरणाम surânâm over the gods भर्ति api even च ca and आधिपत्यम् Ídhipatyam lordship
I do not find any remedy to the grief that parches my senses, though I were to gain unrivalled and prosperous monarchy on earth or even sovereignty over the celestials.

At the outset Arjuna put forth the argument that the living and the departed would be adversely affected if the impending war were waged. But it was only a cloak to hide the depression within himself. When the Lord sympathetically diagnosed his mind, the bare truth came out.

A young woman in agony hesitates to divulge it to her husband, but hastens to unburden it to her mother. In this act she gets a relief which is enhanced by the sympathy of the parent. It is but natural for one to open one's distressed mind to another who is full of compassion. Arjuna is here found in the position of the young woman in agony. The relationship between Sri Krishna and Arjuna is unique. The mother's love, the father's care, the master's discipline, the king's protection and God's grace—a sweet combination of all these is found in the attitude of Sri Krishna towards Arjuna. Therefore, the latter freely opens his heart and pours out his pitiable case to the benign protector.

स्वाभ उच्चाच
एवंधुक्तवा हप्यकेरि गुडाकेतः परन्तपः।
न योत्सय इति गोविन्दं उक्तवा तूणां बभूव ह।२।

एक्मः उक्तवा हरिके-इशम् गुडाके-इश दशम।
न योत्सय इति गो विन्दम् उक्तवा तूणाम बभूव ह।२।
Sanjaya uvāca

evam uktvā hṛṣikeśam gudākesah paramtapaḥ
na yotsya iti govindam uktvā tūṣnīṁ babhūva ha

संजय उवाच sanjaya uvāca Sanjaya said:

एवम् evam thus uktvā having spoken hṛṣikeśam to Hrishikesa gudākesah (the conqueror of sleep) paramtapaḥ destroyer of foes न चोस्ये na yotsye I will not fight इति iti thus नोक्तद्govindam to Govinda uktvā having said तूष्णीम् tūṣnīṁ silent चभूष ह babhūva ha became

Sanjaya said:

After addressing the Lord of the senses thus, Gudakesa, the terror to the foes, submitted to Govinda, 'I shall not fight,' and held silence.

The descriptive names which the sagacious Sanjaya chooses to use here are all pregnant with meaning. Arjuna is fittingly called Gudakesa—the conqueror of sleep. All beings fall victim to sleep when it overtakes them. Such is the power of this factor in life. But this 'bull among men' has disciplined himself in such a way that sleep would come to him only when he made a decision to sleep. When, where and how long to sleep were all at his will. In addition to the self-mastery of this type, he is always a terror to the foes; he is the subduer of baseness within and without. A man of this calibre is not likely to beat a retreat.

The charioteer to this distinguished hero is none other than Hrishikesa—the Lord of the senses and the mind. He is moreover Govinda—the knower
of the destiny of beings. The knowing one never goes wrong in handling things and events.

Against this background, chances are very remote, of the war being called off, as is fondly hoped by Dhrtarashtra. Sanjaya throws a hint to this effect.

The Harbinger of Grace—10

तप्याच हर्षिकेशः प्रहसनिव भारतः ||
सेनयोग्योभयेः विषदन्तिमि वचः || १०

तम् तम् तवाच हुयोर-िस्स् प्रहसन्नू ह्य भारतः ||
सेनयो मध्योः मध्ये विषदन्तिमू इदम् वचः ||

tam uvāca hṛṣikesaḥ prahasann iva bhārataḥ ||
senayor ubhayor madhye vistdantam idam vacah ||

तम् tam to him उवाच uvāca spoke हर्षिकेशः hṛṣikesaḥ Hrishikesa यहस्न् prahasān smiling इव iva as it were भारत bhārata O Bharata सेनयो senayoh of the armies उभयो ubhayoh (of) both मध्ये madhye in the middle विषदन्तिमू vistdantam despondent इदम् idam this वच vacah word

O Bharata, then smiling, as it were, Hrishikesa spoke these words to the desponding one placed between the two armies.

Significant is the smile beaming on the lips of Hrishikesa. As the dawn is the harbinger of daybreak, the Lord's smile forecasts the yoga and the spiritual enlightenment that are to come on Arjuna. It was Preyas that he had been receiving till now. What he is going to receive forthwith is Sreyas, the sovereign remedy for all the evils of the mundane existence. It is the inviolable means for the attain-
ment of Beatitude. There is nothing greater than Sreypas for man to seek. Existence finds fulfilment in It. Arjuna is going to be initiated into It. Hence this divine smile on the lips of the Lord.

Consistency is Yoga — 11

sri bhagavān uvāca

asocyān anvāsocas tvam prajñāvādāṁ ca bhāsase
gatāsūn agatāsūṁ ca nā'nusocanti pāṇḍitāḥ  ||

sri bhagavān uvāca Sri Bhagavan said:

those who should not be grieved for ānubhavo: anvāsocah hast grieved tvam thou prajñāvādān words of wisdom ca and सापसे bhāsase speakest gatāsūn gatāsūn the dead अगतादून na anusocanti grieve not पाण्डिताः: pāṇḍitāḥ the wise.

The Blessed Lord said:

You grieve for those who should not be grieved for; yet you spell words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead. 11

Arjuna's utterances contained in the verses thirty-five to forty-four of the first chapter are commented upon here. The Lord puts it to him that while his arguments appear as words of wisdom, actually they are not.
The way of the world is to classify a man of learning as Pandita; but the Lord does not do so. He holds that the one who truly knows the plan and purpose of the universe is a Pandita. Such a one grieves not over the death of his kin any more than one grieves over the sunset. Grief is meaningless to the knowing one. Keeping the mind constant in all eventualities is the way of the wise. While speaking like an enlightened one, Arjuna sorrows like an ignorant one. This inconsistency in him is pointed out by the Lord.

Bhishma and Drona are sages who have probed into the mystery of life and death. They are not ruffled over the end that is to come to them forthwith. Forced by circumstances they have taken sides with the wicked in a true sportsman’s spirit. Bhishma in particular plays his part best, remaining unaffected by the consequences. But Arjuna grieves for these very persons who should not be grieved for.

He is a Yogeeswara who practises yoga and becomes an adept in it. But Sri Krishna is more than that; he is Yogeswara. It is yoga in all of its forms that ever emanates from Him. As light and heat constantly come from the sun, yoga comes from this Great Entity. He is therefore Yogeswara.

The Lord of Yoga points out to Arjuna that he is devoid of the very first step in yoga. He who harmonizes his thought, word and deed verily gets into yoga; but that is the very thing that Arjuna does not do. He thinks one way, speaks in another way and acts in yet another way. The personality
thereby gets split, integrity shattered and character lost. Such a man falls from yoga. Arjuna is warned against this fall.

Speak out that only which is in your mind. Do not create conflict between word and deed. Nothing good comes from the disharmony of the thought, word and deed in oneself.

--- Sri Ramakrishna

Atman is Immortal — 12

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न तवं नेमेण जनाधिपाः।
न चेत्व न भविष्याम् सर्वेः वयम् परम्॥ १२

न तु एव अस्मि जातु न असाम. न तस्मि न इसे जन-अधिपिः।
न च एव न भविष्याम् सर्वेः वयम् अतः परम्॥

na tv evā 'ham jātu nā 'sam na tvam ne 'me janādhipāh
na cai va na bhaviṣyāmah sarve vayam atah param ॥

na na not tu indeed eva also aham I
jātu at any time n na not āsām was n na
not tvam thou n na not these jnānāpi:
janādhipāh rulers of men n na not c ca and eva
also n na not bhaviṣyāmah shall be sarve all vayam we atat: atah from this time
param after

Nor I, nor you, nor any of these ruling princes
was ever non-existent before; nor is it that we shall
cease to be in the future.

Bodies appear and disappear, but not so the
Atman which ever Is. A question may be raised
as to how the Atman persists while the body perishes.
The answer comes :-
Nature of Death — 13

dehināśmin yathā dehe kaumāram yauvanam jaraḥ ।
tathā dehāntara-prāptih dhiras tatra na muhyati ॥

dehināḥ of the embodied (soul) āsmin in this yathā as dehe in body kaumāram childhood yauvanam youth jaraḥ old age tathā so also dehāntara-prāptih the attaining of another body dhiraḥ the firm tatra thereat na not muhyati grieves

As the indweller in the body experiences childhood, youth and old age in the body, he also passes on to another body. The serene one is not affected thereby.

The born one passes through babyhood, youth and old age. It is the same entity that experiences all these changes. It should not be held that the individual that is the baby is quite different from the individual that is the youth. Likewise, the individual that transmigrates from one body into another retains his individuality. The enlightened one sees into this truth and remains unperturbed over death. Conversely, he who disciplines himself to remain unperturbed under all situations prepares himself thereby for enlightenment. Changes pertain to body and changelessness to Atman. The knower of this fact is truly enlightened.
Though Atman is imperishable, does he not subject himself to heat and cold, pleasure and pain and such like experiences? The explanation comes:—

Feelings Pertain to Body — 14 - 15

मात्रास्पार्साः सुनु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ||
अगमापायिनो नित्याः तांतितिक्षक भारत || १४
मात्रास्पार्साः: तु कौन्तेय शीत-दण्डा गुह्य-दुःख-दर ||
अगमा-अनित्य: अनित्य: तात: तत्तितिक्षक भारत ||

mātrāsparśās tu kaunteya sitosna sukhā duḥkhadāḥ ||
egamāpāyino 'nityāḥ tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata ||

मात्रास्पार्साः: mātrāsparśāḥ contacts of senses with objects tu tu indeed कौन्तेय kaunteya O Kaunteya शीतोष्ण sukh duḥkhadāḥ producers of cold and heat, pleasure and pain अगमापायिन: āgama-pāyinaḥ with beginning and end अनित्य: anityāḥ impermanent tāt: tān them titikṣaṁ titikṣasva bear (thou) भारत bhārata O Bharata

The contacts of the senses with their objects create, O son of Kunti, feelings of heat and cold, of pain and pleasure. They come and go and are impermanent. Bear them patiently, O Bharata. 14

The sense organs such as the eye and the ear contact their objects which are form, sound etc. The sensations caused this way are both favourable and unfavourable. The former feelings lead to pleasure and the latter to pain. These feelings come along with sense contacts and disappear when the senses do not function. A sense object that gives pleasure at one time gives pain at another time. Heat
and cold may be cited as examples. The food that is
delicious and inviting while one is in health turns
loathsome when in sickness. Pleasure and pain are
therefore transitory. He who remains unaffected by
them becomes firm in life. Practice of Titiksha or
forbearance is a sure means to healthy-mindedness.
The practiser thereof is not affected by pleasure and
pain, he becomes competent for enlightenment.

But then, how does such a one become fit for
enlightenment? The answer comes —

\[
\text{yam hi na vyathayanti ete purusam purusarsabha} \]
\[
sama duhkha sukham dhiram so 'mrita tvāya kalpate
\]

Yam whom hi lū surely n vyathayanti na vyatha-
yanti afflict not ete ete these purusam man
puram prab purusa rsabha chief among men sama duhkha sukham same in pleasure and pain dhiram firm sah he amrittvāya for
immortality kalpate kalpate is fit.

That man, O the best of men, is fitted for immor-
tality, whom these do not torment, who is balanced in
pain and pleasure and steadfast.

The indweller in the Purī—in the body looked
upon as a city—is called Purusha. Pleasure and pain
occur inevitably in the body because of the contact
of the senses with their objects. He who identifies
himself with the body is bound to be grieved. But his mind does not waver who gets fixed in the Self; he is all calmness. Remaining unruffled by the evanescent events, reveals the clarity of his understanding. He therefore becomes the man of steady wisdom. He is thus fit for immortality.

We have come into this world to avail ourselves of all the happenings here and thereby discipline ourselves for enlightenment. Cessation of misery corresponds to the removal of ignorance.

An inquiry into the nature of the Real and the Unreal ensues now:

The Real and the Unreal — 16-20

नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः।
उभयोर्पि द्विवेद्वत्तवन्योत्तच्चदशिमि:॥ र० ६

न द-सतः विद्यते भावः न द-भावः विद्यते सतः।
उभयोऽभिः हच्छ: अन्तः चु अभिः: तत्व-दशिमि:॥

nā 'sato vidyate bhāvo nā 'bhāvo vidyate sataḥ ।
ubhayor api dṛṣṭō 'ntas tv anayos tattvadarsibhiḥ ॥

न na not असतः: asataḥ of the unreal विद्यते: vidyate: is सतः: sataḥ of the real उभयोऽभिः: ubhayoh of the two अपि: api also हच्छ: dṛṣṭah (has been) seen अन्तः: antaḥ the final truth तत् tu indeed अनयोऽ: anayoh of these तत्वदशिमि: tattvadarsibhiḥ by the knowers of the truth

The unreal has no existence; the real never ceases to be. The truth about both has been realized by the seers.
Tattva-darśana is seeing into the reality of things. Beings are seeking to have a correct understanding of things about them. To the extent their understanding of things is perfect, their adjustment too becomes perfect. Life is a series of experiments to get at the permanent in preference to the impermanent. A man is attracted by a panoramic plot of land on a river bank and he decides to put up a beautiful house there. But on investigation he finds out that the land is liable to inundation during the rains. Though the plot happens to be ideally situated, it has to be rejected for valid reasons. Many things in nature are unreal and unreliable while seeming to be real and reliable.

The seers of truth behold the body and the pleasure and pain associated with it as unreal. Our bodies were not existent in the distant past, they will not be in the distant future. Though they are now, their existence is equivalent to non-existence—abhāvam. The pleasure of wealth enjoyed in dream is unreal even while enjoying it.

The body is devoid of bhāva and therefore unreal. It was not in the past, it has come into being now, it will not be in the future. What seems to be real now is only a modification of the elements. It is therefore to be discounted as non-existent. The man of understanding should not be affected by pleasure and pain which are all born of identification with the body.

Atman is Existence, it is Real, it is bhāva which means awareness or pure consciousness. Awareness
remains untouched by time, space and causation. States of mind such as wakefulness, dream and sound sleep do not affect Atman. Modifications which are characteristics of things phenomenal do not take place in Atman. It is ever Itself. Prajñānam Brahman—Awareness is Reality. This is the finale of the definition of the Absolute Reality. It is sought to be explained further as follows:—

The ocean of Infinite- Existence- Knowledge- Bliss is ever Itself, unaffected by the phenomenal.

— Sri Ramakrishna

अविनाशित तु तद्विद्धि वेन सर्वमिदं ततम्
विनाशमयन्यक्ष्यस्य स अविनाशिकतूकं विशिष्टति।

विनाशमयन्यक्ष्यस्य स अविनाशिकतूकं विशिष्टति।

97
अ-वि-नाशम् तु तदू विद्धि वेन सर्वमिदं इद्धम् ततम्
विनाशमयन्यक्ष्यस्य स अविनाशिकतूकं विशिष्टति।

aviniṣṭa tu tad viddhi yena sarvam idam tatam
vināśam avyayasyā 'syā na kasci kartum arhati

Aviniṣṭa aviniṣṭa indestructible tu tu indeed tat tat that viddhi know (thou) vena by whom sarvam all iddm iddm this tatam tatam is pervaded vināśam destruction avyayasya avyayasya asya of the imperishable na not kasci kartum to do anāṁ arhati is able

Know that to be verily indestructible by which all this is pervaded. None can effect the destruction of the Immutable.

17

Space is all pervasive and infinite. Clouds appear all on a sudden in it; but their presence does not cause division in space. It is possible for clouds
to change in magnitude. But Akasa or space remains ever itself. Akin to Akasa, Awareness is the substratum of the manifested universe, which appears and disappears. No addition or subtraction can be effected in Awareness. It is the eternal Witness.

While instructing the disciples the Guru first pointed out two fingers indicating thereby that there are in the relative existence two realities—Brahman and Maya. Then he folded in one finger to suggest that Brahman is ever constant while Maya appears and disappears.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The phenomenal is explained:

अन्तवन्त इसे देहा नित्यस्योक्तः: शरीरिणः ।
अनाशिनो प्रामेयस्य तस्मादुद्ययस्नय भारत ॥ १८
अनं व-वन्त इसे देहा नित्यस्य उक्ता शरीरिणः ।
श-नाशिन श-प्रामेयस तस्मात् युद्धस्य भारत ॥

antavanta ime deha nityasya 'ktah saririnah |
anasino 'prameyasya tasmad yudhyasva bharatah ॥

अन्तवन्त antavantaḥ having an end इसे ime these देहा deha bodies नित्यस्य nityasya of the everlasting उक्ता ukta are said शरीरिण saririnah of the embodied अनाशिन anasinaḥ of the indestructible अप्रामेयस aprameyasya of the immeasurable तस्मात् tasmāt therefore युद्धस्य yudhyasva fight भारत bharaṇa O Bharata

These bodies of the Indweller, who is eternal, indestructible and immeasurable, are said to have an end. Fight therefore, O Bharata.

18

The ocean is ever itself. A portion of the water in it changes place forming waves on the surface and currents below. Elsewhere it freezes as icebergs. Changes of this kind take place in nature, but
Atman does not undergo any change whatsoever, It being eternal. All the water in a pond evaporates and disappears. Even so, the body of an individual disintegrates and disappears. But Atman is not exposed to this kind of destruction; it is therefore indestructible. Body can be cognized and described; but Atman is beyond the domain of the mind and speech; so it is immeasurable.

Because of delusion over earthly relationship and over things earthly, Arjuna chooses to recoil from the righteous war. It ill-behoves him to abandon his duty. So the Lord exhorts him, 'Fight therefore, O Bharata.' This exhortation can be found again and again, as the burden of the Gita.

Ya enam vetti hantalaram yathin manyate hamsu
ubhau tau na vijnaito na yam hanti na hanyate

Ch: yah he who enam this (self) vetti knows hantalaram slayer va: yah he who ca and enam this manyate thinks hamsu hatam slain ussia ubhau both tau those na not vijnaita: vijnitaah know na not abhams ayaam this hanti slays na not hamsu hanyate is slain

He who holds Atman as slayer and he who considers It as the slain, both of them are ignorant. It slays not, nor is It slain.
‘I am ruined’, laments the man who suddenly loses his very much loved fortune. Though he is different from his wealth, identification with it drives him on to this deluded position. Attachment to the body makes one feel that physical death is death to the Atman. But the immortal Self remains unaffected by all bodily changes. As the sky is ever itself in the midst of clouds coming and going, the Atman is changeless while the bodies change.

न जायते त्रियते वा कदाचिन्तां भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः।
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यने इन्यमाने शरीरे।

20

न जायते त्रियते वा कदा विवृत्त न अयम् भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः।
अज-ज. नित्य शाश्वत अयम् पुराण न हन्यने इन्यमाने शरीरे।

na jāyate mriyate vā kadācina
nā ’yam bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhuyah।
ajo nityah sāsvato ’yam purāno
na hanyate hanyamāne sarīre।

न na not जायते jāyate is born जिल्ले mriyate dies वा vā or कदाचित kadācina at any time न na not अयम् aham this (self) भूत्वा bhūtvā having been भविता bhavitā will be वा vā or न na not भूय bhuyah (any) more अज ajaḥ unborn नित्य nityah eternal शाश्वत sāsvataḥ changeless अयम् aham this पुराण purāṇah ancient न na not हन्यते hanyate is killed हन्यमाने hanyamāne being killed शरीरे sarīre in body

The Atman is neither born nor does it die. Coming into being and ceasing to be do not take place in it. Unborn, eternal, constant and ancient, it is not killed when the body is slain.
To be born, to exist, to grow, to change, to decay, to perish—these are the six kinds of modifications undergone by the body constituted of elements. But the Atman remains unaffected by these changes.

Be not Attached to Karma — 21

वेदाः विनाशिनां नित्याम् य एनमजनमचयम् ।
कर्म स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ २१ ॥

वेद विनाशिनां नित्याम् य एनम अजनम अवययम् ।
कर्म स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ ॥

veda 'vināśināṁ nityāṁ ya enam ajam avyayam ।
katham sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kam ghātayati hanti kam ॥

चेद veda knows अविनाशिनां avināśināṁ indestructible नित्याम् nityāṁ eternal व: yak who एनम enam this (self) अजम ajam unborn अवययम avyayam inexhaustible कर्म katham how स: saḥ he (that) पुरुषः puruṣaḥ man पार्थ pārtha O Partha कम् kam whom घातयति ghātayati causes to be slain हन्ति hanti kills कम् kam whom

He who cognizes the Atman as indestructible, eternal, unborn and changeless, how can he slay, O Partha, or cause another to slay?

Atman is actionless. The knower of Atman is free from egoism; therefore the feeling of agency is not in him. Karma does not, for that reason, taint him. Slaying and causing to slay are apparently terrible actions. But because of the absence of egoism in an enlightened person, even such evil actions do not tarnish him. An aspirant tries to be free from egoism while discharging his duty.
Absorbed as a saint was, he was passing along a crowded street. Then by chance he trampled upon the foot of a wicked man. That ruffian became enraged and recklessly assaulted the holy man, until he fainted and fell down. He was forthwith carried to the Ashrama and tenderly nursed by his disciples. When he regained consciousness he was asked if he could recognize the one attending on him. "The hand that beat up this body is now nursing it," came the reply. The knower of Brahman distinguishes not the assaulter from the assaulted.

\[\text{— Sri Ramakrishna}\]

Rebirth of the Embodied — 22

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गुद्हायति नरोपराणि \ ।
तथा शरीरारणि विहाय जीर्णान्त्यन्यानि संवालि नवानि देहि।।२२

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गुद्हायति नरः अपराणि ।
तथा शरीरारणि वि-हाय जीर्णानि अन्यानि सम-वालि नवानि देहि।।

\[\text{väsāmsi jīrnāni yathā vihāya} \]
\[\text{navāni grhnāti naro 'parāni} \]
\[\text{tathā sarirāni vihāya jīrnāny} \]
\[\text{anyāni samyāti navāni dehi} \]

\[\text{väsāmsi clothes जीर्णानि jīrnāni worn out यथा} \]
\[\text{yathā as विहाय vihāya having cast away नवानि navāni} \]
\[\text{new गुद्हायति grhnāti takes नर narah man अपराणि aparāni} \]
\[\text{others तथा tathā so शरीरारणि sarirāni bodies विहाय vihāya} \]
\[\text{having cast away जीर्णानि jīrnāni worn out अन्यानि} \]
\[\text{anyāni others संवालि samyāti enters नवानि navāni new} \]
\[\text{देहि dehi the embodied (one)} \]

As a man casting off worn-out garments puts on new ones, so the embodied, casting off worn-out bodies enters into others that are new. 22

It is only after the procurement of new clothings that man rejects the old worn-out ones. The snake
develops new skin from within and then casts off the slough. Even so the Jivatman mentally assumes a new form before dissociating himself from the old body. In other words his mental make up does not die along with the gross body. It is called the subtle body and it persists with its innate tendencies and dispositions. This is the core of the Jivatman and he survives the death of the physical frame. He then chooses to develop another gross body in a womb suited to his attainments.

The snake and its slough are not one and the same. Even so the Atman and the body are different, one from the other.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Atman is Super-mundane — 23-25

 nilai 'bhijnántati shástraṇi nilai dháhíté pákáh: ||
 n chai 'bhijnántati shástraṇi n sháchāyati bhásat: || 23
 n ettäm, 'bhijnántati shástraṇi n ettäm, dháhíté pákáh: ||
 n cha ettäm, 'bhijnántati āap: n sháchāyati bhásat: ||

nai 'nam chindanti sastrāṇi nai 'nam dahati pāvakaḥ ||
na cai 'nam kledayanty āpo na sósayati mārataḥ ||

na na not ettäm, enam this (self) chindanti cut झाँकाणी sastrāṇi weapons n na not ettäm, enam this झाँकिता dahati burns pákáh fire n na not च ca and ettäm, enam this क्लेडयान्ति kledayanti wet āap: āpāḥ waters n na not झोपवाति sósayati dries bhávah: mārataḥ wind

Weapons do not cleave the Atman, fire burns It not, water wets It not, wind dries It not.

Among the five elements Akasa is one that is actionless. So no reference to it is made here.
actions of the other four elements do not affect the Atman. Weapons are made of the stuff which the earth is. Atman being indivisible, weapons cannot hurt it. All the four active elements are incapable of acting on Akasa which is inert. How then can they act on Atman which is Chit-akasa which transcends the inert Akasa itself?

The Atman remains unaffected by mundane things. Pleasure and pain, virtue and vice—dual states such as these do not have sway on It. But they affect the person identified with the body. Smoke tarnishes the walls, but not the space within them.

—Sri Ramakrishna

अच्छेद्यो यमदाधाययं अच्छेद्यो श्रोष्य एव च।
नित्यं सर्वगतं स्वाभुं अच्छेद्यं सत्तनं। ॥ २४॥

अच्छेद्यं: acchedyah cannot be cut अयम् ayam this self आदाहय adāhyah cannot be burnt अयम् ayam this आकलेय akleyah cannot be wetted इसोयह asosyah cannot be dried एव्व eva also च ca and नित्यं nityah eternal सर्वगतं sarvagatam all-pervading स्वाभुं swabhun stable अचलं acalah immovable अयम् ayam this सत्तनं sattanah ancient

This Self is uncleavable, incombustible and neither wetted nor dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, stable, immovable and everlasting.

Atman cannot be cleaved; therefore It is eternal. That which exists in one place and not in another
cannot be called eternal, because of its absence in one place. Being eternal, It is all-pervading. Like Akasa, Atman is everywhere; so It is stable. That which changes places is mobile; but Atman being present everywhere, It is immovable. Time gains no access to Atman; It is for this reason held as everlasting.

The indescribable Atman is sought to be described in innumerable ways. Through varieties of definitions and explanations some vague concept of Him is formed in the mind. But to the extent the mind gets purified cognition of Him becomes lucid. And the cessation of misery is ever in direct proportion to one’s being anchored in the Self. Misery is an unwanted state of mind got into through ignorance. Sreyas is not where misery is. The Lord throws light on the glory of Atman in order to cure Arjuna of the despondency meaninglessly assumed by him.

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयं अविकारोऽयमहृदये।
तस्मादेवा विदित्वेनं नानुशोचितस्यहि।।२५।

अव्यक्तः: अवपरः अवचिन्त्यः: अवपरः अविकारः: अवपरः उद्यमः।
तस्मादेवा विदित्वा एषम् न नसु-शोचितस्य अव्यक्तः।।

avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam avikāryo 'yam ucyate।
tasmād evaṁ viditvai 'nam nā 'nuṣocitum arhasi।।

अव्यक्तः: avyaktah unmanifested अयम् ayaṁ this (self) अचिन्त्यः: acintyāḥ unthinkable अयम् ayaṁ this अविकारः: avikāryāḥ unchangeable अयम् ayaṁ this उद्यमः ucyate is said तस्मात् tasmāt therefore एषम् evaṁ this तस्माद tasmād therefore एषम् evaṁ this
This Atman is said to be unmanifested, unthink-able and immutable. Therefore, knowing it as such, you should not grieve.

Atman cannot be perceived by any of the senses, and whatever does not come within the ken of the senses is necessarily unmanifested. It is very hard to conceive of a thing that cannot be perceived. Atman therefore said to be unthinkable. The four elements—air, fire, water and earth—can be sensed. They are seen to be undergoing modifications, as such they are mutable. But the element Akasa undergoes no modification. It is ever in its original state. Like Akasa, Atman is ever in its original state. It is therefore said to be immutable. Elemental Akasa is insentient and Atman or Chit-akasa is sentient, in every other respect they are identical. Both being partless they remain immutable. It ill-becomes one to grieve over the immutable.

What is Brahman like? It cannot be defined with words. One may be called upon to explain what the ocean is like, to a person who has never seen it. The expounder can at best say, “It is a vast sheet of water.” Defining Brahman is much more difficult.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The Materialistic Standpoint—26

अथ चेनं नित्यजातं नित्य वा मन्यसे मृतम्
तथापि त्व महामहो नैन शोचितमहेषि ॥ २६
atha cai 'nam nityajātam nityāṁ vā manyase mṛtam |
tathā 'pi tvam mahābāho nai 'nam socitum arhasi ||

κथय atha now κ ca and एनम् enam this (self) नित्यजातम् nityajātam constantly born नित्यां nityāṁ constantly वा vā or कन्यसे manyase thinkest नृत्यम् mṛtam dead तथा aapi even then त्वम् tvam thou महाबाहो mahābāho mighty armed न na not एनम् enam this शोचितम् socitum to grieve अहंसि arhasi (thou) oughtest

Or, if you conceive of Atman as given to constant births and deaths, even then, O mighty armed, you should not sorrow.

That there is nothing permanent, is the view of the materialists. The Lord now takes this standpoint for inquiry. Granting that this view is true, even then there is no ground for grieving. A man being given to theism, atheism, agnosticism, materialism or any other belief is not of much consequence. Irrespective of his creed, he must be free from sorrowing. It is despondency that takes away all manliness from man.

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युः ध्रुवं जनम मृत्यस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्येष्येन न तं शोचितमहसि || २७

जातस्य हि ध्रुवं मृत्युः। ध्रुवस्य जनम सत्सय ।
तस्मात् अ-परि-हारेयं अथे न तस्मू शोचितमू वहसि ||

jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyuḥ dhruvam janma mṛtasya ca ।
tasmād aparihārye 'rthe na tvam socitum arhasi ||

जातस्य jātasya of the born हि hi for ध्रुवं dhruvah certain मृत्युः mṛtyuḥ death ध्रुवम् dhruvam certain जनम janam
Death is certain of that which is born; birth is certain of that which is dead. You should not therefore lament over the inevitable.

When a body fails to function properly it disintegrates and undergoes the modification called death. But other bodies crop up from the same modified matter. They contain inherent propelling force called desire, which drives them on to activities of life. Birth and death are thus a matter of course.

A school of nihilism believes in an individual retaining his individuality as long as the motive power of karma lasts. His individuality continues through births and deaths. The exhausting of his karma is like the end of oil in a burning lamp. The flame then becomes extinct. Even so a man ceases to be when his karma comes to an end.

Another school of atheism holds on to the view that a man’s assuming a body and then annihilating it is a matter of course in nature, even as a lump of clay in a river continues to change its form and shape. Changes of form are called births and deaths. Mourning over this modification is meaningless, according to this school of thought.
avayaktādīnī bhūtānī vyakta madhyānī bhārata
avayaktanidhanāny eva tatra kā paridevanā

अवन्यक्तादीनिः avayaktādīnī unmanifested in the beginning भूतानिः bhūtānī beings व्यक्तमभावाः vyakta madhyānī manifested in their middle state भारता bhārata O Bharata अवन्यक्तनिधिनाः avayakta nidhanāni unmanifested again in the end एव̄ eva also तत्र tatra there कां kā what paridevanā paridevanā grief

Beings are all, O Bharata, unmanifested in their origin, manifested in their mid-state and unmanifested again in their end. What is the point then for angulish?

Beings claimed as kith and kin are those that have come into being now. Persons contacted in dream had not been in existence before; they would not be after the dream breaks. Though existing in the mid-state, actually they are not. According to materialism, the so-called relatives have assumed forms in conformity with the law of nature; they will again cease to be; lamenting therefore over the temporarily appearing individuals serves no purpose.

The heterodox points of view are wound up here. The Lord now returns to the orthodox ways of enquiry:—

Atman Transcends Mind and Speech — 29-30

आध्यात्मिकवचनमत्यः श्रृणोति श्रुताचापेन वेद न चैव कर्मित् ॥
आध्यात्मवचनमत्यः ि शुक्लाचापेन वेद न चैव कर्मित् ॥ २९
आध्यात्मवचनमत्यः ि शुक्लाचापेन वेद न चैव कर्मित् ॥

आध्यात्मवचनमत्यः ि शुक्लाचापेन वेद न चैव कर्मित् ॥
ascaryavat paśyati kāścit enam
ascaryavad vadati tathā 'va ca 'nyah
ascaryavac ca' 'nam anyah śrṇoti
śrutvā 'py enam veda na ca' 'va kāścit

Aścaryavat as a wonder paśyati sees kāścit some one enam this (self) Aścaryavat as a wonder vadati speaks of tathā so eva also ca and anyaḥ another Aścaryavat as a wonder ca and enam this anyaḥ another śrṇoti hears śrutvā having heard api even enam this veda knows na not ca and eva also kāścit any one

One beholds the Self as wonderful; another mentions of It as marvellous; another again hears of It as strange; though hearing yet another knows It not at all.

The Atman cannot be classified with the phenomenal things. Hardly ever anybody thinks of enquiring into what is beyond the phenomenal universe. Explorers into the realm of Atman are therefore rare. This field remains incomprehensible to those not yet fully evolved in mind. Light passes imperfectly through tainted and heterogeneous glass. Even so matters pertaining to Atman remain hazy to the imperfect in mind. One feels amazed fancying that he has grasped It either while meditating or while enquiring of It. It is but natural for one to be wonder-struck while reading, hearing or reflecting on the Atman. Reflecting on It is as good as mentally seeing It. Through all these apperceptions the
Atman remains but partially comprehended or not comprehended at all. Mind is the screen that hides its view.

The Vedas, the Agamas, the Puranas and all other scriptures in the world may be compared with the spittle-defiled food, Ucchistam, because of their being tongue-touched. But the Infinite Brahman has never become spittle-defiled. Nobody has yet ever succeeded in defining It in words.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The fact about the Atman is:

देही नित्यमवध्योयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।
तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न तवं शोचितुमभीसि ॥ ३०

dehi nityam avadhya? Yan dehe sarvasya bhara?at
tasmât sargani bhautani na tvam socita? arhasi ॥

The Indweller नित्यम् nityam always अवध्यः avadhyah indestructible अयम् ayam this देहे dehe in the body सर्वस्य sarvasya of all भारत O Bharata tasmât therefore sarvāṇi sarvāṇi (for) all bhūtāni creatures न na not तवं tvam thou sho?chitum
socita? to grieve भीसि arhasi (thou) shouldest

This, the Indweller in the bodies of all is ever invulnerable, O Bharata. Therefore you should not grieve for any being.

The views of the materialists are herein set aside as baseless. Further, the fact about Atman is conclusively presented. It is incumbent on man to be poised above despondency and thereby pave the way for spiritual enlightenment. And this is verily the path of Sreyas.
A man suffers from a midnight dream that somebody comes with a sword in hand to butcher him to pieces. Being frightened beyond wit, he screams and wakes up. He finds in the dim lamp light the door bolted within and the presence of none in the room. Still his heart continues to palpitate rapidly for sometime. This is the sign of one's identification with one's body.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Not only the spiritual standpoint, but the worldly standpoint also is now taken into consideration:

Swerve not from Duty — 31-37

स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितमहेसि।
धर्म्यार्थी युद्धान्येकोद्यत्सत्साधियस्य न विचरते॥ ३१।
स्व-धर्मसमु अधि च धर्म-रूपस्य न विकम्पितसं बहिः।
धर्म्यार्थी हि युद्धात अथः सत्सादी ध्रुवियश्च न विचरते॥

svadhamam api ca 'veksya
na vikampitum arhasi

dharmyaddhi yuddha cchreyo 'nyat
ksatriyasya na vidyate

स्वधर्मम् svadhamam own duty अधि api also च ca and धर्मसमु aveksya looking at न na not विकम्पितस्य vikampitum to waver बहेसि arhasi (thou) oughtest धर्मार्थी dharmyāt than righteous हि hi indeed युद्धात yuddhat than war अथः sreyah higher अन्यत् anyat other क्षत्रियस्य ksatriyasya of a Kshatriya न na not विचरते vidyate is

Again, looking at your own duty as well, you should not waver; for, there is nothing more welcome to a Kshatriya than righteous war. 31

A Kshatriya holds righteousness superior to mere living. By waging the war of the kind that has come about, righteousness is upheld; but by
beating a retreat from it, unrighteousness is allowed to thrive. He is no Kshatriya who suffers unrighteousness to prosper. And the man who takes to evil ways in preference to the good, estranges himself from Sreyas; he falls further. Holding on to one’s Swadharma is a sure means for the gaining of Sreyas. One’s Swadharma is that duty which is best suited to one’s attainments and temperament.

How shall a man avail himself of the tide of fortune that sets in but rarely? The reply ensues:—

यद्रच्छया चौपर्वं स्वर्गद्वारप्राप्तस्।
सुखिन: क्षत्रिय: पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धसीद्धस्म्॥ ३२

यद्रच्छया च उप-पतस् स्वर्ग-द्वार उप-आ-इत्याद्।
सुखिन: क्षत्रिय: पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धं इद्रयाम्॥

yahrechayā ca 'papannam svargadvāram apāvṛtam
sukhinaḥ kṣatriyāḥ pārtha labhante yuddham idṛśam

यद्रच्छया yadrechayā of itself च ca and उपपन्नम् upapannam come स्वर्गद्वारम् svargadvāram the gate of heaven लभन्तम् apāvṛtam opened सुखिन: sukhinaḥ happy क्षत्रिय: kṣatriyāḥ Kshatriyas पार्थ pārtha O Partha लभन्ते labhante obtain युद्धम् yuddham battle इद्रयाम् idṛśam such.

Happy are the Kshatriyas, O Partha, who obtain such a warfare that comes unsought as an open gateway to heaven. 32

At one time or another the tide of fortune rises for every one. All that a man ought to do is to discharge his duty as best as he can. It is like taking the boat up the river, overcoming the downward flow of water. While steadfastly and devotedly doing his duty, a favourable time comes to bless the
man with all prosperity. It is like the ebb of the
tide. Then the water rushes up against the river,
providing facilities to row the boat easily. The wind
also begins to blow favourably then. By unfurling
the sail the passage is quickened. A little effort at
the appropriate time leads to great results. That is
called the opportune moment. Arjuna is face to face
with it now. The trials and tribulations of the exile
in the forest are over. He has but to execute his
duty now as a matter of course. The attainments of
the earth and heaven, of victory and fame, and of
enjoyment and blessedness are waiting to attend on
him. Diffidence and despondency are therefore out
of place at this juncture.

The tide of fortune and the opportune time come
to one and all, consistent with the law of growth and
evolution. Blessed are they who utilize these advan-
tages to get fixed in Sreyas.

What are the adverse consequences of not uti-
lizing these advantages that come but rarely ever in
a life time? The answer comes:—

अथ चेष्चिभ्सम धम्मे संग्रामे न करिष्णसि ।
तत: स्वयमे कीर्ति च हित्वा पापमवाप्प्यसि ॥ ३३

वय चेत्त स्वमृ हम्मू धम्म्सू संग्राम्सू न करिष्णसि ।
तत: स्व-धम्मं किर्तिमृ च हित्वा पापमू धव-वाप्प्यसि ॥

atha cet tvam imam dharmyam
samgraham na kariṣyasi ।
tathaḥ svadharmaṁ kīrtim ca
hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi ॥
अथ चेतं ṛthacet but if tvam thou īsmāṁ this
dharmyān righteous संज्ञामाण samgrāmāṁ war-
fare न na not कारिष्यसि kariṣyasi will do ततः tataḥ then
स्वधर्मम् svadharmaṁ own-duty किर्तिः kirtim fame च ca
and हितवा hitvā having abandoned पपम् pāpam sin
अवाप्स्यसि avāpsyasi shall incur

But if you will not wage this righteous warfare,
then forfeiting your own duty and honour, you will
incur sin. 33

Self annihilation is the wage of sin. Greater
than that is the fall of the man who fails to do in
time his duty that is based on righteousness. Omi-
sion of doing the right thing is more potent for evil
than the commission of the bad thing.

Fame and honour attend on the person who
lives the life on earth well. Conversely, ill-fame and
dishonour come and choke the evil career. The how
of it is as follows:—

अक्षरितिः अधिकारी भूतानि कथिष्यति तेजस्वायाम् ॥
संभावितस्य चाकर्तिः मरणदृष्टिरिच्छेते ॥ ३४

अक्षरितिः अधिकारी भूतानि कथिष्यति तेजस्वायाम् ॥
सम्भवितस्य च अकर्तिः मरणातिि अतिरिच्छेते ॥

akīrtim cā'pi bhūtāni kathākṣyanti te vyayām ॥
sambhāvitasya cā 'kīrtih maranād atiṣṭiṣe ॥

अक्षरितिः akīrtim dishonour च ca and अधिकारी apī also.
भूतानि bhūtāni beings कथिष्यति kathākṣyanti tell से te
ध्यथो bhavyām avyayām everlasting संभावितस्य sambhāvita-
sya of the honoured च ca and अक्षरितिः akīrtih dishonour
मरणात् maranāt than death अतिरिच्छेते atiṣṭiṣe exceeds
People will ever recount your infamy. To the 
honoured, infamy is surely worse than death.

The characteristic of the ordinary man is to 
preserve life somehow. But different is the way of 
the hero. He knows well to safeguard life as well as 
sacrifice it for a great cause. By his willingly surren-
dering life to an ideal, his glory increases and fame 
spreads. It is bad enough for a warrior to cringe 
before the enemy and beg to be spared when being 
trampled to death by him; it is much worse for a hero 
to cling to life after losing honour and fame.

People who indulge in slander and calumny will 
choose to do so on any and every flimsy ground pro-
jected by their imagination. For example:—

भयात्रणादुपरतमर्मस्यन्ते त्यां महारथा: ||
वेषां च त्यां बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यशि लाघवम् || 3४

भयात् रणात उप-रतम् मस्यन्ते लाघु महा-रथः: ||
वेषां च त्यां बहु-मतः भूत्वा यास्यशि लाघवम् ||

bhayād raṇād uparatam mamsyante tvām mahāraṭṭah ||
yēsām ca tvām bahumato bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam ||

भयात् bhayāt from fear रणात् raṇāt from the battle 
उपरतम् uparatam withdrawn मस्यन्ते mamsyante will think 
व्याम् tvām thee महारथः mahāraṭṭah the great car-warri-
ors vēṣām of whom च ca and त्यां tvām thou बहुमतः 
bahumataḥ much thought of भूत्वा bhūtvā having been 
यास्यशि yāsyasi will receive लाघवम् lāghavam lightness

The great chariot-warriors will view you as one 
fled from the war out of fear; you that were highly 
estemed by them will be lightly held.
The sworn enemies of Arjuna such as Duryodhana and others were compelled, unwillingly though, to admire his valour. They had to concede, with concealed envy of course, that Arjuna was one who engaged the Lord Siva Himself in an encounter and won from Him for prize, the divine weapon, Pasupata. All the same, they had the design to vanquish this man of mighty valour somehow. In a situation like this, they would not construe that Arjuna has withdrawn from the warfront out of love and consideration for his kith and kin. They would slight him as one who has fled from fear. Regard for the hero will at once transform itself into ridicule. That infamy can in no way be remedied. Fear does not become a hero. A man given to fear cannot achieve anything in this world. The deed done today from fear will be the cause for repentance tomorrow.

Ridicule of the hero will assume other forms such as:—

अवाच्यवादांश चैहृत्यदर्शितम् त्वाहिताम् ॥
निन्द्वस्तत्तत् सामथर्यं ततो हुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ ३६

अः-च-च-वाच्यवादान् च बहुन् वदिश्यं हि न हितः ॥
निन्द्वत: तव सामथर्यः तत: हुःख-परस् नु किम् ॥

avācyavādāṃ ca bahun vadiśyanti tavā 'hitāḥ
nindantas tava sāmartyam tato duḥkhahāram nu kim||

अवाच्यवादान् avācyavādaḥ words that are improper to be spoken च ca and bahun bahun many वदिश्यं vadiśyanti will say तत tava thy अहिता: ahitāḥ enemies निन्द्वत: nindantaḥ cavilling तत tava thy सामथर्यम् sāmartyam power तत tataḥ than this हुःखतरस् duḥkhahāram more painful न नु indeed किम् kim what
Your enemies will also slander your strength and speak many unseemly words. What could be more painful than that?

When a man is well off in life, all his doings will be extolled as exemplary, but if there be a setback in his life, those very doings of his will suddenly become exposed to uncharitable criticism and slander. People who have been all along admiring Arjuna for his deeds of valour will not hesitate to belittle him and his deeds. The reputation that he has so far gained is well-grounded, indeed. But irreparable will be the ignominy that is bound to come if he failed in doing his duty. The very thought of Arjuna used to create a shudder in the hearts of his enemies. His very martial appearance on the battle-field has damped the war-zeal of his enemies. But if he happens to beat a retreat now, those trembling enemies will surely come to themselves again. More than that, their fear for Arjuna will immediately turn into ridicule of him. Their indulgence in insolent jokes would become unbearable. There is no alternative therefore, to waging the war that has been declared.

The grief-stricken Arjuna contends that war is beset with plenty of evils. But what does the Lord say in the matter? Here comes His say—

ँतो वा प्राप्त्यिति सर्गं जित्वा वा सोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मादुचितं कौन्तेयं युद्धाय कृतविषयः ॥ ३७ ॥

ँत वा प्र आफ्त्यिति सर्गं सिध्या वा सोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।
तस्मात उद्ध विते कौन्तेयं युद्धाय कृत नि-चयः ॥
hato vā prāpsyasi svargam jītvā vā bhokṣyase mahīṃ |
tasmād uttīṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛta niścayāḥ ||

हत: hataḥ slain वा vā or प्राप्तसि prāpsyasi (thou) will obtain स्वर्गम् svargam heaven जित्वा jītvā having conquered वा vā or मोक्ष्यसे bhokṣyase (thou) wilt enjoy महीम् mahīṃ the earth तस्मात tasmāt therefore जित्य uttīṣṭha stand up कौन्तेय kaunteya O Kaunteya युद्धाय yuddhāya for fight kūṭ nīṣṭhāṃ: kṛta niścayāḥ resolved

Slain you will gain heaven; victorious you will enjoy the earth. Therefore rouse up O son of Kunti, resolved to fight.

As foreign matter in the body has to be eliminated through disease, the wicked in the world have to be eliminated through the righteous war. After recounting the evils that would befall the society if this war was not waged, the good that would ensue are now enumerated. A righteous warfare abounds with welfare both here and hereafter. It is the only panacea against the incorrigibles. Would a zealous defender of righteousness ever let go such a golden opportunity?

Viewed from the worldly standpoint Arjuna has no grounds for grieving and for beating a retreat. After making this position clear, the Yogeswara now seeks to introduce yoga into the otherwise earthly life, in the following manner:—

Transform Karma into KarmaYoga — 38-41

हुखदुःखेऽसे समे कुत्वा लाभारामो जयाजयो |
ततो युद्धाय गुज्यस्य नैवं पापमवाप्यसि || 38
sukha duhkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayajayau

tato yuddhāya yujyasva naṁ pāpam avāpsyasi

Śukha duhkhe in pleasure and pain same same kṛtvā having made lābhālābhau gain and loss jayajayau victory and defeat tātāṁ then yuddhāya for battle yujjasva engage thou naṁ na not evaṁ thus pāpam sin avāpsyasi shalt incur

Treating alike pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat, engage yourself in the battle. Thus you will incur no sin.

It is the way of the world to view gain and victory with pleasure and loss and defeat with pain. But different from that should be the frame of mind of those who take to self-culture. They are to disentangle the mind from likes and dislikes. All earthly events are fraught with consequences which are agreeable and disagreeable. By being favourably affected by the one and unfavourably by the other, the mind loses its stamina. By refusing to be tossed about by pain and pleasure the mind becomes steady and strong. That karma is called sin which brings in misery in its trail. But a man of strong and balanced mind takes no note of any misery that comes to him. He is in that way free from sin.

The very karma done by the man of the world is also done by the karma-yogi. But there is a world of difference between the two in their attitudes.
The one is attached and the other detached. Both attachment and detachment are solely in the mind.

A weakling totters while carrying a small load to a short distance. But a strong man coming from a long distance with a heavy load of two maunds on his head stands by and sees a wrestling match, unmindful of the burden on his head. To the strong in body and mind problems are but few.

—Sri Ramakrishna

एषा तेजस्विता सांख्ये बुद्धियोऽग्रिमा भृणु ||
बुद्ध्याय युक्तो यया पार्थि कर्मसन्ध्ये प्रहास्यसि || २९
एषा ते अभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धि: योगे हु इमाम् भृणु ||
बुद्ध्याय युक्त: यया पार्थि कर्मसन्ध्ये-वन्धनस् प्रहास्यसि ||
esa te 'bhhihitā sāmkhye
buddhir yoge tv imāṁ sṛnu ||
buddhyā yukto yaya pārtha
karma bandham prahāsyasi ||

eṣa this te te to thee abhihitā (is) declared सांख्ये sāmkhye in Samkhya बुद्धि: buddhiḥ wisdom योगे yoge in the yoga तु tu indeed इमाम् imāṁ this भृणु sṛnu hear बुद्ध्याय buddhyā with wisdom युक्त: yuktaḥ induced यया yaya which पार्थि pārtha O Partha कर्मचन्द्रम् karma bandham bondage of karma प्रहास्यसि prahāsyasi (thou) shalt cast off

The ideal of Self-knowledge has been presented to you. Hearken now to the practice thereof. Endowed with it, O Partha, you will break through the bonds of karma.

The principles of Self-knowledge have been enumerated in the verses 11 to 30. Yoga or the practice thereof will now be taught in the verses 40, 41, 45—53.
Samkhya is one of the six systems of philosophy pertaining to Hinduism. Its origin is attributed to the sage Kapila. The literal meaning of the word Samkhya is enumeration. According to this system Prakriti is constituted of twenty-four categories and Purusha or Atman is the twenty-fifth. Purushas again are infinite in number. But Sri Krishna uses the word Samkhya to indicate Self-knowledge. His concept of yoga is comprehensive of all the forms of Sadhanas though the path of karma predominates among them.

Theory and practice are the two aspects of every branch of knowledge. Of these two, the former pertains to the intellectual grasp and clarification while the latter to the translation of it into action. One is the pure science and the other, the applied science. An architect conceives of an edifice. At that stage it is an ideal. He explains it clearly to others; then it is theory. When he actually builds it he gives it a practical shape. Samkhya and yoga are the theory and practice of religion. They do not come into conflict one with the other. They augment each other. Rare indeed it is to know of the glory of Atman. And life gets enriched as Atman is known. Yoga is none other than living the life abundantly. By the practice of yoga mind grows in purity. To the purified mind the concept of Atman becomes progressively lucid. This is how Jnana and yoga mutually aid.

Truths pertaining to Atman have to be enquired into. What is known thereby has to be put into prac-
tice. Some simply enquire about Atman without connecting that enquiry with life. Others plunge in life without caring to know the principles that govern it. But harmonizing both is what is wanted.

Does not the yoga that is not carried on to its conclusion prove itself a sheer waste? The following is the answer to this question:—

नेवासिक्रमनायोदस्ति प्रत्यवयो न विद्यते ।
स्वल्पमध्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ ४०

न इह अभि-क्रम-नाशः अस्ति प्रति-अव-अष्टः न विद्यते ।
सु-अल्पमु अष्टि अस्ति धर्मस्य त्रायते महतः भयात् ॥

ne 'hā 'bhikramanāsaḥ 'sti pratyavāyo na vidyate ।
svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt ॥

na not īha in this abhisātkramanāyaḥ: abhikramananāsaḥ loss of effort āsti asti is pratyavāyaḥ: pratyavāyayaḥ production of contrary results na not vichayate vidyate is svālpam very little api even astaḥ asya of this dharmasya duty त्रायते trāyate protects महतः mahataḥ (from) great भयात् bhayāt fear

In this there is no loss of attempt; nor is there any adverse effect. The practice of even a little of this dharma protects one from great fear. 40

If the construction of a house be not completed with roofing, all that is so far done goes to waste. If the raising of a crop be not gone through with harvesting, the endeavours so far made become fruitless. But the partial practice of yoga does not suffer from any disadvantages of these kinds. Even a fragmentary application of it has its corresponding benefit
just as a day's food has its own nourishment. If a wrong medicine be administered to a patient, instead of its healing the disease, it may lead to the decease of the person. The practice of yoga is not fraught with any danger of this kind. Any little practice of it, gives to that extent a glimpse into the nature of Atman. The fear of death is the greatest of all. As Atman is being understood this fear ceases.

The way of right understanding and application thereof is as follows.

न्यासायात्मिका दुःखिरेकेक हृदन्दन ।
बहुशास्त्रो भन्नाताथ बुद्धुक्तोष्ण्यवसायिनाम ॥ ४१
बि-अब-साय-मातिसा दुःखि एका हि हृद-न्दन ।
बुद्ध-शाखा: हि अनं-अन्ता. च बुद्धय अ-बि-अब गायिनाम ॥

Vyavasayatmika buddhir eke 'ha kuru nandana ।
bahusakhah hy anantais ca buddhayo 'vyavasayinam ॥

Vyavasayatmikā vyavasayatmikā one pointed दुःखि buddhih determination एका ekā single हि here हृदन्दन kuru nandana O joy of the Kurus बहुशास्त्र on many-branched हि hi indeed अनंता anantāh endless च ca and बुद्धय buddhay ah thoughts अन्यवनायिनाम vyavasayinām of the irresolute.

To the firm-in-mind, O joy of the Kurus, there is in this but one decision; many-branched and endless are the decisions of the infirm-in-mind.

A number of students work at a problem in mathematics. Wrong answers they get are numberless and they are constantly shifting. But when the right answer is arrived at by a smart student, he no
more deviates from it. Earthly hankerings are innumerable and people go on changing constantly from one to another. But to the seeker of the Divine the purpose is one and all endeavours are concentrated on it.

Firmness in mind comes to the one who learns concentration, which is serviceable both to the sacred and the secular. When the divergent sunbeams are focussed with the aid of a lens to one point, their powers of heat and light get intensified. Ignition of a combustible thing then becomes possible. Even so, the mind trained in concentration can both know and do a thing to perfection.

It was possible for Arjuna alone, among the disciples of Drona, to shoot his arrow successfully at a target within a grove. His success was entirely due to concentration.

When Swami Vivekananda was in America, he had an occasion to watch a few students practising shooting. Their target was three or four egg shells tethered to float and dance on a rustling brook. The failure of all of them in their attempts brought a smile on the lips of the Swami. The provoked youths challenged the ability of this strange observer. Handling a gun for the first time in life, the Swami shot and smashed the shell that he aimed at. "The secret of success lies in concentration," said he when the others wondered how he could achieve it at the very first attempt, as claimed by him.

Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, the famous scientist, demonstrated to the world that all the feelings and
sensations found in man are in the plants as well. When questioned as to how he could probe into that mystery, he replied, "To know all about the plants I myself became a plant mentally." He meant to say that the unknown becomes known through concentration and attention.

Reaching Godhood, the hardest of all, is possible to none but the firm-in-mind. The one-pointed devotion of the Gopi, Srimati Radha to Sri Krishna illustrates this fact. Her mind and sense organs function exclusively for the communion with Sri Krishna. All her mentations are directed to Him. Whatever her eyes see are all associated with Him. The ears ever bring to her messages pertaining to her Darling." The food she eats comes from Him. His grace is her life. Another extraordinary phenomenon presents itself through this milk-maid. When the mind gets fully concentrated the sense organs assume new powers. They are able to function one for the other. The melody emanates from Sri Krishna's flute; it comes floating in the air until it contacts Radha's ears. Instantaneously her mind becomes the receiving as well as the broadcasting instrument of that sound. The within and the without become one symphony. According to her experience as the all-pervading Nada-brahmam, Sri Krishna alone is contacted at all levels. There is nothing strange in her ears sensing the Sound-Reality; the olfactory sense experiences the fragrance in It; consistent with its capacity the sense of touch feels the presence of the Sound-Reality; and the tongue tastes the Sound-
Reality in its own way. All the five senses together pay homage in their respective ways to the Sound-Reality which is Sri Krishna. A concentrated mind opens realms of the Reality unknown to the ordinary. Through one-pointedness, realization of the Reality and at-one-ment with It is possible. This exalted state can be attained by means of Sankhya and yoga merging into one. The one who is firm-in-mind is therefore the best among men.

In whatever direction a ship may be sailing, the compass needle in it always points to the north. Even so amidst all eventualities in life the mind of the knowing man is always fixed on the Ideal.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The ways of the infirm-in-mind are as follows:—

The Way of the Worldly — 42-44

यामिम पुष्पितां वाचम प्रवदंत्य अविप्सिताः ||
वेदवावादरताः पार्थ नान्यद्वा स्रीतिवादिनः || ४२
याम् इमाम् पुष्पिताम् वाचम् प्रवदाति अ-विप्सितः।
वेद-वाद-रताः पार्थ न अन्यत्र अस्ति इति वादिनः ||

yām imām puspitāṁ vācam pravadantāḥ avipascitaḥ ||
vedavādaratāṁ pārtha nā 'nyad asti 'ti vādinaḥ ||

yām which īmām this puspitām flowery vācam speech pravadanti utter
अविप्सितः avipascitaḥ the unwise वेदवादरताः vēdavādaratāṁ taking pleasure in the eulogising words of the Vedas पार्थ pārtha O Partha न na not अन्यत्र anyat other अस्ति asti is इति iti thus वादिनः vādinaḥ saying

The unwise who delight in the flowery words disputing about the Vedas say that there is nothing other than this.
कामात्मान: खँगिपरा: जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम्।
क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगेत्यक्ष्यमिति प्रति॥ ४३
काम-आस्तान: स्वर्ग-परा: जन्म-क्रि-फल-व-न्यायः।
क्रियाव-विशेष-बहुलाम् भोग-एक्ष्य-प्रदाम्॥

kāmātmānaḥ svarga-parāḥ janma karma phala pradām. kriyā visesa bahulāṁ bhogaisvarya gam put prati. ॥

kāmātmānaḥ full of desires svarga-parā with heaven as their highest goal janma karma phala pradām leading to (new) birth as the result of their works kriyā visesa bahulāṁ exuberant with various specific actions bho Nagaszvar gam put bhogaisvarya gam put prati for the attainment of pleasure and lordship

Who are desire-ridden, who hold the attainment of heaven as the goal of birth and its activities, whose words are laden with specific rites bringing in pleasure and lordship.

भोगेत्यक्ष्यमिति तथापहृतचेतसाम्।
व्यक्तायात्मिकां वुद्व: समाधिः न विधीयते॥ ४४
भोग-एक्ष्य-प्र-संकाताम् तथा अप-हृत-चेतसाम्।
विभ-अ-साय-आत्मितस्य वुद्वः समाधि न विधीयते॥

bhogaisvarya prasaktānāṁ tayā 'pahrtacetasāṁ।
vivasaayātmīkā buddhath samādhau na vidhiyate।

भोगेत्यक्ष्यमिति, bhogaisvarya prasaktānām of the people deeply attached to pleasure and lordship tayā by that apahṛtacetasāṁ whose minds are drawn away vyaktaayātmikā vyavasāyātmikā determine वुद्वः buddhih reason समाधिः samādhih in Samadhi न not विधीयते. vidhiyate is fixed
There is no fixity of mind for them who cling to pleasure and power and whose discrimination is stolen away.

The desire-ridden are those who have not risen to ethical and spiritual levels; they are the unrefined among the human. Their sole aim in life is to hunt after vulgar enjoyments here and hereafter. Their learning, enquiry and power of speech are all directed to this base end. The ritualistic portions in the Vedas pander merely to the low tastes of the crude happiness-hunters. Rites of this kind in the Vedas are useful to only those who seek to prolong the wheel of birth for the sake of several enjoyments. Though the Vedas are the oldest literature in the world, all that they contain are not sublime and elevating. The needs of the vulgar are also met in them.

Enjoyment of pleasure and happiness is not the goal of the human life. The attainment of perfection is its supreme object. The means for it is to be absorbed in Samkhya and yoga. Rituals simply distract the mind. Samadhi cannot be had from them.

The vulture soars high up in the sky. But its eyes are always on the carrion and carcass below on earth. However much one may be learned in the Vedas, as long as one's eyes are fixed on sense-pleasures one acts like a vulture. Spiritual enlightenment is not to the one given to lust and greed.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What ought to be the ideal in life? The answer comes:

The Key to Yoga—45-53

श्रेष्ठभविषयं वेदं निश्चेतुमण्यो भवार्जैत

निद्रिस्न्तः नित्यसन्निघो निर्यागलोक्यं जात्मचारः || ४५ ||
traiguṇya viṣayā vedā nistraigunyō bhavā 'ṛjuna
nirdvandvo nitya sattvasthō nīryogakṣēma ātmavān

The Vedas enumerate the three Gunas. You transcend the three Gunas, O Arjuna. Be free from the pairs of opposites, ever-balanced, unconcerned with getting and keeping and centred in the Self.

Prakriti or the phenomenal universe is here designated as the Vedas; and this is the correct definition. The compiled literary works, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva are also called Vedas, because they deal with the working of the universe. They help the aspirant to understand intellectually, the function of Prakriti. So far, they are indispensable. When the Vedas are said to be imperishable, it refers to Prakriti which is eternal and not to the books which run the risk of being destroyed or neglected. More than all these, it is Prakriti that is constituted of the three Gunas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas.

To be Prakriti-bound is not the goal of the enlightened human life. While the life here is
entangled, what is beyond is unfettered. The means
to get into it is also presented herein. Heat and cold,
pain and pleasure, gain and loss, victory and defeat—
duals such as these are called the pairs of opposites.
They are inevitable in the phenomenal existence.
When a person refuses to be affected favourably or
adversely by these happenings and when he maintains
his even-mindedness, he is said to be making progress
in self-culture. The term yoga-kshema requires to
be clarified. Yoga is the act of seeking for the
needful earthly things and kshema the act of keep-
ing carefully, such of the things procured. But the
spiritual aspirant ought to be unconcerned with
getting and keeping them. As all beings get, as a
matter of course, the air they require for breathing,
the spiritual aspirant gets his bare bodily require-
ments without effort. Such is the law of spiritual
life. The aspirant deviates from the path when he
gives undue attention to getting and keeping them.
As one gets his being centred in the Self, he transcends
the phenomenal existence.

If the word ‘Gita’ be rapidly repeated it would sound, ‘Tagi,
Tagi...’ And Tagi is a modification of Tyagi—the man of
renunciation. Renunciation of the phenomenal existence is the
gist of the Gita.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Whatever a man wants for his earthly life can be
procured here and he can live a happy life. Instead,
what is it that one gets by transcending the three
Gunas? The answer comes:—

याग्नान्त्यं उद्धारं सर्वं संप्रदत्तोऽके || ३६
तागान्त्ववेदेऽनु घातकं नागान्तयं विज्ञातं: || ३६
yāvān artha udapāne sarvataḥ samplutodake
tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu brāhmaṇasya vijñānataḥ

Yāvān as much artha use udapāne in a reservoir sarvataḥ everywhere samplutodake being flooded tāvān so much (use) sarveṣu in all vedeṣu vedeṣu in the Vedas brāhmaṇasya of the Brahmana vijñānataḥ of the knowing

To an enlightened Brahmana all the Vedas are as useful as a tank when there is a flood everywhere.

It is evident that a tank containing water is very useful in a place where water cannot be had from any other source. But nobody ever pays any attention to such a tank in a locality submerged everywhere with pure water. Likewise the Vedas and the scriptures are of use to those who are still in ignorance. By faithfully following the sacred books happiness can be obtained on earth and in heaven which are both in the region of the phenomenon. But the various spheres of relative existence become meaningless to the one illumined with Brahma-jnanaṃ. It is infinite beatitude. All earthly and heavenly happinesses are mere rays of that endless brilliance. The food consumed in dream does not nourish the body; whereas what is consumed in the wakeful state gives succour both in the wakeful state and in sleep. Likewise Brahma-jnanaṃ which leads to the absolute existence enriches the Prakṛti-bound relative existence also abundantly.
The courtezan of a prince heeds not the courting of a beggar on the road. The one enjoying the supreme bliss of communion with the Maker cares not for all earthly joys and enticements.

— Sri Ramakrishna

A man in a locality where there is only a tank of water has to content himself with it. Similarly the man not blessed with Brahma-jnanam has to be contented with mundane happiness only. A contention to this effect is likely to be advanced. No, reconcile not yourself with vulgar existence, but prepare yourself as follows:—

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचनः
मा कर्मफल्प्रेमिः ते सम्बोधस्त्वकर्मणि

कर्मणि एव अविष्कारः ते मा फलेषु कदाचनः
मा कर्मफलप्रेमः स्वः मा ते स्वः शातु शकर्मणि

karmaṇy eva 'dhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karma phala hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmanī
t

कर्मणि karmanī in work eva only अविष्कारः adhi-
kārah right tē te thy mā not phaleṣu in the fruits
कदाचन kadācana at any time mā not कर्मफलप्रेमः mū: ।
karma phala hetur bhūḥ let not the fruits of action
be the motive mā not tē te thy saṅgaḥ attachment अस्तु astu let (there) be शकर्मणि akarmanī in
inaction

Seek to perform your duty; but lay not claim to its fruits. Be you not the producer of the fruits of karma; neither shall you lean towards inaction. 47

There seems to be an anomaly and defeat of purpose in this injunction of the Lord. Not an atom moves without a motive. Beings are all busy
either to gain something or to ward off something unwanted. In the absence of such a motive no action needs be performed. But the Lord induces Arjuna not to be motivated and at the same time to be intensely active. Yes, herein lies the turning point in life from Preyas to Sreyas. Good accrues from detachment and never from attachment. Karma in itself is no evil, but it becomes so when mixed up with desire. Desire tainted karma gives continuity to the wheel of birth and death. The seekers after heavenly enjoyments are also slaves to desire. Conquerors of desire are they who care not for the fruits of karma. Freedom from desire is the real freedom. When duty is discharged untarnished by desire, clarity of understanding ensues. In addition to it, efficiency increases. Karma therefore has to be performed perfectly by the aspirant unmindful of the fruits thereof.

A boat may be floating on water, but no water should be allowed to get into it. Man may live in the world but no worldly desire ought to take possession of him.

—Sri Ramakrishna

How the desireless one works and lives in the world is being explained now —

योगस्थ: कुरु कर्माणि सदम् त्यक्तवा धनञ्जय ।
सिद्धयसिद्धोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ ४८ ॥

गोग स्थः कुरु कर्माणि सदम् त्यक्तवा धनम्-नय ।
सिद्धि-असिद्धोः समो भूत्वा समत्वम् योग उच्यते ॥

yogasthak kuru karmāni saṅgam tyaktvā dhananjaya ।
siddhy asiddhyoh samo bhūtvā samatvam yoga ucyate ॥
Perform action, O Dhananjaya, being fixed in yoga, renouncing attachments, and even-minded in success and failure; equilibrium is verily yoga.

The yogi holds all the activities taking place in him as the doings of the Lord. He places himself in the position of a willing servant, ever ready to execute orders. An attitude of this kind eliminates attachment. The master orders his servant to go to the next village and bring a particular person. The servant goes on the errand accordingly, but finds the person absent. There is no disappointment in him for this failure. He is commissioned to go on another day on which he is able to find the required person. There is no special elation over the success now. The servant is simply satisfied with carrying out orders effectively. It is in this manner that the yogi holds the successes and failures in his endeavours free from attachment and aversion.

The nature of the mind is to be elated in success and dejected in failure. But by remaining unperturbed by either, the mind gains in clarity and firmness. It is like the surface of water that has become placid and fit to reflect objects clearly. This even-mindedness is equilibrium. He is a yogi who keeps the
mind in this poised state under all circumstances Spiritual growth is possible to him only who keeps the mind ever poised.

Be in the world even as a maid servant in a rich man’s house. For all intents and purposes she claims her master’s children and property as her own. But at the core of her heart she knows that they do not belong to her and she remains firm in that attitude. Seemingly own worldly things, but have no attachment to them. As the maid servant can with ease relinquish her assumed ownership of the master’s property, be prepared for separation from earthly possession.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The frame of mind that unbecomes a yogi is now dilated upon —

दूरेण वचर्ण कर्म बुद्धियोगािढ़नाितयः
युद्धी शरणमनिित्वं कुप्यतः फलहेतवः: || ४९

दूरेण हि अ-वरम् कर्म बुद्धि योगात् धनम्-जयः
युद्धी शरणम् भवत् इच्छा कुप्यतः फल-हेतुवः ||

dūreṇa hy avaram karma buddhiyogād dhanamayā ||
buddhau saranam anviccha krpanāh phalahetavah ||

दूरेण dūreṇa hy sar hì hi indeed अवरम् avaram inferior कर्म karma action बुद्धियोगात् buddhiyogāt than the yoga of wisdom धनम् dhanamayā O Dhananjaya बुद्धau buddhau in wisdom शरणम् saranam refuge अन्विच्छा anviccha seek कुप्यतः krpanāh wretched फलहेतवः phalahetavah seekers after fruits

Motivated karma is, O Dhananjaya, far inferior to that performed in the equanimity of mind, take refuge in the evenness of the mind, wretched are the result-seekers.
A porter carries the luggage of a railway passenger from one platform to another. A co-passenger also carries for him one or two bundles of his, with a helpful attitude. Though the action is the same for the porter and the co-passenger their attitudes differ widely. The one works for a wage and the other for love. The wage-earner remains a cooly while the other evolves in mind. The majority in the world work like the wage-earner and make themselves wretched. But a few work for duty’s sake expecting nothing in return. They ever assume the role of a giver and never that of a grabber. The more the water from a well is bailed out, the more fresh water sprouts in it. The more a man acts for duty’s sake seeking nothing in return, the more he grows in yoga.

Does the equilibrium of mind add to its efficiency? The answer comes:

rahūkṣa jahāti \ ha ubhe sukrta duśkrte \ ।
tasmād yogāya yuyvasva yogāḥ karmasu kauśalam ।

buddhiyukto jahāti ‘ha ubhe sukrta duśkrte ।
tasmād yogāya yuyvasva yogāḥ karmasu kauśalam ।

buddhiyukto: buddhiyuktaḥ endowed with wisdom jahāti jahāti casts off \ ha iha in this life \ ha ubhe both sukrta duśkrte good and evil deeds tasmāt therefore kauśalam kauśalam therefore yogāya to yoga yuyvasva devote thyself yogāḥ yoga karmasu in actions kauśalam skill
The one fixed in equanimity of mind frees oneself in this life from vice and virtue alike; therefore devote yourself to yoga; work done to perfection is truly yoga.

Karma is classified as good or bad based on the result it produces. Good karma is as much the cause as the bad one, for the continuity of the wheel of birth and death. But the karma-yogi is not affected by karma of any kind. This is due to his being fixed in equanimity—the state free from likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion. A surgeon cuts and operates on the body of a patient. The sick man's surviving the surgery or succumbing to it, does not make the doctor virtuous or vicious. He does his duty very well for duty's sake. If the patient dies while being operated on, the doctor does not feel guilty of murder. He goes through the series of operations calmly because of his equanimity of mind. But this very doctor dare not operate on his own ailing son, he seeks the help of another surgeon. This diffidence is born of attachment leading to inequanimity of mind. Detached performance of duty adds to efficiency and the required equilibrium is maintained perfectly.

This principle applies to all activities in life. It is yoga to maintain equilibrium in the midst of all of them. Work is executed very efficiently in poise only. Attachment and aversion take away the efficiency from man. Bhishma fought for the wicked to the best of his ability, but because of his complete detachment he was not tainted by his action. As the
Mahabharata has it, a woman that served her husband dispassionately rose in yoga superior to an ascetic who gained by austerity, the psychic power to burn an intruding bird to ashes. A butcher also, in his turn, became a greater yogi than this ascetic by discharging his seemingly ugly duty without attachment and aversion.

Equanimity of mind comes to one free from likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion. He is a yogi. No new karma accrues to him. The momentum of the old karma wanes away. He gains in perfecting the mind.

A yogi seated in a Himalayan cave allows his mind to wander on unwanted things. A cobbler in a corner at the crossing of several busy roads of a city, is absorbed in mending a shoe, as an act of service. Of these two, the latter is a better yogi than the former.

— Swami Vivekananda

A question may rise as to which among the duties that fall to man's lot may be considered preferable. The answer comes:

\[
\text{karma} \text{ā} \text{uddhis} \text{yuktāhi} \text{ fala} \text{ḥ tyaktaḥ} \text{ manḍiśiṇaḥ: \text{ janma} \text{ bandha} \text{ vinir} \text{ muktāh padam gacchanty anāmayam} } \\
\text{janma} \text{ bandha vinir} \text{ muktāḥ padam gacchanty anāmayam} \\
\text{karma} \text{ā} \text{ buddhiyuktā hi phalam tyaktvā manḍiśiṇaḥ}
\]

karmaā karmām action born uddhisyuktā buddhiyuktā possessed of knowledge hi hi indeed falam phalam the fruit tyaktvā having abandoned manḍiśiṇaḥ the wise janma bandha vinir
muktaḥ freed from the fetters of birth padam the abode gacchanti go anāmayam beyond evil

The wise, imbued with evenness of mind, renouncing the fruits of their actions, freed from the fetters of births, verily go to the stainless state.

The yogi views all forms of karma alike, imbued as they are with misery in varying degrees. He converts the misery-laden karma into the misery-freed one. It is characteristic of karma to perpetuate the wheel of birth and death. But the yogi in his wisdom renders it effectless in this respect. Converting evil into good is the best of all dexterities. Lord Siva converts the world-destroying poison into the world-saving nectar. The yogi walks the way of Siva. He handles the bondage-producing karma in such a way that it becomes the freedom-yielding one, yoga is the panacea of all evils in the world.

With the aid of the perishable phenomenon get at the Imperishable Noumenon

— Sri Ramakrishna

The attainment of the Imperishable is indicated in the following manner —

yat n te mohakṣirṇa dveṣaṁścīṣitaṁ ārambhadhyati

 tad gaññāsi nītīniś ca śrotvaṁś ca त ॥ ५२

yat n te mohakṣirṇa dveṣaṁścīṣitaṁ ārambhadhyati

 tad gaññāsi nītīviśeṣaṁ śrotvaṁś ca त ॥

vadā te moha kalitam buddhir vyatitarisyati ṛ
ladā gantāśi mārṣvedam śrotavasya śrutasya ca त
When your understanding transcends the taint of delusion, then shall you gain indifference to things heard and those yet to be heard.

After transcending the taint of delusion, the yogi is able to understand and distinguish between Atman and Prakriti, the Real and the unreal, the Being and the becoming. The Truth in Itself is realized. The phenomenal existence is then evaluated for what it is worth. The inquirer evaluates the dream. He does not attribute one value to the dream that he has heard of already and waits to attribute another value to the one that remains to be related to him. A Brahma-jnani hears of the scientific discoveries that have been so far made. He classifies them all as the various modifications of the phenomenal universe as cognized by the intellect which is itself a phase of the fleeting phenomenon. The new discoveries that remain to be recounted to him will also be brushed aside with the same remark. Events like the Mahabharata war present themselves as great and consequential to ordinary people. But the Brahma-jnani views them with utter indifference. The evolution and involution of the universe itself are meaningless to him.
An aspirant may wonder as to when such an exalted state would come to him. The assurance comes:—

ध्वितिविशतिपञ्चा ते पदः स्थाय्यति निष्ठला ।
समाधावचला बुद्धिः तदा योगमवास्तवेऽस्ति ॥ ५३
ध्विति-विशति-मुद्धिः ते पदः स्थाय्यति निष्ठला ।
समु-वा-भौ स-चचा बुद्धिः तदा योगमू वव-वापु-वधि ॥

srutipvratipannā te yadā sthāsyati niscalā ।
samādhaṇa acalā buddhiḥ tadā yogam avāpsyasi ॥

ध्वितिविशतिपञ्चा srutipvratipannā perplexed by what thou hast heard te thy yadā when sthāsyati shall stand niscalā immovable समाधाव in the Self अचला acalā steady बुद्धि buddhiḥ intellect तदā tadā then योगमू yogam self-realization अवास्तवेऽस्ति avāpsyasi (thou) shalt attain

When your intellect, tossed about by the conflict of opinions, has become poised and firmly fixed in equilibrium, then you shall get into yoga. 53

It is but natural for man to pay heed to conflicting views and to get confused over them. But nobody raises the query "Am I alive or dead?" And nobody's opinion is sought in this matter. Man's existence is self-evident to him. When mentation ceases in equilibrium, it is called Samadhi or Spiritual Illumination. Atman in Its Original Splendour is then realized. Yoga reaches its culmination here. This state of Pure-Consciousness is the goal of life.

First attain Godhood and then pursue the worldly things. Do not proceed in the reverse order. If you enter the life in the
world after spiritual enlightenment, you will not have anxieties of the mind.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Arjuna now gets an opportunity to raise a question. He submits it before the Lord:—

The Enlightened Defined — 54-72

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थितप्राज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केसवः
स्थितधिः किं प्रभापेत किमासित्य ब्रजेत् किम् || 54
स्थित-प्राज्ञस्य का भाषा उमाधि-स्वस्य केसवः
स्थित-धिः किं प्रभापेत् किम् आसित्य ब्रजेत् किम् ||

arjuna uvāca

sthitaprajñasya kā bhāṣā samādhisthasya keśavaḥ
sthitadhiḥ kim prabhāṣeta kim āsita vrajeta kim||

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

स्थितप्राज्ञस्य of the sage of steady wisdom का kā what भाषा bhāṣā description समाधिस्थ समाधिस्थस्य of the man merged in the superconscious state केसवः keśava O Kesava स्थितधिः sthitadhiḥ the sage of steady wisdom किं kim what (how) प्रभापेत prabhāṣeta speaks किम kim what (how) आसित्य āsita sits ब्रजेत vrajeta walks किम kim how

Arjuna said:

What, O Kesava, is the mark of the man of steadfast wisdom, steeped in Samadhi? How does the man firm in wisdom speak, how sit, how walk? 54

All the three terms, sthitaprajña, samadhistha and sthitadhi connote the same. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. When such a one is in
Samadhi what becomes of his mind? When he projects the mind on external things, how does he behave?

The concluding eighteen stanzas in this chapter are devoted to the definition of a Brahma-jnani. Those who want to improve their handwriting choose to copy the model letters and alphabets. And this method is invariably adopted in all fields. In picking up the language, painting and singing the perfect ones are imitated, there is no other way of acquiring knowledge and art. Brahma-jnanam is no exception to this. While the illumined one established in perfection is being defined, the method and the means to attain that state are also contained in that definition. The goal and the paths thereof are simultaneously presented. A diligent enquiry into them and an ardent practice are wanted to achieve the Ideal.

श्री भगवानुवाच

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थे मनोगतान्।
आतमन्येवात्मना तुएः स्थितप्रजहातोऽभिः || ५५

प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थे मनात्माना।
आत्मनि एव आत्मना हुएः स्थित-प्रजहातेऽत्तत्र उच्यते।

śri bhagavān uvāca

prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārthā manogatān
atmany evā 'tmanā tustah sthitaprajñas tado 'cyate

śri bhagavān uvāca Śrī Bhagavan said

प्रजहाति prajahāti casts off यदा yadā when कामान्
kāmān desires सर्वान् sarvān all पार्थे pārtha O Partha
manogatāṁ of the mind अत्मि atmani in the Self eva only अत्मना atmanā by the Self tuṣṭah satisfied स्थितप्रज्ञः sthitaprajñah of steady wisdom तदा tadā then उच्यते ucyate (he) is called

The Blessed Lord said:

When a man abandonst O Partha, all the desires of the heart and is satisfied in the Self by the Self, then is he said to be one stable in wisdom.

This is the answer to the first part of Arjuna's question.

Fire is hot; it need not go anywhere in search of warmth. Even so Atman is Bliss. It imposes the bliss within on objects outside and goes in search of those objects believing that with their acquisition happiness can be gained. This search outside for happiness is kama. The grabbing modification of the mind is kama. The waves and ripples on the surface of water obscure the sight of the sand bed below. The ripples of kama in the mind obstruct the vision of Atman, the basis. All the same, the changeless bliss within reveals itself as the happiness coming from the sense-objects outside. When the mind is pacified by relinquishing all the kamas, the blissful Atman is realized in Its original glory. He is a Brahma-jnani who intuits that the happiness he sought for in the world outside, is in its entirety in himself. He remains Self-satisfied. The aspirant who seeks to wipe out all desires and to pacify the mind is the one who practises yoga.

He who is dead as it were when alive, that is to say, as desireless as a corpse, becomes competent for Brahma-jnanam.

— Sri Ramakrishna
Pacification of the mind is being explained now —

Du: leṣānudvādhaṁmaṇa: suṣeṣu vīgataspṛh: ।
Bītārgaṁvācoḍha: śītāvīśāṁniṁrūṭe ॥ ५६
Du leṣu abh-ud-viṁ-maṇa Du leṣu vi-ga-t-ṣṭaḥ ।
Bīt-raṇ-śvamkoṭha: śītā-ṭhe śuṇi ucyate ॥

duḥkhesv anudvignamanāḥ sukhesu vigatasprahā ।
vita rāga bhaya krodhaḥ sthitadhīr munir ucyate ॥

Du leṣu duḥkhesu in adversity anudvignamanāḥ of unshaken mind Du leṣu sukhesu in pleasure vīgataspṛhā without hankering Bītārgaṁvācoḍha: vita rāga bhaya krodhaḥ free from attachment fear and anger śītāvīśa śītādhiḥ of steady wisdom śuṇi: munir sage ucyate (he) is called

He whose mind is not perturbed by adversity, who does not crave for happiness, who is free from fondness, fear and anger, is the Muni of constant wisdom. 56

There is no end to events in this world, which come as trials and tribulations to man. The way of the ordinary is to be afflicted by them. But the man of wisdom remains unperturbed, viewing them as unavoidable but effectless to the extent ignored. By adding fuel to fire its volume and intensity increase. Desire for happiness increases similarly in a worldly man but never in a Jñāni. In the midst of an ever increasing number of objects of happiness, he lives entirely unconcerned with them. He is further free from fondness, fear and anger. These three traits tarnish the mind. Fondness is attachment which robs the aspirant of discrimination. Man fails to see
defects in those he is fond of. Detached love is what is wanted. Man is not fond of a poisonous snake, but he fears it. Fear is born of ignorance; it deprives man of manliness; it is worse than death. Fearlessness is the message of the Upanishads. The Jnani fears nothing including death. Practice of fearlessness is imperative for not only the seeker of wisdom, but also for all who want to thrive in life. Bhima the brother immediately elder to Arjuna is one not at all attached to the Kauravas and in no way afraid of them; but he was bitterly angry with them. Anger unbecomes an ethically and spiritually evolving one. It robs one of discrimination. The mind that is free from attachment, fear and anger evolves in excellence. The Brahma-jnani is necessarily established in these virtues.

Muni is he whose mind delights in the Self as steadily and uninterruptedly as the unbroken flow of oil poured from its container.

The man given to envy, anger and timidity never grows in spiritual stature.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How does the man of wisdom contact the external world? The answer comes:

यः सर्वत्रानमिन्मेहस्तत्तत्त्वाप्य शुभाशुभम्।
नामित्वक्ति न देशि तत्स्तत्स्त्र ग्राह्या ग्राहिता॥ ५७

यः सर्वेऽ न्यन्त्र-निशि-स्त्रेषुः तत्र त्तर न-अह्यं श्रम-वाह्यम्।
न असि-नक्ति न देशि तत्स्तत्र ग्राह्या ग्राहिता॥

yah sarvatram abhisnehas tat-tat prāpya subhāsubham
nā 'bhinandati na dveṣṭi tasya praṅā pratiśṭhitā
g
He who is unattached everywhere, who is not delighted at receiving good nor dejected at coming by evil, is poised in wisdom.

This world is a mixture of good and evil. People who are attached to it are bound to have joy and sorrow. They oscillate helplessly between weal and woe. But the Jnani remains supremely above these turmoils. He is no creature of circumstances. From his mouth come neither words of praise nor those of censure. This is the implied answer to the question as to how he speaks.

For the man who sees from the peak of a hill, the tall trees, the grass, the ups and downs and everything on the plains below seem alike. The Brahma-jnani likewise sees divinity alone in everything. He makes no distinction between the good and the bad and between the superior and the inferior.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The self-mastery of the Jnani is now explained as follows:

यदा संहरते चायं कृमोऽज्ञानीय सर्वेश |
इन्द्रियाणीनिद्रियायथंस्यस्यं प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता || ५८

यदा तमूः हरते च भस्मः कृमि: भजानि द्व अवर्जनेष |
इन्द्रियाणि इन्द्रियंसर्वं तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रति-स्थिता ||

yadā samharate cā 'yam kūrmo 'ngāni 'va sarvasah 1
indriyāṇi 'ndriyārthebhyaś tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā 11
When also, like a tortoise its limbs, he can withdraw the senses from sense-objects his wisdom is then set firm.

The tortoise withdraws its limbs into the shell with ease and spontaneity to protect itself against possible dangers. It then rests satisfied with the self-provided security. It is as natural as this for a man of perfection to be an introvert. This process is technically known as pratyāhāra. As a man bolts from within and sits indoors undisturbed, the Jnani delights in the Self; and this is the norm with him. Just as a fish put back into water, the knower of Brahman derives bliss from the core of his being. Complete mastery over the senses is characteristic of the Illumined.

Poisonous snakes fatally hurt people. But the snake-charmer handles them as if they are no creatures of consequence. More than that, he has quite a few of them coil, creep and writhe about his body. The senses, likewise, are dependable and treacherous too, in the case of the ordinary man. But they are ever tame and subservient to the knower of Atman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The following three stanzas contain the answer to Arjuna’s question as to how the Enlightened One sits.
viṣaya vinivartante nirāhārasya dehinah
drasāvarjam raso 'py asya param dṛṣṭvā nivartate

viṣayāḥ the objects of senses vinivartante turn away nirāhārasya abstinent dehinah of the man rasāvarjam leaving the longing rasaḥ longing (taste) api even asya of his param the supreme dṛṣṭvā having seen nivartate turns away

Sense objects drop out for the abstinent man, though not the longing for them. His longing also ceases when he intuits the Supreme.

The senses of those fallen sick become unfit for indulgence; but the craving in them for sense enjoyment persists. They harbour the hope of being able to enjoy after recovery. A convict in prison is forced to abstain from sense enjoyments; but the hankering for them dwells in his heart. While the body and the senses are under restraint, the mind wanders. The mental make up of the beginner in austerity is not far removed from that of the patient or the prisoner. Subtle tendencies hover about in him.

Seeds that are burnt do not sprout any further. Similarly the vagrant mind gets vanquished once for all with the dawn of the Knowledge Supreme. A Jnani is he in whom mentation has lost its vehe-
mence. An aspirant is he who tries to sublimate the senses by associating them always with the Sublime.

A brother and sister were playing in a dense and bushy garden. All on a sudden the brother was missing. While the other was anxiously searching for him, a bear came out of a bush. The girl became stunned with fear. Finding the joke too severe for her, the brother threw off the mask of the bear and presented himself in his true form. The terrified girl came then to her senses and wondered that it was all the play of her own brother. In this manner Brahmān puts on the mask of the phenomenon and allures or frightens the ignorant. But the Enlightened One is no more frightened or enticed. He transcends the senses.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The nature of the uncontrolled senses:

yatate api kaunteya purusasya vipascticah
indriyāṇi pramāṭhīni haranti prasabham manah

yatataḥ of the striving hi indeed api even kaunteya O Kaunteya purusasya of the senses pramāṭhīni turbulant haranti carry away prasabham violently man the mind

The excited senses, O son of Kunti, impetuously carry away the mind of even a wise man, striving for perfection.

Treacherous are the senses. They are as impetuous as wild horses newly harnessed. Riding on
them is risky to life. The major portion of the spiritual discipline to which an aspirant subjects himself is actually the warfare that he carries on with the wayward senses. Innumerable are the defeats that he suffers at their hands at the initial stage. Repentance so much spoken of by a section of theologians as a means to win the mercy of the Maker is none other than the moral man chewing the cud of the rebuffs and reverses that he has had from the restive senses.

Conquest of the senses is the means for the attainment of excellence here and hereafter. The refinement of an individual or a society is measured by the yardstick of sense-control.

People who live in localities infested with venomous creatures should always be alert and mindful of the danger. Even so, people intent on spiritual growth should guard themselves against indulgent senses tainted with lust and greed.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The means to subdue the senses:


tāni sarvāṇi संयम्य युक्त आतीत मत्तरः ।
वसे हि पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि तत्स्य महत् प्रतिचित्तम् ॥ ६१

tāni sarvāṇi संयम्य युक्तः आतीत महत् प्रतिचित्तम् ।
वसे हि पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि तत्स्य महत् प्रतिचित्तम् ॥

tāni sarvāṇi samyamya yukta āśta matparah ।
vase hi yasya 'ndriyāṇi tasya prajñā pratisīhitā ॥

tāni tāni them sarvāṇi sarvāṇi all संयम्य samyamya
having restrained युक्तः yuktah joined आतीत āśta should
sit मत्तरः matparah intent on me वसे vase under control
hि hi indeed यस्य yasya whose इन्द्रियाणि indriyāṇi senses
तर्य tasya his प्रज्ञा prajñā wisdom भविष्यता pratiṣṭhitā (is) settled

The yogi, having controlled them all, sits focussed on Me as the supreme goal. His wisdom is constant whose senses are under subjugation.

Mind cannot occupy itself at the same time with two conflicting thoughts. In the auto-suggestion, “I shall efface sense pleasures,” the idea of those pleasures is involved. It gets deep-rooted in the mind. In a favourable future situation this hidden idea sprouts and puts forth branches. By nipping the tender branches on the surface, the stalk and the roots below are not destroyed. On the other hand, the stem gathers strength below. The unwanted idea thrives in the sub-conscious region of the mind; it is negatively fostered. The process has therefore to be reversed by substituting a positive idea such as, “I shall delight in the glory of the Lord.” When this wholesome idea gains in strength the other gets purged away. Healthy ideas wipe out the unhealthy ones. As devotion to the Lord increases, the wild vehemence of the mind gets tamed down.

No thought of any sense-indulgence crops up in the mind while one is bitterly bereaved of a dearly loved relative. Similarly no vulgar thought crops up in the mind of the one devoted to the Divine. The turbulent senses in him become subdued soon.

— Sri Ramakrishna

श्यायते वियत्यायर्पूर्वः समलोकोपसिसितायते।
सन्नातः सन्नाते कामः कामात्कोषोपसिसितायते॥ ६२
श्यायत: विययान्युपः सतः तेषु द्वै-नायते।
सन्नातः सन्नाते कामः कामात्कोषः आसि-नायते॥
dhyāyato visayān pumṣah sangas tesā 'pajāyate
sangāt samjāyate kāmah kāmāt krodho 'bhjāyate

ध्यायत dhyāyatah thinking विषयान visayān (on) objects of the senses पुम pumṣah of a man संग asangah attachment तेसु tesu in them उपजायते upajāyate arises संगान sangāt from attachment सजायते samjāyate is born काम kāmah desire जान kāmāt from desire क्रोध krodhaḥ anger अभ्जायते abhjāyate arises

Brooding on the objects of senses, man develops attachment to them; from attachment comes desire; from desire anger sprouts forth.

क्रोधानृत्व संमोहः संमोहात्वत्वतिनिर्घ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभंशाहुद्विनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्रणप्रणयति ॥ ६२

krodhāḥ bhavati sammohah smmohat smrtivibhramaḥ

From anger krodhaḥ from anger bhavati comes संमोह संमोहah delusion सम्मोहान sammohat from delusion स्मृतित्विव्रभम smrtivibhramaḥ loss of memory स्मृति bhrahmsād buddhināsāt buddhināsāt pranasyati

From anger proceeds delusion; from delusion, confused memory; from confused memory the ruin of reason; due to the ruin of reason he perishes. 63

What is enunciates here may be explained through a concrete example as follows —
A man goes to his office every day seeing on the road many people, but not taking note of them. Like mere phantoms they appear and disappear. An attractive figure one day left a faint impression in his mind. On the following day the same figure drew a little more of his attention. Subsequent sights of that lovely figure made him cogitate; it was a pretty young woman that took possession of his mind. He developed attachment to, and picked up acquaintance with her, which steadily grew into friendship. Then came in him the desire to make the charming woman his own. Rivalry now ensued between him and another young man courting her. Competition between the two changed into bitter anger.

What else is anger if it is not an obstructed desire? From the sort of anger provoked in one, the nature of the desire lurking in one can easily be detected. Anger is temporary insanity. When the mind is occasionally upset it is anger, when permanently, it is lunacy. In effect both are the same; delusion ensues in either case.

In the woodlands the trees, creepers and plants are all easily discernible. But when there is a dust laden tempest the trees are tossed so much that one cannot be distinguished from another. It is a mass of confusion. Akin to this is the state of mind given to anger. It gets deluded first; next comes the loss of memory of things good and bad. A violence is resorted to indiscriminately, paving the way for self-destruction.
The prolonged bitter anger in the two wooers of the woman burst one day into a rage. A scuffle ensued in which one tried to do away with the other. They forgot in the excitement about the severe punishment that the law of the land metes out for attempted murder. Both were jailed and the woman had her own lover to marry. Loss of discrimination paves the way for self-destruction.

A minute peepal seed gets into a crack in a wall, sprouts, grows and rents the wall asunder. Similarly an evil thought germinates in the mind, develops in its own way and wrecks the man ultimately. Thought can make or mar man. Good thought mends and makes man while the evil one ends him.

A holy man was living in a temple. Nearby was the house of a harlot. Noticing how the profligate ones were frequenting her house he once called the woman and warned her against her evil ways. She lamented over her lot and prayed to the Lord for forgiveness although she could not put an end to her base profession. The annoyed anchorite now started recording her lapses by pelting a pebble every time a libertine visited her. When the heap of pebbles grew large, the holy man summoned the prostitute to his presence and censured her severely pointing out to her the enormity of her sins. The heart-broken whore died that very night appealing to the Almighty for deliverance from the debauched body. Strangely enough, that very night the holy man also departed. The defiled remains of the former was cast away as food to vultures and jackals, but that of the latter was interred with due honours. Lo, the development of this scene was quite different in Yama loka. The soul of the prostitute was escorted to Vaikuntha while that of the anchorite was consigned to hell. The excited holy man demanded an explanation for this injustice. The reply came that inviolable justice alone prevailed in the creation of the Lord. Although living in a polluted body the prostitute's mind was ever fixed on the Divine, whereas the mind of the man in the holy body was always
wandering on unholy concerns. While the earthly remains of both were fittingly disposed, their souls as well were assigned their fitting regions. Beware of your thoughts and everything will be all right with you.

— Sri Ramakrishna

On what should the mind, weaned from the senses, be placed? The answer comes:

रागद्वैयुक्तस्य विषयानिन्द्रियविक्रियारूपः ।
आत्मनिन्द्रियविधियातीम् प्रसादाधिगच्छति ॥ ६४

राग-द्वै-विद्युतः तु विषयान् इन्द्रियः चरनः ।
आत्म-निष्ठे विद्येय-आत्मा प्रसादः अधिगच्छति ॥

raga dveša vyuktais tu visayān indriyaiś caran ।
ātmavasyair vidheyātmā prasādam adhigacchati ॥

रागद्वैयुक्तः: raga dveša vyuktaḥ free from attraction and repulsion tu but visayān objects indriyaiḥ with senses charn caran moving ātmavasyaiḥ: ātmavasyaiḥ self-restrained vidheyātmā the self-controlled prasādam to peace adhigacchati attains

But the disciplined yogi, moving among objects with the senses under control, and free from attraction and aversion, gains in tranquillity.

The senses are extrovert by nature. They ramble in fields external. Those objects that are pleasing to them are hugged while those others that are displeasing, shunned. A closer study reveals that these senses are themselves, instruments in the hands of the mind. As goaded on by the mind they indulge in attraction and aversion.
He is a yogi who has conquered his mind. He makes it revel in Atman. If it ever goes outward, it does so being untainted by attraction and aversion. There is purity as well as innocence in its contacting the external objects, with the result that the tranquillity of the mind is not disturbed. On the other hand calmness and clarity increase. It is a form of Samadhi for the mind to be fixed in purity and calmness, while making benign use of the senses.

Sri Ramakrishna’s life exemplifies this fact. The sight of an extensive verdure below and dense black clouds above with a group of snow white cranes in flight in between, took him into the Beyond. While the make-up of Siva was going on on his person, the sense of touch with the holy ash all over the body transported him into the Infinite. Hearing of the divine name of the Lord was a sure means to put him in Samadhi. The aroma of the incense used in worship roused the divine consciousness in him. The taste of the sacramental food invoked his devotion to God. Thus all the five senses served him as gateways to the Noumenon. Instead of their being impediments they became instruments for the transcendental flights of the perfected mind of this disciplined yogi.

Now comes the answer to the question as to how the man of steady wisdom walks:

प्रसादेः सर्वेदः सानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।
प्रस्तश्चेत्सति शाशु दुधः परंचिन्यते ॥ ६५
prasāde sarvaduḥkhaṁ hānir asyo 'pajāyate
prasannacetaso hy āsu buddhiḥ paryavatisthate

prasāde in peace sarvaduḥkhaṁ (of) all pains hānir: destruction asya of him upajāyate arises prasannacetasaḥ of the tranquil-minded hi because āsu asu soon buddhiḥ intellect paryavatisthate becomes steady

In tranquillity, all his sorrow is destroyed. For the intellect of the tranquil-minded is soon anchored in equilibrium.

This world is a mixture of good and evil. But the majority of people see more of evil than good in it. Some among them hope that when the world gets rectified there is the possibility of their enjoying more of peace of mind. Cognizing evil in the world and mind being given to restlessness are interrelated. Evils seen outside are all, in fact, the projections of the mind; they have no external reality. As the mind gets purified, seeing of evil gets minimized. Grounds for becoming a prey to sorrow are accordingly cut down. When the mind becomes perfectly pure all evils and all sorrow automatically vanish. Keeping the mind even under all circumstances is the means to gain in purity.

What appears as the world is verily the Divinity. Creating relationship with It on this basis leads to the purification of mind. Poise and placidity are the
characteristics of the purified mind. Atman, the Reality, gets reflected best in it. Ultimately the pure mind itself gets merged in Atman.

After curdling, the milk is to be kept undisturbed in one place only so that it may coagulate into good curds. Change of place will have adverse effect. Likewise mind is to be fixed on the Lord only for it to become calm and divine.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What is the harm accruing from allowing the mind to dissipate? The answer comes:

नासिति बुद्धिरुपक्ष्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।
न चाभावयत: शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥ ६६

न असिष्ठुद्धि: अयुक्तस्य न च अ-युक्तस्य भावना ।
न च अ-भावयत: शान्ति: ते-शान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥

nā 'sti buddhir ayuktasya na ca 'yuktasya bhāvanā ।
na ca 'bhāvyayataḥ sāntir asāntasya kutah sukham ॥

न na not असिष्ठ asti is बुद्धि: buddhi knowledge अयुक्तम् ayuktasya of the unsteady न na not ca and अयुक्तम् ayuktasya of the unsteady भावना bhāvanā meditation न na not ca and अभावयत abhāvayataḥ of the unmeditative शान्ति: sāntih peace शान्तस्य asāntasya of the peaceless कुतः kutah whence सुखम् sukham happiness

There is no wisdom in the fickle-minded; nor is there meditation in him. To the unmeditative there is no peace. And how can the peaceless enjoy happiness?

Yoga is the science of self-culture. He who devoutly practises it is called a yuksa; but he who is indifferent to it is an ayukta. It is by the practice
of self-culture \textit{buddhi} or right understanding is developed. It makes the mind profound, which state being known as \textit{bhāvanā}. The one devoid of profundity does not get at \textit{sānti}—the serenity of mind. How can there be happiness to one with a disturbed mind?

Excellences such as deep discrimination, benign mentation, solemn bearing and unbroken joy emanate from the practice of yoga. He who is indifferent to this soul-elevating science paves the way for self-annihilation.

Clay allows itself to be moulded into any fine form; but baked clay is of no use for this purpose. Mind burnt by profane desires is incapable of taking divine moulds.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Why does not one with undisciplined mind get illumined? The answer comes:—

\begin{quote}
\textit{इन्द्रियाणां हि चरताम यन्मनोऽनुविद्यते} \textit{।}
\textit{तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञावायुनायिमवामिष्ठसि} \textit{।} ६७

\textit{इन्द्रियाणाम हि चरवम् यत् समः अजुविश्वायते} \textit{।}
\textit{तत् भक्त्य हरति प्रज्ञाम् पायुः नावम् इति अम्भसि} \textit{।}
\end{quote}

\textit{indriyānāṁ hi caratāṁ yan mano 'nuvidhyate} \textit{।}
\textit{tad asya harati prajñāṁ vāyuṁ nāvam ivā 'mbhasi} \textit{।}

\begin{quote}
\textit{इन्द्रियाणाम indriyānāṁ senses हि hi for चरताम cara-}
\textit{tām wandering यत् yat which मनः manah mind अनुविद्यी-}
\textit{यते anuvidhyate follows तत् tat, that भक्त्य asya his हरति}
\textit{harati carries away प्रज्ञाम prajñāṁ discrimination वायुः}
\textit{vāyuḥ the wind नावम nāvam boat इव ivā like अम्भसि}
\textit{ambhasi in the water}
\end{quote}

Just as a gale pushes away a ship on the waters, the mind that yields to the roving senses carries away his discrimination.
A ship without a rudder is at the mercy of a strong wind. Nothing can be predicted as to where it will be shoved. Senses are involuntarily drawn to the sense-objects. Mind that follows in the wake of the senses is naturally led astray by them. As a rudderless ship does not reach its destination, so the misdirected mind does not contact Atman. The wick that contacts a flame gets lit; similarly the mind that communes with Atman gets illumined.

Sense-pleasures are like itching eczema. There is pleasure in violently scratching it; but the disease gets aggravated thereby. By yielding to sense-pleasures mind gets more entangled in them.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How shall the senses be handled then? The answer comes:

तस्यादयस्य महावाहो निर्याहितानि सर्वस्य: ।
इन्द्रियार्थयोजायोभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिसिद्धा ॥ ६८
तस्माद यस्य महावाहो निर्याहितानि सर्वस्य: ।
इन्द्रियार्थयोजायो रक्षते प्रज्ञा प्रतिसिद्धा ॥

_tasmād yasya mahābāho nīgrhitāni sarvasaḥ ।
indriyāṇi indriyārthebhyas tasya prajñā pratisīṭhitaḥ ॥

_tasmāt therefore चत्व yasya whose महावाहो
mahābāho O mighty-armed निर्याहितानि nīgrhitāni restra-
ined सर्वस्य: sarvasaḥ completely इन्द्रियार्थy: indriyāṇi the
sense-objects चत्व tasya his प्रज्ञा prajñā knowledge प्रतिसिद्धa
pratisīṭhita is steady

Therefore, O mighty-armed, his cognition is well
poised, whose senses are completely restrained from
their objects.
The very purpose of being blessed with the senses is defeated if they are not allowed to contact the objects. That they should be rendered defunct is not the teaching of the Lord. The deciding factor between good and evil is the attitude with which the senses are directed on the sense-objects. Perceiving them with covetousness is sin, while viewing them as objects of adoration is virtue. Gluttony and slavery to the tongue is sin; eating to keep the body fit for a noble purpose is virtue. Beholding the body of a person with a lustful eye is sin; viewing it as the temple of God is virtue. All the five senses can be sublimated and the sense-objects sanctified in such a way that the divinity alone is contacted in and through all of them. Sri Ramakrishna perfected his sense of sight so well that all womenfolk including the street-walker were to him veritable embodiments of the Divine Mother. Sublimation of the senses was at its zenith in him. Mastery over the senses in this manner makes one competent to gain intuitive knowledge of the Imperishable. This knowledge once obtained persists for ever.

Blinkers have to be used in order to break a horse to the rein. Otherwise it will not be tamed. Vulgar desires have to be done away with in order to obtain the Divine. Purity of mind, complete sense-control, desirelessness—these divine qualities make one competent to gain Godhood.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the transformation in the aspirant that the sublimation of the senses brings in its train? Here comes the answer:—
That which is night to all beings, in that the disciplined man wakes; that in which all beings wake, is night to the Atman-cognizing Muni.

The faculty of seeing varies with beings in the physical plane. While man is able to see distinctly in broad daylight, owls and tigers are not able to do so. Day is therefore virtually night to them; and what is night to man actually serves as day to them. For, they then discern well. Day and night as physical facts are one thing and as of practical value quite another for beings differently constituted.

Men are not all wakeful to the same thing. A thief is well posted with particulars in his field, while the rest are all hidden in darkness to him. To a gambler his game is as bright as day, other concerns being enshrouded as if in darkness. The learned see well into the literary world, unmindful of everything
else. The same world opens up different vistas to different people in accordance with their dispositions.

To people who are sense-bound things earthly are all real and they are immersed in them; they are wakeful to the mundane. To the Brahma-jnani, on the other hand, who has conquered the senses and who has awakened to divine consciousness, the spectacle is different. His intuition, his concepts, his percepts are all filled in with Divinity. Whatever is, is Brahman to him. He cognizes existence as Brahman and not as the mundane. According to the attainment, beings are attuned to different planes of Existence. The Enlightened one is in the finale of It.

With the realization of God everything undergoes transformation to the Jnani. It is God Himself that has become the phenomenal universe and all the beings in it. The son is then perceived as the boy Krishna. Father and mother undergo metamorphosis as the Divinity. The wife is no more his mate; he sees the Cosmic Mother in her. Recognizing God in all, adoration to Him takes place through the worshipful service of all.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The plentitude ensuing from Brahma-jnana is as follows:—

आयुष्यमाणमचलस्वतिः सहुद्रसास्पः श्रविशाश्च यद्व ।
तद्वकामः ये श्रविशाश्च सं शांतिसामायोत्तो न कामकामी ॥ ७०

āpūryamāṇam acalapratishtham
samudram āpāḥ pravīṣanti yadvat ।
tadvat kāmā yam pravīṣanti sarve
sa sāntim āpnoti na kāmakāmi ॥
Not the desirer of desires, but that man attains Peace, in whom all desires merge even as rivers flow into the ocean which is full and unmoving.

It is not possible for any one to add to, or subtract the volume of the ocean. Though all the rivers of the world continue to empty themselves into it, its magnitude remains ever the same. If the rivers ceased to flow in and evaporation went on as usual, even then the expanse of the ocean will be the same. It is ever full. The mind of the Muni is like the ocean. The sensations brought in by the sense-organs get themselves dissolved in the ocean of consciousness. No modifications of the mind such as desires, aversions, longings, feelings and thoughts take shape. The question of the mind getting muddled does not arise there. It is a vast waveless ocean of consciousness. Not a speck of mentation may be noticed in that infinitude. He who is in this blessed state is a Jivan mukta—a free soul, even though embodied. The very presence of an emancipated soul is a boon to the society. In his presence the minds of aspirants automatically become pacified.

There are mountains hills dales valleys and plains at the bottom of the ocean. But they are not discernible on the surface. Akin to it the Jnani in Samadhi experiences Infinite—existence—
knowledge-bliss. Modifications such as I and mine get merged in that beatitude.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What should the aspirant do so that he may gain access to this state? The answer comes:

विहाय कामान यः सर्वानु पुमांश्ररति निःस्प्रहः ।
निर्मो निरहेङ्यारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥ ७१

वि-हाय कामान यः सर्वानु पुमान्त्वरति निः-स्प्रहः ।
निर्-मम: निर्-अहं-कारः स: शान्तिम अधि-मध्यति ॥

vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān pumānś carati niḥspṛhah ।
nir mamo nir ahamkāraḥ sa sāntim adhigacchati ॥

विहाय vihāya abandoning कामान kāmān desires यः
yah that sarvān sarvān all pumān pumān man carati moves about निः-स्प्रहः niḥspṛhah free from longing निर्मो: nir mamo: devoid of ownership निर-अहं-कारः nir aham-kāraḥ without egoism स: saḥ he शान्तिम sāntim to peace अधिगच्छति adhigacchati attains

That man attains Peace who lives devoid of longing, freed from all desires and without the feeling of “I” and “mine.”

As long as man is given to worldly desires he will not have peace of mind. Calmness comes to the extent craving is quelled. The feeling of “I” and “mine” leads man into bondage to karma. Agency and ownership are the modifications of mind that ensue from this feeling. Waves and billows rise up on the surface of the sea and put on appearances of separate volumes of water. It seems as if the sea is
split up into many bits. But in fact it is one undivided mass of water. The ego, in this way, makes man feel he is a separate entity. And desire is the root-cause of this apparent individuality. With the cessation of desire the ego assuming "I" and "mine" disappears. What remains is the unmodified super-consciousness bathed in bliss. All ethical and spiritual life is directed to the elimination of the ego.

When the goat is slaughtered its body shakes for a while as if imbued with life. Similarly the ego of the Jnani undergoes slaughter when he attains illumination. But a trace of the ego lingers just to carry on the bodily sustenance. But it has no power to bind him again to worldliness.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The consummation that comes along with spiritual illumination is as follows:—

एषा ब्राह्मि स्थिति: पार्थ्य नेतां प्राप्य विमुक्तिः |
सिद्धवास्यामंतकालेकपि ब्रह्मानिर्वाणस्त्रुच्चति ॥ ७२
एषा ब्राह्मि स्थिति: पार्थे न एवाम् अ-आपि-व विस्मृति ।
सिद्धवास्याम् अन्त-वाले धारी प्राप्य निर्वाणम् नाच्चति ॥

esā brāhmi sthitih pārtha
nai 'nām prāpya vimuhyati ।
sthitvā 'syām antakāle 'pi
brahma nirvāṇam rccati ॥

एषा esā this ब्राह्मि brāhmi of Brahman स्थितिः sthitih state पार्थ्य pārtha O Partha न na not एवाम् enām this प्राप्य prāpya having obtained विमुक्तिः vimuhyati is deluded सिद्धवास्यā sthitvā being established अस्याम् asyām in this अन्तकाले antakāle at the end of life अपि api even ब्राह्म-निर्वाणम् brahma nirvānam oneness with Brahman स्त्रुच्चति rccati attains
This, O Partha, is the Brahman state. Attaining this, none is bewildered. Being established in it even at the death-hour, a man gets into oneness with Brahman.

Objects seen in dream have their value as long as that dream lasts. Pleasure and pain experienced in it have also their importance. But on coming to wakefulness, the dream world is rejected as delusion. Brahman-nirvāna is the highest state of existence, getting into which the ordinary wakefulness itself is equated with dream and set aside as valueless. Mundane existence no more deludes the Brahmanjñāni.

Brahman-nirvāna is also designated as Aparoksha-anubhūti. It transcends the mind and the intellect. An individual short of this illumination is called a Jivatman. If he holds on to the body after intuiting it, he is classified as Jivan-mukta—freed while in the body. As all rivers re-enter the ocean and become one with it, all Jivas re-enter Brahman and get identified with that Absolute State. And this is the goal of life. If this state be attained even at the last moment when the body is about to drop, the man enters Brahman-nirvāna. He no more embodies.

The newly married daughter-in-law is given plenty of domestic work by the mother-in-law. But as she advances in pregnancy her work is reduced. After the birth of the child she is permitted to be busy all the while caressing the baby. Attainment of Brahman-jñanam is analogous to this. Through the devout discharge of one’s duty one’s mind gets purified and comes to know of the presence of the Lord in one’s heart. Then work is
steadily abandoned and constant communion resorted to until at-one-ment is reached.

—— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासुपनिषतसु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णांजुनसंवादे साहृवयोगेन नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ||

**iti** srimad bhagavadgitasūpanisatsu brahmavidyāyāṁ
yogasāstre sri krsnārjuna samvāde sāmkhya yogo
nāma dvitiyo ’dhyāyah ||

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the second discourse designated

**THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE**
KARMA YOGA — THE YOGA OF ACTION

CHAPTER III

Arjuna’s Doubt — Jnana Yoga and Karma Yoga are Complementary — The Greatness of Yajna — The Wheel of Life — Atman is Beyond Action — What the Spiritual Aspirant ought to do — How to Root out the Ego — Spiritual Practices Conforming to Dispositions — The Origin of Sin.

Arjuna’s Doubt — 1-2

अर्जुन उवाच

व्यायसी चेतकर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दनः ।
तत्त्वं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥ १ ।

व्यायसी चेति कर्म: ते मता बुद्धि: जन-अर्द्धः ।
तत् किम् कर्मणि घोरे माम् नियोजयसि केशव ॥

**arjuna uvāca**

*jyāyasti cet karmanas te matā buddhir janārdana |
tat kim karmanī ghore mām niyojayasi kesava ||

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

स्वायसी jyāyasti superior चेति cet if कर्मण: karmanāḥ than action ते te by thec मता matā thought बुद्धि: buddhiḥ knowledge जनार्दन janaṛdana O Janardana ततू tat then किम् kim why कर्मणि karmani in action घोरे ghore terrible सामू mām me नियोजयसि niyojayasi thou engagest केशव kesava O Kesava

Arjuna said:

If it is held by you, O Janardana, that knowledge is superior to action, why then do you, O Kesava, enjoin on me this terrible action?
vyāmisreṇe 'va vākyena buddhim mohayast 'va me |
tad ekam vada niscitya yena sreyo 'ham āpnuyām ||

vyāmisreṇa perplexing iva as it were vākyena with speech buddhim understanding mohayasi (thou) confusest iva as it were me my tat that ekam one vada tell nīcitsya for certain yena by which ēvam sreyah bliss (the good or the highest) āham āpjnuyām may attain

With these perplexing words, you are, as it were, confusing my comprehension. Tell me with certainty the path by pursuing which I may get at the Supreme.

The Lord made it plain to Arjuna that he was not to abandon his duty for any reason whatsoever. After goading him to action He next put it to him to convert the bondage-creating karma into the bondage-breaking karma-yoga. The Lord's contention was that the karma-yogi alone could accomplish everything. He then pointed out the supremacy of Jnanam—enlightenment. That in spiritual illumination alone the acme of life was attained, was the conclusion of the Lord. He even extolled it as the Supreme.

This twofold emphasis created a doubt in the mind of Arjuna, which may be set forth as follows:—
"Lord, you are the dispeller of the ignorance of beings; you are also the remover of their misery.
Why do you place me alone in a dilemma? I am sure it is no intention of yours to lead me astray. I have supplicated to you for Sreyas. Do, therefore, guide me aright."

JnanaYoga and KarmaYoga are Complementary — 3-8

Śrī bhagavān uvāca

loke 'smin dvividhā niṣṭhā purā proktā mayā 'nagha ।
jñānayogena sāmkhyānāṁ karmayogena yoginām।

Śrī bhagavān uvāca Sri Bhagavan said:

loke in world asmin in this dvividhā twofold niṣṭhā path purā previously śrīkā proktā said mayā by me anagha O sinless one jñānayogena by the path of knowledge sāmkhyānāṁ of the Samkhyaśas karmayogena by the path of action yoginām of the yogis

The Blessed Lord said:

The twofold path was given by Me, O sinless one, to the world in the beginning — the path of knowledge to the discerning, the path of work to the active. 3

Cognizing the Self through the process of discrimination and detachment from the non-Self is known as the path of knowledge. Clarity of understanding comes as one continues to discharge one’s duty with
dispassion. Intellect clarified thus gets to know the Self clearly. The path of knowledge and the path of action are both thus conducive to the cognition of the Self. They are both verily great paths. Aspirants inclined to discrimination and those to duty are found in the world at all times. These paths therefore eternally exist along with man’s aspiration for self-perfection.

How are these two ancient paths complementary to each other? The answer comes:—

न कर्मणामनारम्भाचैक्षम्य पुरुषोऽशुद्धिवि ।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धि समविगच्छति ॥ ४ ॥
न कर्मणामय शनु-आरम्भात् नेष्क-कर्ममु दुलयः हश्य-शुद्धे ।
न च समू-ति-असनात् एव विद्विस्म सयु भधि-नाश्चति ॥

na karmāṇāṃ anārambhān naiškarmyam puruso 'śnute ।
na ca samnyasanād eva siddhim samadhigacchati ॥

na not karmāṇāṃ of actions anārambhāt from non-performance naiškarmyam actionlessness puruṣaḥ man aśnute reaches na not ca and sāṃnyasanāt from renunciation eva only siddhim perfection samadhigacchati attains

Man gains not actionlessness by abstaining from activity, nor does he rise to perfection by mere renunciation.

The little ones seeking education take to schooling. But it is no intention of theirs to stick lifelong to educational institutions. They are to pass out after successfully completing the courses of study. It avails them nothing to come out of the
school abandoning the studies. The training that the Jivatman gets in the school of Nature is similar to this.

Naishkarmyam and Siddhi connote the same; for, the state of perfection is that in which all activities are transcended. A fully ripe fruit may be said to have reached the state of perfection. Its taking form from the flower, its development, growth and maturity are all different stages of its activity, leading to actionlessness in perfect fruition. The fully ripe fruit severs its connection with the tree. But if it is plucked out before ripening its fulfilment remains incomplete.

Man's spiritual life or his progress towards Sreyas is akin to this. As the tender fruit grows receiving sustenance from the tree, so man marches towards perfection in and through the discharge of the duty fallen to his lot. He derives no benefit by violently snatching himself away from duty. Desireless action is the sure means to reach actionlessness.

The goal in life of man is to merge in Godhood. Make a reminder knot of this fact in a corner of your scarf and then plunge in the discharge of your duties.

— Sri Ramakrishna

An unripe fruit plucked from a tree can be utilized for cooking purposes. Similarly abandoning karma, temporary rest can be had by the karma-bound man. Where is the harm in man's giving up work and living in peace for sometime at least? But the fact is this:—
None can ever remain really actionless even for a moment; for everyone is helplessly driven to action by the Gunas, born of Prakriti.

Prakriti or Nature is constituted of the three Gunas—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. It is ever in a state of flux. In other words karma is inherent in Prakriti. Beings involved in Prakriti are therefore helplessly bound by karma. Vain is their wish and attempt to rid themselves of action, eating, sleeping, breathing, beating of the heart—all these are nothing but karma. From the atom up to the universe all are engaged in activities of innumerable types. It is impossible for beings to renounce karma while being entangled in Prakriti.

Those who are enlisted as indoor patients in a hospital cannot get out of it until they are cured. After the cure is effected they have no need to be in the hospital. Similarly beings that suffer from the ailment of ignorance are hospitalized in Prakriti. They are being effectively treated with karma for
enlightenment. With the dawn of Brahma-jnanam they quit Prakriti, and get to actionlessness.

— Sri Ramakrishna

If one attempts to abandon karma while being bound in Prakriti the consequence will be disastrous. How? The answer comes:

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य च आस्ते मनसा स्मरतः
इन्द्रियार्थोनित्वमुद्रहत्वा सिद्धार्थाः स उच्चते

6

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि समस्य-यम्य य: आस्ते मनसा स्मरतः
इन्द्रिय-अभ्यास्ते विसूत्त-आस्तः गिथ्या-वाचारः स: उच्चते

karmendriyāṇi samyamyā ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā mithyācārah sa ucyate

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि karmendriyāṇi organs of action संयम्य
samyamyā restraining य: yah who āste sits manasā
by the mind स्मरतः smaran remembering
इन्द्रियार्थोन indriyārthān sense-objects विमूढात्मा vimūḍhā-
tma of deluded understanding सिद्धार्थ: mithyācāraṁ
hypocrite स: saṁ he uucchate ucyate is called

That deluded man is called a hypocrite who sits controlling the organs of action, but dwelling in his mind on the objects of the senses.

The functioning of the mind persists as long as the Jivatman is bound by Prakriti. And the way of the mind is to be ever assuming modifications. Thought waves continue to rise in it while the external sense organs are held under restraint. This conflict is harmful. It is like applying brake to the wheels of the locomotive while the throttle-valve is fully open. To shut out the steam first and then to apply the brake is the proper course. Any contrary
action is disastrous to the locomotive. When man adopts this kind of wrong restraint on himself in a violent way in order to control the senses, he ruins the personality. Whatever mars man is evil. While yet in ignorance man's pretension to the renunciation of action is sheer hypocrisy which he should not resort to.

Two friends went out one night intent on any entertainment that they came by. As they walked on they met with a pious gathering listening devoutly to the Holy Bhagavatam being explained. One of the two suggested that they sat there and derived benefit from that sacred discourse. But the other preferred some earthly enjoyment and walked away to a house of ill fame. After a while the first man thought he made a mistake in choosing that holy assembly. All the time he was cogitating over the pleasure his companion was enjoying. The second man on the other hand was repenting of the base choice he had made and was imagining of the divine bliss his friend was sharing with the devotees. The first man was sitting in a house of God and sinning while the second was craving for the divine though physically placed in a bad environment. Sin and virtue accrue ever from the frame of mind and never from the restrictions imposed on the senses.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What then should the aspirant do? The answer comes —

यस्य इतित्वाणि मनसा नियम्यार्थस्यते देखुनि।
कर्मेन्द्रियाय: कर्मयोगसः स विशिष्यते। ॥ ७

य तु इतित्वाणि मनसा नियम्य भावः रक्षते भजन।
कर्म-इतित्वाय कर्म-योगम् असक्त: स विशिष्यति। ॥

yas tv indriyani manasā niyamyā 'rabhate 'rjuna।
karmendriyaih karmayogam asaktaḥ sa visisyate।

य यह whoseo तु tu 'but' इतित्वाय indriyani the senses मनसा manasā 'by' the mind नियम्य niyamyā
controlling अरभते ārabhate commences अर्जुन arjuna O Arjuna कर्मेन्द्रियाः karmendriyaiḥ by the organs of action कर्मयोगम karmayogam karma yoga असक्त: asaktaḥ unattached स: saḥ he विशिष्टवले visisvate excels

But he excels, O Arjuna, who, restraining the senses by the mind, unattached, directs his organs of action to the path of work.

A hungry dog chained to a post scrambles and paws for a plate of food kept for him at a distance. Such is the case of the mind of the untrained man given to sense-life. Viewed ethically and spiritually, he is a hypocrite who allows his mind to wander on sense-objects while apparently curbing the senses. On the other hand an aspirant ought to change his attitude and seek to engage his mind on things divine. The mind disciplined this way chooses to engage the ever active and indulgent senses on things noble and elevating instead of on those, base and vulgar.

Discipline is imperative in all the detailed activities of the mind and the senses. The acts of cooking and eating may be cited as samples. An aspirant prepares wholesome food for offering to his chosen Deity. While doing so, there is no thought whatsoever of his tasting the dish. It is done in a worshipful mood. The food is then dedicated to the Deity. It is subsequently partaken of by the devotee as grace from the Lord and not as an object of sense-enjoyment. Its delicacy is relished as the glory of the Lord. Herein lies the difference between the indulgent and the disciplined. The former wastes
away the mind and the senses while the latter weans
and conserves them. In this wise all the senses
require to be fully engaged in the service of the Lord
Self-control culminates in self-fulfilment

A deadly cobra was a terror to the wayfarers in a woodland
The knowers of this fact scrupulously avoided that locality for
this reason. Once when a holy man was inadvertently passing
that way the venomous creature made its appearance intent on
its nefarious act. But the benignly loving look of the saint
brought a change in the snake. Instead of biting him it looked
meekly on the pious man. He kindly advised the serpent not
to hurt anybody. And this enemy of mankind wholeheartedly
took the advice. After a long interval the holy man came again
that way, thought of the converted cobra and searched for it.
To his dismay the creature was found mangled and half dead,
wriggling in a hole. When the matter was anxiously enquired into,
the snake submitted that it was all the result of faithfully follow-
ing the advice of the saint. Because it stopped biting, people
took to pelting it with pebbles and hurting it violently. The
deadly creature was forced to hide itself lest it should be done to
death. The saint smilingly rebuked it: "I exhorted you not to
hurt, but I did not prohibit you from hissing." The snake
learned a lesson for life and thenceforth got on safely. The
unbridled senses are like the poisonous snake playing havoc
among people. The curbed senses are like the inactive snake
almost beaten to death. The sublimated senses cause harm to
none while elevating their owner to sublimity.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What, therefore, the aspirant ought to do, is
enjoined as follows:

\[तिष्ठसि कुरू कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो धार्मिकम्: ।
शरीरयानापि च ते न प्रसिद्धेदकर्मिकम्: ॥ ८

निष्ठागु कुरू कर्म तमसु कर्म ज्याय हि अ-कर्मण ।
शरीर-वायु भावि च ते न प्र-बिद्धेत कर्मण ॥

KARMA YOGA
niyatam kuru karma tvam karma jyāyo hy akarmānaḥ
sarīrayātrā 'pi ca te na prasiddhyed akarmānaḥ

नियतम् नियतम् बौद्ध कुरु परम् कर्म कर्म अच्छा ज्याय हि हि अकर्मणः
रसिर्यात्रा रसिर्यात्रा महत्थो ते ते भू न भू अति अकर्मणः

Engage yourself in obligatory work; for action
is superior to inaction, and if inactive, even the mere
maintenance of your body would not be possible. 8

Bathing, eating, sleeping—activities such as these
are classified as nitya karma or obligatory work.
These are indispensable for a robust living. No new
merit is acquired by performing an obligatory work;
but if any one fails to perform it, then one incurs
demerit. Eating, for example is an obligatory work.
By regularly nourishing oneself, one does not emerge
as a better person, but if one neglects one’s nourish-
ment one becomes weak and emaciated, which is
a demerit.

Bodily existence is required to achieve the
several ideals in life. Keeping the body fit is there-
fore accepted as an aid in making the pilgrimage of
life. If the body be not perfect, life gets frustrated.
Action is the means to maintain it well. Those who
deride an abundant life ought to be fully engaged in
activities.

One ought not to be satisfied with discharging
the obligatory duties alone. For, they can only
maintain man in the excellences he has so far acquired. But there are yet other excellences to acquire. New endeavours are the sure means to it. Crawling is a necessary step in a baby’s life. But in remaining satisfied with it, the baby cannot evolve. He has further to stand, walk and run. Even so man progresses through new enterprises. There are those who hold that doing any new karma amounts to the creation of an additional bondage. The seeming progress on one side is nothing but bondage to karma on the other, is the view of these people. They advocate the avoidance of the chimera of action and its dreadful consequence in the shape of slavery to action. But this negative position is untenable. Man can make endless ethical and spiritual progress in life and at the same time remain untethered to karma. The Lord now provides the means to it as follows:—

The Greatness of Yajna — 9-13

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोत्पत्त्व लोकोपयं कर्मवन्धनः ।
तदर्थे कर्म कौन्तेय शुकसज्जः समाचर ॥ ९

यज्ञार्थात् कर्मण: बन्यन: लोकः कर्मवन्धनः ।
तद्भवेऽकर्म कौन्तेय शुकसज्जः समाचर ॥

yajñārthaḥ karmano 'nyatra
lokō 'yam karmabandhanah ।
tad artham karma kaunteyā
muktā sangah samācara ॥

यज्ञार्थात् yajñārthāḥ for the sake of sacrifice कर्मण: karmanah of action अन्यत्र anyatra otherwise लोकः lokaḥ the world अयम् ayam this कर्मवन्धन: karma bandhanah
bound by action तद्वर्धम् । *tad artham* for that sake कर्म karma action कौलेष्व kaunteya O Kaunteya मुक्तसंगः mukta saṅgaḥ free from attachment समाचार samācāra perform

The world is bound by actions other than those performed for the sake of Yajna. Do therefore, O son of Kunti, earnestly perform action for Yajna alone, free from attachment.

Competition, co-operation and self-dedication are the three ways in which beings make life a fulfilment. The lowest order of creation exists by sheer competition. In this stage, the struggle for existence is an endless warfare. The physically strong and the fittest thrive and prosper while the weak and the feeble are either left in the background or exterminated. This law of the survival of the fittest inexorably prevails in life at the physical level. Plants, birds and beasts bear testimony to it.

In the life at the mental plane, cruel competition gets minimized. Intelligent co-operation gains ground here. This process is also known as social life. Man is a social being though corporate life is not his exclusive prerogative. Other beings are also found very well at it. Corporate life is more conducive to growth and progress than the competitive one. The civilization of man is mainly based on his gregarious instinct. Collective peace and security are the bases for prosperity and progress in arts and sciences. Man enjoys these advantages much more than the lower order of creation.
Self-dedication is the highest law of life. It prevails at the ethical and spiritual planes. It is given to the enlightened man alone to practise self-dedication. The act of offering the best and the most useful in one for the welfare of the others is self-dedication. Both the giver and the receiver stand to gain through this sacred act. It is like draining the water away from a copious well into a fertile field. This bounteous act goes by the name of Yajna which literally means sacrifice. As fresh water springs out from an emptied well, the man who performs Yajna becomes more and yet more enlightened and prosperous. By imparting one’s learning to others the capacity to teach increases. By sharing one’s knowledge and wisdom with the others one’s fund of knowledge and wisdom increases. By supplying manure to the soil its capacity to yield is made more potential. By giving the labourer his due wage the urge in him to turn out more work is made keen. By sharing one’s wealth with all those who have been responsible for its growth, security and further expansion are ensured. The personal weal is ever unfailingly contained in the public weal. Giving effect to this inviolable law of nature is the practice of Yajna.

Meritorious act untainted by selfishness, disinterested service, work of any kind performed for general welfare, adoration of the Almighty, ethical and spiritual endeavours—all these salutary activities are contained in Yajna.

Dedicating oneself exclusively to spiritual life amounts to the performance of Yajna. Waging a
righteous warfare to wipe out wickedness from the world is an act of Yajna. Increasing the wealth of the country not for self-aggrandizement but for people's welfare is definitely Yajna. humble and obscure labourers such as hewers of wood, drawers of water, tillers of soil and carriers of load are also performing Yajna when they assume the attitude that with the sweat of their brow they are serving the Lord and His creation. It is the attitude that transforms the soul-entangling karma into the soul-emancipating Yajna. Divinity reveals itself best where Yajna takes place. That "Yajna is Vishnu" is an Upanishadic statement. Performance of Yajna leads man to Sreyas.

He lives in vain who does not utilize the human birth which is very rare to obtain, for the attainment of Divinity.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Has Yajna any place in cosmic plan? The answer comes:—

सहयज्ञा: प्रजा: सूक्ता पुरोवाच प्रजापति: | ।
अनेन प्रसविष्यद्धवोपस्पित्तकायः| ॥ १० ।
सह-यज्ञा: प्रजा: सूक्ता पुरा उचाच प्रजा-पति: | ।
अनेन प्र-सविष्यद्भासुः एष्वं भस्तु हि-ब्रम-हुल्लुः ।

sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā puro 'vāca prajāpatiḥ ।
anena prasaviṣyadhvam esa vo 'stv ista kāma dhuk ॥

sahayajñāḥ: sahayajñāḥ together with sacrifice प्रजा: prajāḥ mankind सूक्ता sṛṣṭvā having created पुरा purā in the beginning उचाच uvāca said प्रजापति: prajāpatiḥ. Prajapati अनेन anena by this प्रसविष्यद्भासुः prasaviṣyadhvam shall ye propagate एष: esaḥ this व: vah your भस्तु
astu let be ḍṛkāmṛṣṭa ṛṣa kāma dhuk milch cow of desires

Having created mankind in the beginning together with Yajña, the Prajapati said: "By this shall you propagate; this shall be the milch cow of your desires."

The creative force of nature is an aspect of Isvara Manifesting Himself in this aspect He governs and guides human destiny. Then He is known as Prajapati.

Life on earth is wrought with misery, however much man may pose to be free from it. Still, there is an unfailing way to convert earthly life into a ‘mansion of mirth.’ When all activities in life are changed into Yajña, the spectacle also undergoes a corresponding change. Man is born to give and not to grab. The grabbing man pays the penalty in the form of misery, the giver reaps the reward in the form of undiluted joy. The means to give somehow increases in the man who has a mind to give. The resources, the bodily effort and the mental disposition—all these become multiplied in the man of Yajña. His life flowers in being useful to others and fruits in enlightenment.

Kāmadhuk is also called Kāmadhenu. It is a mythological milch cow, having a woman’s head, a cow’s body and a bird’s wings. The usefulness of the human, the beast and the bird are all combined in it. The owner of this divine cow is believed to have all his wants immediately supplied. Allegorically this milch cow is nothing other than Yajña. The doer of Yajña is never in wants, he is always in
affluence. Whatever he wants to offer to others comes to him easily. His bounteous mind is the real Kāmadhenu. Because of this frame of mind he is ever in prosperity. Preyas and Sreyaṣ do both pay homage to him. This is the plan and purpose of the Cosmos.

What is the practical shape that can be given to the spirit of Yajna? The answer comes:

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।
परस्परं भावयन्ति: श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ ११

devān bhāvayatā 'nena te devā bhāvayantu vah ।
parasparam bhāvayantaḥ sreyaḥ param avāpsyatha. ॥

C Cherish the Devas with this; and may those Devas cherish you; thus cherishing one another, you shall reap the supreme good.

Etymologically the word deva means the one that is shining. In the human frame the senses are called devas. They are shining in their own way and they bring light to the dweller in the body. If food be not supplied to the body, the senses become weak and unable to function. If the senses be abused then also they get worn out. But when they are
properly cherished they become useful to bring knowledge and efficiency to man. To the extent man gets enlightened he looks after the senses with added wisdom and attention. Mutual fostering takes place this way causing good to both. Life becomes enriched thereby.

Highly evolved souls are called Devas wherever they happen to be. Cosmic forces are also called Devas because of their efficient functioning. The characteristic of the good and the enlightened is that they are always engaged in the welfare of all. It is Yajna to aid them in their noble and auspicious endeavours. The good and the noble in the world spontaneously come forward to serve the doers of good and to promote their noble causes. Those who sacrifice themselves completely to God get their reward accordingly. As the fuel that gives itself away to fire becomes fire in its turn, the devotees who surrender their everything to the Lord, become all Divinity. By sacrificing his all to God, man attains Godhood. This is the supreme good that Yajna brings.

Whatever you offer to the Lord is returned to you, magnified manifold. Take care, therefore, that you do not offer anything bad to him.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What becomes of him who makes no sacrifice but appropriates everything to himself? Here is the answer:—

इष्टान्भोगान्ति तो देया दास्यन्ते पद्धतिविशः ।
तैद्विजानप्रदायिभ्यो यो शुद्दके स्तन एव सः ॥ १२
iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā dāsyante yajñabhāvītāḥ ।
tair dattān apradāyai 'bhyo yo bhunkte stena eva saḥ ॥

iṣṭān desired bhogān objects hi hi so vo
yāḥ to you devāḥ the gods dāsyante dāsyante will
give yajñabhāvītāḥ nourished by sacrifice tāḥ
by them dattān dattān given apradāya without offering. ēṣāḥ: ebhyāḥ to them yāḥ who bhunkte
enjoys stenaḥ thief ēva verily saḥ he

"Cherished by Yajna, the Devas shall bestow on
you the enjoyments you desire." A thief verily is he
who enjoys what is given by them without returning
them anything.

This world abounds in facilities and amenities
that have come about as a result of the sacrifices of
several people. The new born baby is nursed and
brought up. That is "sacrifice" of the parents. The
youth receives education. It comes from sacrifice
made by the builders of educational institutions. The
food that man consumes, the house that he lives in,
the clothing that he wears, the means of transport
that is available to him—all these are the outcome of
sacrifices made by other people. While availing him-
self of all these advantages, man ought to ask him-
self as to how his own life is going to be useful to
the others. As are one’s sacrifices so are the bless-
ings that emanate from them. Whatever man does
must be more beneficial to others than to himself.
His doings become Yajna in proportion to their public
utility. When a balance is struck between receipts and gifts, a righteous man is he who gives more than he receives. Indebted is that man who appropriates more than he gifts. A thief is he who grabs everything and sacrifices nothing. This seemingly prosperous man ends his career as a non-entity. The enlightened do not place themselves in that pitiable position.

What is it that befits a noble life? What other thing is it that does not befit a noble life? The answer comes—

यज्ञसिष्टासिनाः सन्तो भुज्वंते सर्वंलिपिः।
भुज्जते ते लघु पापाः ये पचन्यात्मकारणात् ॥ २३

Yajñasíṣṭásināh saṁto muciṇyante sarvā kilbisaṅgh
bhūjñate te tv agham pāpaḥ ye pacanty ātmakārana
t

Yajñasíṣṭásināh who eat the remnants of the sacrifice सन्तो भुज्वंते सर्वंलिपिः sarvā kilbisaṅgh from all sins
भुज्जते bhūjñate eat te te those तु tu indeed agham

sin pāpaḥ sinful ones ye ye who pacantye cook

The good who eat the remains of Yajña are freed from all sins; but the sinful ones who cook food only for themselves, they verily eat sin.

Karma in itself is neither good nor evil. The motif behind it makes it good or evil. A deadly war waged with the object of exterminating the wicked is a virtuous act. A pious prayer to the Almighty for
a selfish end may not be a sin; but it is not so meritorious as a prayer offered for common weal. An action becomes sacred to the extent the ego gets obliterated. All thought, word and deed require to be directed to the glory of the Lord and the good of the world.

Partaking of food is an obligatory work. Cooking the daily food has therefore to go on as a matter of course. But one ought to think of and provide for the hungry and the needy as much as for oneself. He who is exclusive and self-centred in the procurement of food and in the partaking of it, is a sinful man. What he eats is nothing but sin. The bondage of sin that he creates for himself is boundless.

The king Yudhishthira performed a great RajasuyaYajña when he ascended the throne after the great war was over. The learned and the wise unanimously praised that Yajña as unparalleled. A mongoose having one side of its body turned golden, entered the sacrificial hall, rolled on the ground and pronounced the extollers as liars. But the assembled great men pleaded that they only spoke out their considered opinion and that they did not lie. The half-golden creature then explained itself: "A few years back a terrible famine raged in a particular province causing death to people in large numbers. A pious teacher, his wife, son and daughter-in-law lived a humble but dutiful life in that region. In the midst of privation the teaching went on regularly. When life was somehow lingering in that family, a scanty offering of flour was made to it by a devoted disciple. The famished four baked four pieces of bread with that flour, offered them to the Lord and sat to partake of the sanctified food, when there was a knock at the door. The family felt itself blessed because the deity of a guest had arrived just in time when they had the semblance of a meal to offer. All the four fading souls reverently parted with their little shares, intent on appeasing the increasing hunger of the new comer. He blessed them heartily for their hospitality and went his way. But the whole family perished
of hunger. Just then I entered their hut and rolled myself on the floor. The remnants of the flour there came in contact with a half of my body and turned it golden as you all see. It was so because of the purity of the motive and of the intensity of the spirit of self-sacrifice in their act of cooking and serving the guest. Since then I am on the look out for another Yajña of that type that would turn the remaining half of my body golden. What the King Yudhishthira is doing here is no great Yajña as it has not brought any change whatsoever on my body. The assembly meekly submitted to the view of the strange mongoose.

— Mahabharata

A day passed bereft of the performance of Yajña is a day gone to waste. Such is the injunction enjoined in the scriptures. An ideal family man is he who engages himself daily in the five great Yajñas. All the five of them form his nitya karma—obligatory work.

First and foremost among them is Deva Yajña—the worship of God. The day invariably begins with it. This has to be gone through devoutly and to the best of one’s knowledge. It may be augmented with rituals according to traditions and individual tastes.

The second in order is Rishi Yajña—the adoration of the Enlightened. The great ones who have had God-realization have not allowed their rare experiences to go into oblivion. Out of compassion for the ignorant humanity they have passed them on to posterity in the form of scriptures and sacred books. A devoted study, assimilation and practice of the principles contained in them constitute this Yajña. Expounding the holy scriptures with a devotional attitude to the ardent enquirers and devotees is also an aspect of this Yajña.
Pitru Yajna comes third in rank. It has its two aspects. The living parents have to be revered and devotedly served every day. He who pleases not his parents cannot please anybody here or hereafter. This is the first part of this Yajna. Thinking daily holy and auspicious thoughts for the welfare of the departed ancestors is its second part.

Fourthly comes Nara Yajna—the devoted service rendered to mankind. Individuals are the limbs of the community. At all levels and in all fields the interest of the limb should be subordinated to that of the main body. Any position reverse to this is definitely harmful. That man who places the public interest above the personal and acts accordingly is doing Nara Yajna. This age is in need of emphasis on this Yajna.

Bhuta Yajna or a reverent relationship with all the living beings completes the list. Since all creatures have come from God, the Cosmic Life, they have to be treated with due regard. The domestic animals and birds require to be tended on a par with the human. The cow-mother—Gomata is literally worshipped in this great land. Bhuta Yajna does not, however, preclude stern steps being taken against terrific and venomous creatures that prove a menace to human life.

It is God Himself who has become the entire Creation. All beings are therefore to be revered as the various manifestations of Narayana. The tiger-Narayana, however, has to be respected from a safe distance. —Sri Ramakrishna

Through the meticulous practice of these five great sacrifices—Pancha maha yajna the life of man
on earth becomes prosperous and auspicious. Again, all the activities in life can be converted into Yajna by the knowing ones. The how of it is being explained now:—

The Wheel of Life—14-16

अञ्जाःपतं भूतानि परंत्यादन्तसम्भवः ।
यज्ञाःपतं परंत्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्रः ॥ १४

वन्नात्, समस्तं भूतानि परंत्यात् वयम-समु-भतः ।
यज्ञाः, सरस्तः परंत्यः यज्ञः कर्म-तामु-उद्भतः ॥

annād bhavanti bhūtāni parjanyād annasamābhavah ।
yajñād bhavati parjanyo yajñāḥ karmasamudbhavah ॥

जन्यान् annāt from food समस्तं bhavanti come forth भूतानि bhūtāni beings परंत्यात् parjanyat from rain वन्नात्-भतः annasamābhavah production of food यज्ञाः yajñāt from sacrifice सरस्तः bhavati arises परंत्यः parjanyāḥ rain यज्ञः yajñāḥ sacrifice कर्मसमुद्रः karmasamudbhavah born of action

From food beings become; from rain is food produced; from Yajna rain proceeds; Yajna is born of karma.

Work performed with the right frame of mind gets converted into Yajna. The effect of that work assumes a subtle force which in the Vedic parlance is known as apūrva. This point can be clarified through two concrete examples. The sun converts the sea water into the invisible vapour which is equivalent to apūrva. In its turn the vapour becomes rain. The rubbish consigned to fire changes itself into the invisible carbon dioxide. It is apūrva in this state. It then forms food to the plants
assimilated by their leaves. Similarly man’s Yajna changes into mental force which alone in reality is apūrya. The syllables chanted in Yajna do not themselves become mantras or mental forces. It is the thought or the feeling that really constitutes the mental force—mantra. The purer the man and his motive, the stronger is the mental force. It is the intensity of the force of mind that becomes apūrya. Influenced and regulated by it the rainfall occurs to people on earth. The production of grains for food depends on the availability of water caused by rain. That beings thrive on food, is self-evident.

Karma brahmodbhavanī viddhi
brahmā kṣarasamudbhavanī

tasmāt sarvagatam brahma
nītyam yajñe pratiṣṭhitam

Know karma to have arisen from the Veda, and the Veda from the Imperishable. The all-pervading Veda is, therefore, ever centred in Yajna.
The phenomenon—jagat constituted of the three Gunas is known as Brahma or as Veda. It is also constituted of time, space and causation. This manifested universe expands into infinitude. It is therefore designated as all-pervading. Having come out of Brahmā the Supercosmic Intelligence, this cosmos itself beams with intelligence. For this reason it is styled as Veda. This phenomenon is again in a constant state of flux. As such, karma and the cosmos are equated. When karma is performed perfectly and with the best of motives it becomes Yajna. Eating for example may be done as an act of glorifying the Divinity enshrined in one. Living itself is turned into Yajna when directed to the service of the Divine. An earthly government becomes ideal when all people are law abiding. On a higher level still, when people take to the performance of Yajna, the functioning of the universe itself becomes elevated and sublime. The universe is therefore stated to be ever centred in Yajna. It is possible for man to convert the earth into heaven. And sacrifice is the sure means to it. The scheme of Nature is verily centred on Yajna.

Does any harm accrue to man if he does not engage himself in Yajna? The answer comes.—

एवं प्रवर्तितं च नातुवंतयतीसं यः ||
अघातुर्रित्रियाचारमो मोघं पार्थ स जीवः ति || १६
एवं प्र-वर्तितं च भवं न भव-वेत्तयतं इह सः ||
वच-वायुः इन्द्रिय-आ-राशि: मोघम् पार्थ सः जीवति ||
evam pravartitam cakram nā ’nuvartayat ’ha yah ||
agāyur indriyārāmo mogham pārtha sa jīvati ||


He who does not follow on earth the wheel thus revolving, sinful of life and rejoicing in the senses, be, O Partha, lives in vain.

Factories are set up for curing, treating and processing the various things. The wheel of Nature is likewise set up by the Lord for nursing, training, disciplining and elevating all beings at varying levels of existence. A pupil who declines to be educated does not derive the benefit of his being schooled. A visit to a town is as bad as no visit if the visitor fails to see or do anything there. Having come into this world if man does not do what is expected of him, his advent amounts to nothing. As a drone he drags on a wretched existence. He is no asset but a burden and dead weight to society. Instead of fulfilling, he frustrates the divine plan and purpose of Nature. Man ought to be a fulfilment and not a failure in life.

Is there nobody who is an exception to the wheel of action revolving to progression? The answer comes:

Atman is Beyond Action — 17-18

शस्लिङ्गात्सर्वस्वरूपे यात्मात्मः तत्सवपूर्वः मानवः ||
आत्मसेवः च संचेतस्तत्त्वं कार्यं न विद्यते || १७
yas tv atmāratīr eva syād atmātpitaḥ ca mānavaḥ  
ātman eva ca saṁstutas tasya kāryam na vidyate ||

yaḥ who tu but अत्मरति: atmāratīḥ rejoices in the Self एव eva only स्वात् syāt may be अत्मवृत्स: atmātpitaḥ satisfied in the Self च ca and मानव: mānavaḥ the man जात्मनि ātmani in the Self एव eva only च ca and संतुष्ट: saṁstustah contented तत्व tasya his कार्यम् kāryam work to be done न na not विद्यते vidyate is

But the man who rejoices in the Self, is satisfied with the Self, and is centred in the Self, for him verily there is no obligatory duty.

Prakṛti or Nature is constituted of karma. But there is no karma whatsoever in Atman. Actionlessness and Atman are one and the same. Mind is in fact a phase of Prakṛti. Karma is therefore going on constantly in it. But there is a speciality in the functioning of the mind. When it impinges on the external world with the aid of the senses or even without their aid, its activities are on the increase. But when it revolves back on the Self or Atman, its activities automatically diminish. The last of all of its activities is to get established in Atman. The river is active until it reaches the ocean. On merging in it, its functioning is over. Likewise the functioning of the mind is over in its being resolved in Atman. Bliss is the characteristic of Atman. That mind which is set in the Self is therefore ever satisfied, pacified and blissful. The finale of all activities is for the mind to rest in Atman.
All beings are tending towards this goal consciously or unconsciously. To the mind merged in Atman, there is no duty.

The minute hand and the hour hand in a clock are inter-related. Though they appear separate, they get united also hourly. The Jivatman and the Paramatman seem separate. In time they get united.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does not the man established in the Self seek anything from society? The answer comes:

नैव तस्य क्र्तेनार्थो नाक्र्तेनेह कथन ।
न चास्य सर्वभूतेः अथवदृश्यपाश्रयः ॥ १८ ।

न एव तस्य क्र्तेन अर्थः: न अ-क्र्तेन इह का-कथन ।
न न अस्य सर्व-द्रूषितु । का-स्वितु अर्थ-वि-अप-ध्व-अश्वः ॥

nai ’va tasya kṛtenā ’rtho nā ’krtene ’ha kascana ।
na cā ’syā sarvabhūteṣu kascid arthavyapāśrayah ॥

न na not ēva even तस्य tasya of him क्रतेन kṛtena
by action अर्थः: arthah concern न na not अक्रतेन akṛtena
by actions not done इह iha here कास्य kascana any न
na not च ca and अस्य asya of this man सर्वभूतेः sarvabhūteṣu in all beings कास्य kascit any अर्थावियपाश्रयः arthavyapāśrayah depending for any object

For him there is in this world no object to acquire by doing an action; nor is there any loss by not doing an action; nor has he to depend on anybody for anything.

In sound sleep man is self-sufficient. He has nothing to seek from any entity. But it is a negative state based on nescience. It is temporary. The spiritually enlightened man, on the other hand,
enjoys infinite beatitude. Naught else is there for him to obtain. This *Brahmāvasta* is never again lost. The *Brahma-jnani* therefore has nothing to seek from man or God.

One of the signs of the enlightened man is that he is enjoying boundless bliss within himself. The surface of the ocean seems boisterous, but at the bottom it is all calmness. Even such is the state of affair of the *Jnani*.

— Sri Ramakrishna

By mere affectation this supreme state cannot be reached. One has to make oneself competent for it by diligent preparation. *Karma* yoga is the means for it. How shall one do action? The answer comes:

**What the Spiritual Aspirant ought to do—19-26**

 Benton सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचारः।
असन्नो खाचरनकर्मेण परमामोऩि पूर्वः॥ १९॥

तस्माद असक्तं सततम् कार्यम् शर्यम् कर्म नमः-आ-चयः।
व-नक्तः हि आ-चयतं कर्मम् परम् आरु-नोऩि पूर्वः॥

`tasmād asaktah satatam kāryam karma samācara ।
asakto hy ācaran karma param āpnoti pūrusah ॥`

तस्माद तस्मात therefore असक्त without attachment सततम् satatam always कार्यम् kāryam which should be done कर्म karma action समाचार samācara perform असक्त: asaktah without attachment हि hi because आचरन् ācaran performing कर्म karma action परम् param the Supreme आपनोति āpnoti attains पूर्वः pūrusah man

Therefore, constantly perform your obligatory duty without attachment; for, by doing duty without attachment man verily obtains the Supreme.
Because of the incessant beating of the heart, bodily existence goes on effectively. But man gives no thought whatsoever to the beating of the heart. Several other essential activities have to be carried on in similar ways, free from attachment. Absence of attachment leads to the pacification of the mind. Work and rest go on side by side. Mind made calm this way becomes capable of grasping the Self. Calmness of mind is not for him who neglects duty. Calmness is a prerequisite for Self-knowledge.

How are we to reconcile the worldly entanglements and engagements with spiritual detachment? See how the carpenter’s housewife busies herself with all and sundry. With one hand she pushes the paddy to be pounded in the mortar; with the other hand she embraces and suckles her baby. At the same time she bargains with a customer for the flattened rice. In the midst of all of these activities her mind is on the hand pushing the paddy lest the pestle should hurt it. Likewise do your worldly activities; but in the midst of them keep the mind fixed on the Lord. Deviate not on any account from Godly path.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Have there ever been people who, in the midst of the taxing earthly activities, were absorbed in the Self? The answer comes:—

कर्मणेव हि संसिद्धिमाध्यमः जनकाद्याः ।
लोकसंग्रहमेच्छापि संपत्त्यन्त्रतेस्यसि ॥ २०

कर्मणा एव हि सामू-विघ्न-विद्या आ-एक्टः जनक-आद्याः ।
लोक संग्रहमा एव आपि सामू-पक्षृन् क्षेत्य समीम्यः ॥

καρμαναί 'वा हि samsiddhim āsthitā janaκādayaḥ ।
lokaśanagraham evā 'pi sampasyaṁ kartum arhasi ॥

κर्मणा karmanā by action et eva only hि hi verily संसिद्धिम् samsiddhim perfection आस्थिता: āsthitāḥ attain-
ed जनकाद्य janakādayah Janaka and others लोकसमग्रहम lokasamgraham protection of the people एव अष्ट.evā api only सप्तयन् sampasyan having in view सप्तयन् kartum to perform अर्हसि arhasi thou shouldst

Janaka and others indeed achieved perfection by action; having an eye to the guidance of men also you should perform action.

Raja-rishis such as Janaka and Asvapati were engaged in the active and efficient administration of their kingdoms. Incidentally they took part in several other activities conducive to people’s welfare. But their aim in life was more than that. They diligently applied themselves to Self-knowledge and got it.

There is an additional advantage in the spiritually enlightened taking to altruistic work. The ignorant cannot guide society any more than the blind lead the blind. But the enlightened are the best servants of society. The nature of karma is also very well known to them. Efficient work on right lines can be turned out by them. Following in their wake, ordinary men set themselves to their duties in all earnestness. Taking this important factor into account, the elite should ever engage themselves in the discharge of their dharma to the best of their ability.

The world goes its way waiting for guidance from nobody. A pertinent question may therefore be put whether concern for the world is not a self-created problem. This doubt is hereby met —
Whatever a great man does is followed by others; people go by the example he sets up.

Being eminent with virtues is a rare gift which comes from God. In one so imbued godly qualities are in evidence. Such a man is viewed a model to society. The world feels inclined to walk in his way. His responsibility is therefore very great. Man is to society what a limb is to the body. As the action of a limb affects the body, the action of a man affects the society. In public interest a person of eminence has therefore to put forth his best. Slighting or allowing godly gifts go to waste, amounts to slighting God Himself.

A person took his ailing son to a physician for medical consultation. The man asked him to bring the boy again on the following day. After posing to examine the patient for a while the healer advised the father against giving sweets to the sickly boy. “This could have been mentioned at the very first visit instead of making me walk twice carrying the boy,” complained
the parent. The doctor explained, "But then, my man, there was kept here yesterday a plate of candy. My advice might have been mistaken by your son for selfishness." The responsibility of those who guide the society is very great.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How then about the responsibility of the Lord Himself? The answer follows —

न मे पार्थार्थि कर्तव्यं तिष्ठ लोकेषु किंवन्।
नानवासंवासवां वर्तं एवं च कर्मणि॥ २२

न मे पार्थ अति कर्तव्यम् तिष्ठ लोकेषु किंवन्।
न अन्तःवर्त वाप्र नात्मकः अप्र अत्यंत्मकः वर्तं एवं च कर्मणि॥

Na me pārthā 'sti kartavyam trisu lokēsu kimcana
na 'navāptam avaśptavyam varta eva ca karmanī
t

न na not मे me my पार्थ pārtha O Partha असि asti
is कर्तव्यम् kartavyam to be done (duty) तिष्ठ trisu in the
three लोकेषु lokēsu worlds किंवन kimcana anything न na
not अनवासं anavāptam unattained अत्यंत्मकं avāśptav-
yam to be attained केवल varte am एव्यeva also च ca and
कर्मणि karmanī in action

There is nought in the three worlds, O Partha, that has not been done by Me, nor anything unattained that might be attained; still I engage in action. 22

Iswara or the Saguna Brahma is immanent in the universe. Because of His proximity there are orderliness and precision in all the happenings in the cosmos. These happenings, however, are all impersonal. Incessant activities are evident even in His Incarnations as Rama, Krishna and others. Sri Krishna had nothing to gain or lose in the Mahabharata warfare. Still the part He played in it was
far more than those of all the other characters put together. And why did he do so? He gives the answer:—

यदि वर्तेत य जाते कर्मण्यपतित्रित: ||
सम वर्तमानुवर्तीते समुप्य: पार्थ सर्वेष: || २३

यदि हि अहंम न वर्तेयम् जाते कर्मणि अ-वतित्रित: ||
सम कर्मे श्रृवशंकिते समुप्य: पार्थ सर्वेव: ||

_yadi hy aham na varteyam jatu karmany atandritah ||
mama vartmā 'nuvartante manusyaḥ pārtha sarvasah ||

_yadi yadi if hi surely aham I n na not varteyam engage in action jatu ever karmani in action atandritah unwearied mama my vartma path ahamvartante anuvartante follow suphya: manusyaḥ men pārthē pārtha O Partha sarvēśa: sarvasah in every way

If ever I did not engage in work relentless, O Partha, men would in every respect follow My path.

Staunch adherence to good and devotion to duty are the characteristics of the great. But the ordinary people in society do not usually feel inclined to emulate the merits in the eminent. If there be any lapses in them such as idleness, procrastination and indifference to duty, these are readily caught by the ordinary. They even cite these shortcomings in the great as precedents. Sri Krishna is therefore exemplary in His conduct. In all of His doings He is a model to mankind.

Is there any harm if perchance the Lord ever deviated from dharma? Here is the answer:—
These worlds would perish if I did not do action; I should be the cause of confusion of species and I should destroy these beings.

The potentiality of a seed is known only when it sprouts and grows. The worth of a man is known only through his actions.

To be devoid of function is equivalent to be dead. The difference between the two is very little. The body of the dead disappears while that of the functionless drags on a wretched existence, proving itself a burden to society.

Fostering the body is common to high and low. The difference, therefore, between the two cannot be known merely from bodily existence. For, if life got confined to the physical level only, there would be no difference between the refined and the crude, between the enlightened and the ignorant, between
the virtuous and the vicious. This levelling down would mean confusion of species.

Through the meticulous performance of one’s dharma one’s attainments get exemplified. The level of one’s evolution becomes self-evident through the discharge of one’s duty. Where karma is kept in abeyance, the distinctions get lost. If Iswara, the Cosmic Intelligence does not induce His beings in their respective functions confusion of species is bound to take place, leading to cosmic calamity.

Does not drudging in karma indicate that all beings are prosaically harnessed to action? No, it is not so. Distinctions reveal themselves as follows:—

सत्काः कर्मणःविद्वांसी यथा कुर्विन्ति भारत ।
कुर्भिद्वांस्वतःकामस्विनिकीलोकसंग्रहम् ॥ २५

सत्काः कर्मणि अन्विद्वांसः यथा कुर्विन्ति भारत ।
कृत्योद्विद्वांस्वतः तथा व-सत्काः चिकीर्षुः लोक-समृ-प्रहम् ॥

saktāḥ karmany avidvāmso yathā kurvanti bhārata ।
kuryād vidvāms tathā 'saktas cikīṛṣur lokasamgraham'॥

सत्क: saktāḥ attached कर्मणि karmani to action
अविद्वांस: avidvāmsah the ignorant यथा yathā as कुर्विन्ति
kurvanti act भारत bhārata O Bharata कृत्यत kuryat should act विद्वान् vidvān the wise तथा tatha so असक्तः
asaktāḥ unattached चिकीर्षुः cikīṛṣuḥ wishing लोकसंग्रहम्
lokasamgraham the welfare of the world

As the unenlightened act from attachment to action, O Bharata, so should the enlightened act without attachment, desirous of the guidance of the multitude.

25
Difference between man and man is in the sort of desire harboured at heart. The enlightened one is desireless. Desire for the fruits of actions goads the multitude to activity. The enlightened man has no personal motive. Out of compassion for the ignorant he ceaselessly works. Following his example the others do their work.

Has the enlightened man anything to guard himself against? The answer comes —

न बुद्धिमेष्टे जनयेद्वारां कर्मसङ्किनाम् ।
जोपकेर्तस्वर्णमाणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचारस् ॥ २६

न बुद्धि-मेद्वा जनयेद्वा अज्ञातां कर्म-सङ्किनाम् ।
जोपयेत् सर्व-कर्माणि विद्वान् युक्त समु श-चरस् ॥

na buddhi bhedam janayed ajñānām karma sanginām ā
jośayet sarva karmāṇi vidvān yuktah samācaran

न na not बुद्धिमेष्टे buddhi bhedam unsettlement in
the minds जनयेत janayet should produce अज्ञातां ajñā-
नाम of the ignorant कर्मसङ्किनाम karma sanginām of the
persons attached to actions जोपयेत् jośayet should
engage सर्व कर्माणि sarva karmāṇi all actions विद्वान् vidvān
the wise युक्त युक्तah balanced समाचारस् samācaran per-
forming

Let not the wise man unsettle the mind of ignorant people attached to karma. By doing persistently and precisely let the wise induce the others in all activities.

Doing duty for duty’s sake devoid of desire, is an exalted state given to the enlightened only. This philosophy of action is too high for the common man to understand. He either works for results or
wants to avoid exertion on one plea or another. To work for results is far superior to being given to laziness born of inertia. The indolent man must be roused to ambitions and exertions leading to pleasures and prosperity. Teaching disinterested service to him will unsettle his understanding. Then there is the man who suffers from philosophical indigestion. He is given to an escape-mentality from actions on the ground that they are all wrought with pain and evil. His creed is to pose quietism which is a pitfall in Vedanta. Care should be taken that no confusion is created in the minds of the indolent and the ignorant. Himself active, the enlightened man should induce all to intense activity.

What is the cause of attachment which is so deep-rooted in the common man? It is analysed as follows:—

**How to Root out the Ego—27-32**

प्रक्ते: क्रियासानि गुणी: कर्माणि सर्वशः ।
अहंकारविमृद्धत्मा कर्ताहिंसिति सन्यते ॥ २७
प्र-क्ते: क्रियासानि गुणी: कर्माणि सवे-सः ।
अहंकार-सर्व-नूढ-आस्या कर्ता अहं इति सन्ये-थे ॥

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvasaḥ ।
ahaṃkāra vimūḍhātmā kartā 'ham iti manyate ॥ ॥*

प्रक्ते: prakṛteḥ of nature क्रियासानि kriyamāṇāni are performed गुणी: guṇaiḥ by the qualities कर्माणि kar-
माणि actions सर्वशः sarvasaḥ in all cases अहंकारविमृद्धत्मा
ahaṃkāra vimūḍhātmā one whose mind is deluded by
egoism कर्ता kartā doer अहम् aham । इति iti thus चान्यते
manyate thinks
The Gunas of Prakriti perform all karma. With the understanding clouded by egoism, man thinks, "I am the doer."

Karma is inherent in Nature which is constituted of the three Gunas — Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. But there is no karma whatsoever in Atman. The ignorant man is incapable of distinguishing between the action-ridden Nature and the actionless Self.

It is egoism to identify the Self with the non-Self. Two trains stand side by side in a railway station. A passenger in one train fixes his gaze on the other. When the other train moves the man fancies that his own vehicle moves. Likewise the mobility of Prakriti is imposed on the immobile Atman. Egoism is brought about by mistaking Prakriti for Atman. Bondage persists as long as egoism lasts. The egoistic man thinks of himself as the doer while actually he is not. Egoism and agency are the outcome of ignorance.

When an onion is peeled continually all skin goes away and no substance is left. Similarly on analysing the ego it is found to be no entity.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Then how about the enlightened man? The elucidation comes —

\[
\text{तत्स्वचतु महाभाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोऽः} \quad ॥ ॥
\text{गुण गुणेऽद्वित्तिः सत्य न सज्जहे} \quad ॥ ॥
\text{तत्र्विद् छ महाभाहे गुण-कर्म विभागयोः} \quad ॥
\text{गुण गुणेऽवत्स्त्वे इति सत्य न सज्जहे} \quad ॥
\]

*tattvavit tu mahābhāho gunakarma vibhāgayoh* ॥

*gunā guṇesu varṣanta iti mañā na sajjate* ॥
तत्त्वविद् tattvavit the knower of truth तु tu but महाबाहो mahābāho O mighty-armed गुणकर्मविभागयो: guna karma vibhāga-yoh of the divisions of qualities and functions गुणं gunaḥ the qualities (in the shape of senses) गुणेः gunaḥ amidst the qualities (in the shape of objects) वर्तते vartante remain इति iti thus मत्वा matvā knowing न na not सज्जते sajjate is attached

But, O mighty-armed, the one intuitive into the nature of Guna and karma knows that Gunas as senses merely abide with Gunas as objects, and does not become entangled.

There is a kinship between the senses and their respective objects. They are both constituted of the same elements and of the same Gunas. The element fire for example has its own combination of Gunas. Emitting light is characteristic of fire. The combination of Gunas in fire takes one form as the sense of sight and another form as the object of sight. Because of the sameness of nature in both of them, sense experience becomes possible. And this is the fact in regard to all the five senses. Atman which is consciousness, remains unaffected by the sensations, even as Akasa is substratum to the dashing clouds. The sage who realizes this truth is free from entanglement.

What is the attitude of the enlightened towards the ignorant? It is explained:—

श्रुण्तेऽप्रेषणसमूहः सक्षन्ते गुणकर्मसः
तात्सत्सत्सविदो मन्दानकुलस्तनविन विचालेभे

॥ २९
prakrtēte guna sammūdhāḥ sajjante guna karmasu

prakrtē prakrtēh of nature गुणसमूहः guna sammūdhāḥ persons deluded by the gunas सज्जन्ते sajjante are attached गुणकर्मसु guna karmasu in the functions of the qualities वान् tān those अक्रत्सनविदाः akṛtsnavidāh of imperfect knowledge मन्दानं mandān the foolish क्रस्नविद् kṛtsnavit man of perfect knowledge न na not विचालयेत् vicālayet should unsettle

Those deluded by the Ganas of Prakriti get attached to the functions of the Ganas. The man of perfect knowledge should not unsettle the mediocre whose knowledge is imperfect.

No differentiation can be made between the skin and the pulp in a tender fruit. It is only after it matures and ripens that this difference comes about. Even so the mediocre make no distinction between the action-fabricated Prakriti and the actionless Atman. They are therefore entangled in karma. Attempt at discrimination between Atma and Prakriti will only lead to confusion of understanding. There is no harm in their performing their duties with attachment They should therefore be encouraged to be more and more active. Work with attachment has its place in the evolution of man. But the way of the spiritual aspirant should be as follows:—

मधि सर्वाजि कर्माणि संन्यासायात्मचेतस ।
निरासीनिन्मये श्रूत्वा युज्यते विचलत्वः ॥ ३०
mayi sarvāni karmāṇi samnyasyā dhyātmacetasā
nirāśr nirmamo bhūtvā yudhyasva vigatajvarah

Surrendering all actions to Me, with your thoughts resting on Self, freed from hope and selfishness and cured of mental fever, engage in battle.

The more one attunes one’s mind to truth, the more one gains in equilibrium. The truth is, the Lord is the invisible propeller of all actions in the universe. He is the true owner of everything sentient and insentient. Man’s prerogative is to know this truth and adjust his life activities accordingly. His mental fever gets pacified in that way. Further, efficiency in the execution of duty increases in him.

Iswara, the Lord of the universe smiles on two derisory occasions. When the son is sinking on his death bed, the doctor assures the desponding mother, “Don’t be afraid; I’m here to save your son.” This is the first occasion on which God is moved to smile. Two brothers survey and share a land saying, “That portion is yours and this mine.” This is the second occasion on which the Lord smiles.

— Sri Ramakrishna

There are aspirants who do not understand that the real doer and owner of everything is Iswara; how about them? The statement comes:—
Those who ever abide in this teaching of Mine, full of sraddha and free from cavilling, they too are released from actions.

A wayfarer is unable to find out by himself the intricate path to his destination. But he places faith on those who go that way and follows their instructions. By this means he is sure to achieve the end. A pilgrim in the path of spirituality is of mediocre understanding in that field. It is no disadvantage if he with sraddha entrusts himself to the adepts in yoga. Even he gets freed from the shackles of karma.

Sraddha is a state of mind conducive to all round advancement. Ardently applying oneself to an undertaking, to be meek and accommodative with the others, placing faith in fellow beings—these are all characteristics of sraddha. To be submissive to the preceptor is the mark of having sraddha in him.
Earnestly digesting the understandable portions in the Bhagavad Gita and hoping that the abstruse portions will soon become lucid—this is placing sraddha in this great book.

It is cavilling if one becomes intolerant of others obtaining what is not obtained by oneself. Merits in one, if any, get melted away if one is given to cavilling. Conversely, advancement is ensured for one who delights in the prosperity of others.

Haughty people there are who deride the ignorance, credulity and superstition in others. They are proud of their own attainments. Such people hardly ever make any progress in spirituality. On the other hand, the humble and the meek who are ever dependent on the Lord, get over their defects, if any, very soon. The gracious Lord sees to it that His erring devotees come round soon.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What becomes of the callous and the impious?

Their position is explained:

\[ ye \text{ tv etad abhyasūyanto nā 'nutiṣṭhanti me matam } \]
\[ sarvajñāna vimūḍhāṁs tān viddhi naṣṭān acetasāḥ ]

ye ye those who ṣu tu but etat this abhyasūyantaḥ carping at na not anuṣṭhānti anuṣṭhānti practise me my matam matam teaching sarvajñāna vimūḍhān deluded in all knowledge tānaḥ tān them viddhi know naṣṭān naṣṭān ruined acetasāḥ deoid of discrimination
But those who carp at My teaching and act not thereon, deluded in all knowledge and devoid of discrimination, know them to be ruined.

Fire hurts the one who mishandles it and it cooks food for another who utilizes it properly. Losers are they who do not know of this law of nature. Moral and spiritual laws are not different from the laws of nature. Those who avail themselves of these laws progress and prosper, while those others who defy and break them come to grief and debasement.

Cat’s claws and teeth are benevolent to the kitten and malevolent to the rat. Similarly maya, the power of the Lord, is beneficial to His devotees and harmful to the malefactors.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Laws of life pertaining to all, inclusive of the enlightened and the ignorant, are as follows —

Spiritual Practices Conforming to Dispositions — 33 35

सद्यं चेष्टेते स्वस्याः प्रक्तेष्वानवानपि ।
प्रक्तिः यात्तिः भूतानि निग्रहः किः करिष्यति ॥ ३३
सद्यं चेष्टेते स्वस्या प्रहः शान-नान् लापि ।
प्रक्तिः यात्तिः भूतानि नि प्रह निग्रह करिष्यति ॥

sadrśam cestate svasyāḥ prakṛter jñānavān api ।
prakṛtim yānti bhūtāni nigrahah kim karisyati ॥

सद्यं sadrśam in accordance chetate cestate acts
स्वस्या svasyāḥ of his own प्रक्तेष्वान prakṛteh of nature
ज्ञानवान jñānavān a wise man अवि api even प्रक्तिः prakṛtim to nature यात्तिः yānti follow भूतानि bhūtāni
beings निग्रह nigrahah restraint निग्रह kim what करिष्यति karisyati will do
Even a wise man behaves in conformity with his own nature; beings follow nature; what shall restraint avail?

Some plants grow tall and slender while others shrubby and stout; some fruits taste sweet while others bitter. The varying natures in the vegetation cannot be changed, but they can be augmented and enriched. Variation in nature is much more pronounced in the human than in the other species. Dispositions are divergent even among the enlightened. One is an introvert and another an extrovert. A saint is given to devotion and a sage to discrimination. The yogi disciplines the mind while the man of action lovingly serves mankind. Attaining perfection is their thread of unity in the midst of mental variations. No violence should be done to the vagaries even in saints. Each must be allowed and encouraged to evolve in line with his temperament.

The earthy among men are bound fast to things mundane. Obstructing their worldly ways avails nothing. Inducing them to evolve in tune with their nature aids their growth. Slow sublimation of their nature is the greatest service that can be rendered to them.

An individual complained to Sri Ramakrishna that he found it impossible to turn his mind Godward. It was asked of him as to what was the thing or being that he loved most. The man pondered for a while and said that he was inordinately attached to a goat that he reared. A suggestion was then made to him to think of that goat as imbued with divinity and meditate on it. The man did so and had his mind slowly turned Godward.

— Sri Ramakrishna
Each man is an embodiment of his own nature. If following one's nature is the proper way for salvation, then self-control and discipline become purposeless. The scriptural injunctions, "Do this, refrain from that," etc., are unnecessary. Objections of this kind may pertinently arise. Clarification of this issue now ensues —

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थं रागद्वेषं व्यवसितोऽि
तयोऽ् वसम अगच्छेति भयं परिपन्धिनोऽि ॥ ३४

इन्द्रियस्य इन्द्रियस्य अर्थं राग द्वेषी वि जव स्थिती
तयोऽ् न वसम अ गच्छेतु ती हि भः भो दोरी परिपन्धिनोऽि

\[\text{indriyasye } \text{indriyasya } \text{artho } \text{rāga-dveṣaṃ } \text{vyavasthitau } \text{tayor } \text{na } \text{vasam } \text{āgačchet } \text{tau } \text{hy } \text{asya } \text{paripanthinau } \text{ii} \]

इन्द्रियस्य indriyasya to the senses इन्द्रियस्य इन्द्रियस्य of the senses अर्थं arthe in the object समेत्योऽ् rāga-dveṣaṃ attachment and aversion व्यवसित तयोऽ् tayoh of these two न na not वसम वसम स्वयं गच्छेत् अगच्छेत should come under ती तै तै these two हि hi verily अस्य asya his परिपन्धिनी paripanthinau foes

Attachment and aversion of the senses for their respective objects are natural, let none come under their domination; they are verily his enemies.  34

Life in the body and in the senses is not an end in itself, it is only a passing phase. Senses have been serviceable for the evolution of the subhuman into the human. Now the goal for the human is to evolve into the divine. Senses are stumbling-blocks to it. They are therefore labelled the enemies of the spiritual aspirant. They require to be transcended. It is from attachments and aversions that they get
their power to function. When these dualities are done away with, the senses cease to be enemies. Likes and dislikes are created by the egoistic attitude. When this hurtful attitude is changed into the helpful devotional attitude, likes and dislikes melt away; the senses in their turn get tamed down.

The function of the scriptures is to exhort man to change his attitude from the base to the noble. When the life for the individual is converted into the life for the Lord, the senses cease to be enemies.

When can desire and hatred, the enemies of man be destroyed? These propensities of the mind prove themselves enemies when directed to worldly affairs. They become allies when directed Godward. Desires for worldly things must be converted into the desire for God. Let man be annoyed with God and angry with Him for not revealing Himself. Desire and anger cannot be totally destroyed, but they can be transmuted; then they become harmless.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Attachment and aversion cause harm in other respects also. The evil ensuing from them is enunciated:—

\[
\text{श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विद्युणः परमात्मस्वतृत्वितात् ।}
\text{स्वधर्मं निधनं श्रेयः परमात्मं भयावहः ॥ ३५}
\text{श्रेयान् स्व-धर्मं: विद्युणः पर-धर्मस्व-धर्मितात् ।}
\text{स्व-धर्मं निधनम् श्रेयः पर-धर्मं: भय-व-वहः ॥}
\]

\[s\text{श्रेयान् svadharma vigunah paradharmat svanusthitat \ ।}
\text{svadharmane nidhanam sreyah paradharmo bhayavahah ॥}

ṣreyān sreyān better स्वधर्म: svadharmaḥ one's own duty विद्युण: vigunah devoid of merit परधर्म: paradhar- 

\[māt than the duty of another स्वतृत्व: svanusthitāt
tan than the duty of another स्वतृत्व: svanusthitāt
than well-discharged स्वधर्मम् svadharma in one's own duty निधनम् nidhanam death अेब: sreyah better परधर्मम् paradharmah another's duty भयावह bhayāvahah fraught with fear

One's own dharma, though imperfect, is better than the dharma of another well discharged. Better death in one's own dharma; the dharma of another is full of fear.

Man's nature is to have recourse to what gives pleasure and to recoil from what gives pain. Arjuna's temporary set back illustrates this position. From boyhood onwards he had been trained for the dharma of a ruler and a warrior. He delighted in being trained that way, because it was his own duty, svadharma. The impending righteous war demanded his fighting against the revered grandsire, which he did not like; he even hated it. At this juncture he preferred to be a recluse, subsisting on alms. Nothing good accrues to one by changing one's svadharma, prompted by fear or hatred. Abandoning one's duty and embracing that of another, enticed by ease and pleasure are equally harmful. Vacillation of the mind is born of weakness; it depraves man more and more. Steadfastness to duty on the other hand, strengthens man and aids the building of character. Constancy is life and vacillation death. Through firm devotion to duty man gains in excellence. Arjuna was about to lose his manliness through a change of dharma. Even if he had lived a hermit's life as best he could, his conscience would have been clouded; and that was worse than death. He would
have proved himself a coward if he had changed his dharma. Man should always evolve in the make up best suited to him.

A professional farmer does not lose courage and continues to cultivate even if there be a terrible drought for twelve long years. But a weaver who takes to tilling for a change of occupation gets disheartened if rain fails for one season. A true devotee does not deviate from the path of devotion for any reason whatsoever. In life and death he relies on the Lord.

— Sri Ramakrishna

In chapter two stanzas 62 and 63 and in chapter three stanza 34, the root cause of all evils has been unmistakably pointed out. Still Arjuna raises that question again here for further elucidation:—

The Origin of Sin—36-43

अजुन ज्ञान

अथ केन प्रयुक्तो याम पापम चरति पूर्वः ।
अनिच्छाचष्टि वार्षेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ १६

अथ केन प्र-याम-तः अयम् पापम् चरति पूर्वः ।
अनु-चछ्च्चन् अपि वार्षेय वज्जति इव नियोजितः ॥

arjuna uvāca

atha kena prayukto 'yam pāpam carati pūrṣaḥ ।
anicchann api vārṣpeya balād iva niyojitaḥ ॥

अजुन ज्ञान arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

अथ atha now केन kena by which प्रयुक्त: prayuktah impelled अयम् ayam this पापम् pāpam sin चरति carati does पूर्वः pūrṣaḥ man अनिच्छ्चन् anicchan not wishing अपि api even वार्षेय vārṣpeya O Varshneya बलाद balād by force इव iva as it were नियोजित: niyojitaḥ constrained
Arjuna said:

But dragged on by what does a man commit sin, unwillingly though, O Varshneya, constrained as it were by force?

Sri Krishna is here addressed as Varshneya because of his coming of the Vrishni race.

Shri Bhagavān uvāca

kāma esa krodha esa rajoguṇa samudbhavaḥ
mahāsano mahāpāpmā viddhy enam iha vairiṇam

Shri Bhagavān uvāca Sri Bhagavān said:

kāmāḥ desire esa: eṣaḥ this krodhaḥ anger esa: eṣaḥ this rajoguṇa samudbhavaḥ born of the Rajo-guṇa mahāsanaḥ all-devouring mahāpāpmā all-sinful viddhi know enam this iha here vairiṇam the foe

The Blessed Lord said:

It is desire, it is wrath begotten by the Rajo-guṇa; all-consuming, all-sinful, know this as the foe here on earth.

Desire is the most destructive foe of man. When this desire is obstructed it transforms itself into wrath. The Lord therefore treats both as one. It takes its origin in Rajas and aggravates it further. As fire cannot be satiated by feeding it with fuel, desire
cannot be appeased by supplying it with sense-objects. The more it gluts, the more it craves. Sin increases in direct proportion to desire. It is therefore Satan, the arch-enemy of man.

Time and again man gets humiliated because of his being victim to lust and greed. Still he is unable to recoil from them and give his thought to God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

How desire clouds man's understanding is depicted now:

धूमेनातिरियते वहिर्यादंशो मलेन च ।
यथोल्लोचनातो गभरस्तथा तेनेदास्त्रवंतः ॥ ३८

धूमेन स्व-क्षिप्ते कहि: यथा या-दर्शे: मलेन च ।
यथा उल्लोचना आ-शुद्ध: गर्भः: तथा तेन हेदम् अर-त-सर ॥

dhūmenā 'vriyate vahnir yathā 'darso malena ca ।
yatho 'lbena 'vṛto garbhas tathā tene 'dam āvrtam ॥

धूमेन dhūmena by smoke अआतिरियते āvriyate is enve-

loped चहुँि: vahnih fire यथा yathā as जाद्वः: ādarṣaḥ a

mirror मलेन malena by dust च ca and यथा yathā as उल्लो

ulbena by the amnion आश्चर्यः: āvṛtaḥ enveloped गर्भः:

garbhaḥ embryo तथा tathā so. तेन tena by it हेदम idam

this आश्चर्र्यः: āvṛtam enveloped

As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by
dust, as an embryo by the womb, so is this covered by

that.

The resplendent Atman is veiled in desire, which is in three grades corresponding to the predominance of the three Gunas. Desire dominated by Sattva guna is like fire being choked with smoke. A little blowing will set it ablaze and the smoke will disappear.
Discrimination likewise drives out the thin cloud of \textit{sattvic} desire and reveals Atman as It is. Some effort is required to remove the dust on a mirror. Even so \textit{rajasic} desire demands strenuous attempt for its removal. Lastly \textit{tamasic} desire is compared with an embryo in the womb. Time and regulated living are the factors for the embryo to develop and be delivered as a baby. Time and self-preparations are necessary to eliminate the deep-rooted \textit{tamasic} desire.

As a patch of cloud hides the blazing sun, \textit{maya} in the form of desire hides Iswara. When the cloud disappears the sun becomes visible. When desire disappears Iswara reveals Himself.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Desire is further analysed:—

\begin{quote}
\textit{अतः ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञातिनो नित्यवैरिणा।}
\textit{कामह्र्षेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूर्वेणानलेन च} II 39
\textit{वा-प्र-तम् ज्ञानम् एतेन ज्ञातिनः नित्य-वैरिणा।}
\textit{काम-ह्र्षेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूर्वेण अनलेन च} II
\end{quote}

\textit{āvrtam jñānam etena jñānino nityavairinā।}
\textit{kāmarūpena kaunteya dusprūrena 'nalenac ca} II

\textit{वा-प्र-तम् āvṛtam enveloped ज्ञानम् jñānam wisdom}
\textit{एतेन etena by this ज्ञातिनः jñāninaḥ of the wise नित्यवैरिणा}
\textit{nityavairinā by the constant enemy कामह्र्षेण kāmarūpena whose form is desire कौन्तेय kaunteya O Kaunteya दुष्पूर्वेण dusprūrena unappeasable अनलेन analena by}
\textit{fire च ca and}

Knowledge is covered, \textit{O} son of Kunti, by this insatiable fire of desire, the constant foe of the wise.39
Desire grown to the stature of greed is a destructive force and an enemy to all human beings. But the ignorant among them who come under its sway hold it as a helpful friend. Whenever a set back and humiliation ensue from it, the destructive force of desire is momentarily detested as a treacherous factor in the make up of man. But this feeling vanishes as quickly as it dawns. The unwary ignorant choose to ally with it always. But the case of the knowing man is different. Both while under the influence of desire and while holding it in abeyance the wise man views it as his sworn enemy. He likes no alliance with it. Still, in spite of him, it steals into his heart assuming innumerable forms and trying to allure him. It is therefore the constant foe of the wise.

The indicator in the balance moves away from the middle point when there is more weight on one side. The mind of man moves away from God allured by the weight of lust and greed.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Wherein does desire reside? The answer comes:

इन्द्रियाणि मनोऽहस्तमार्थाधिष्ठानेषुच्यते ।
एतैविरोधतेषु ज्ञानसाक्ष्यं देहिनम् ॥ ४०

इन्द्रियाणि मनः बुधः-ति: अस्य अभिस्थत्वः-नमु उच्चवर्ते ।
एतः विद्योहःति एवः ज्ञानम् भा-बुधः देहिनम् ॥

indriyāṇi mano buddhir asyā dhiṣṭānām ucyate ।
etair vimohayaty esa jñānam āvṛtya dehinam ॥

इन्द्रियाणि indriyāṇi the senses मनः: manah the mind
बुधः buddhiḥ the intellect अस्य asya its अधिस्थानम् adhiṣṭhānam seat उच्चवर्ते ucyate is called एतः: etaiḥ by these
विद्योहःति vimohayati deludes एवः: esaḥ this ज्ञानम् jñānam
wisdom आत्म अवृया having enveloped देहिनम् dehinam the embodied

The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be its seat; by these it deludes man by veiling his wisdom.

The fort that protects the enemy has to be spotted out before laying siege to it. The foe of desire has usurped the fort of the heart of man. He has captivated the senses, mind and intellect. Perforce he makes them serve his base pleasures. The senses are sent out on lustful missions. The mind is made to cogitate on covetous concepts. The intellect is directed on designs that are vulgar. These instruments that are evolved to serve the Supreme are, alas, utilized in profligacy.

The mind directed to sensuous things is like a holy man living in the midst of hooligans, or like a wealthy man living in a slum.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How to subjugate desire? The way is pointed out:

तस्मात्त्मसिन्द्रियाण्याद्रो नियम्य भरतपरम् ।
पापवान प्रजाहि देवीं ज्ञानप्रियाननाशनसु ॥ ४१
तस्मात् तस्मात् इन्द्रियाणि भाद्रि नि-गृह-य भरत-प्रथम ।
पापमानम् प्र-अहि हि एनम् ज्ञान-बि-ज्ञान-नाशनसु ॥

tasmāt tvam indriyāṇy ādau niyamya bharata pāsaṅha ।
pāpamān prajāḥi hy enam jñānavijñāna nāsatam ॥

tasmāt tasmāt therefore tvam tvam you indri-
यानi the senses आद्रि ādau in the beginning नियम-
या having controlled भरत प्रथम bharata pāsaṅha O best of
the Bharatas पाप्मानम् pāpmānam the sinful प्रजाहि prajāhi kill हि hi surely एनम् enam this ज्ञानविज्ञानानाम jñāna-vijñāna nāsanam the destroyer of the knowledge and realization

Therefore, O eminent of the Bharatas, mastering first the senses, slay it — the sinful, the destroyer of knowledge and realization. 41

When the protecting fort is taken by storm, the enemy’s position becomes vulnerable. It is easy to subdue him then. Lay hold of the senses, mind and intellect using them for divine causes and desire is thereby done away with.

A clear grasp of the teachings of the scriptures is classified here as knowledge. Intuiting the Reality is realization. Both of these become impossible to a man of worldly desires. The splendour of Atman gets smothered by desire, which is therefore condemned as sinful. The conqueror of desire is indeed a hero. Lord Siva’s burning Cupid to ashes is a mythological exposition of the conquest of desire.

What is maya? It is none other than the desire that obstructs the spiritual growth of the aspirant.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The strategic positions to be taken up for uprooting desire are now delineated:—

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याप्राचीनिन्द्रियेऽपि: परं मन: ।
मनसस्तु परा इन्द्रियोऽवृद्धे परतस्तु स: ॥ ४१

इन्द्रियाणि पराणि बहु: इन्द्रियेऽपि: परस्तः मनः ।
मनसः हूः परा इन्द्रिः: व: इन्द्रिः पर-तः हूः स: ॥

indriyaṇī parāṇy āhur indriyebhyāḥ param manah ।
manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratās tu saṅk ॥

the Bharatas पाप्मानम् pāpmānam the sinful प्रजाहि prajāhi kill हि hi surely एनम् enam this ज्ञानविज्ञानानाम jñāna-vijñāna nāsanam the destroyer of the knowledge and realization

Therefore, O eminent of the Bharatas, mastering first the senses, slay it — the sinful, the destroyer of knowledge and realization. 41

When the protecting fort is taken by storm, the enemy’s position becomes vulnerable. It is easy to subdue him then. Lay hold of the senses, mind and intellect using them for divine causes and desire is thereby done away with.

A clear grasp of the teachings of the scriptures is classified here as knowledge. Intuiting the Reality is realization. Both of these become impossible to a man of worldly desires. The splendour of Atman gets smothered by desire, which is therefore condemned as sinful. The conqueror of desire is indeed a hero. Lord Siva’s burning Cupid to ashes is a mythological exposition of the conquest of desire.

What is maya? It is none other than the desire that obstructs the spiritual growth of the aspirant.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The strategic positions to be taken up for uprooting desire are now delineated:—

इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याप्राचीनिन्द्रियेऽपि: परं मन: ।
मनसस्तु परा इन्द्रियोऽवृद्धे परतस्तु स: ॥ ४१

इन्द्रियाणि पराणि बहु: इन्द्रियेऽपि: परस्तः मनः ।
मनसः हूः परा इन्द्रिः: व: इन्द्रिः पर-तः हूः स: ॥

indriyaṇī parāṇy āhur indriyebhyāḥ param manah ।
manasas tu parā buddhir yo buddheḥ paratās tu saṅk ॥
\textit{Indriyāni} the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses \textit{parāni} superior श्न्त्रियाणि indriyāni the senses

The senses are said to be superior to the body; the mind is superior to the senses; the intellect is superior to the mind; and what is superior to the intellect is Atman.

A thing subtle is always superior to another, gross. The senses, five in number, excel the gross body. Mind dominates over the senses and so it is superior to them. Intellect comes above the mind in that it decides while the latter merely feels. Atman supplies light to the intellect itself and therefore it is above all these instruments utilized by It.

The skin and other coverings of a fruit are of varying grades. The interior sheaths progressively assume more and more of the characteristics of the pulp which is the main factor in it. Similarly, in the make up of man the subtle organs are more akin to Atman, than the gross.

Desire clings more tenaciously to the subtle than to the gross. Attachment to the body easily gives place to the attachment to the senses; from the senses it shifts to the mind; from the mind it rises to the intellect. Attachment to all of these categories leads to bondage and brings untold misery to the
embodied. How to do away with desire, subtle as well as gross, is the question. The sovereign solution is presented:

एवं चुढे: परं बुद्धवा संस्तब्धायांत्मानभालना।
जाहि श्रेष्ठ महावाहो कामरुपं दुरासदम्॥ ४३

एवं चुढे: परं बुद्धवा साम-सब्ध अत्मानम् अत्माना।
जाहि श्रेष्ठ महावाहो काम-हला दुर-भा-सदम्॥

evam buddheḥ param buddhvā
samstabhya 'tmānam ātmanā
dahi satrum mahābāho
kāmarūpaṁ durāsadam

एवम् evam thus चुढः buddheḥ than the intellect परं param superior बुद्धवा buddhvā having known संस्तब्धायāya restraining अत्मानम् ātmanam the self अर्थात् ātmanā by the Self जाहि jahi slay thou श्रेष्ठ satrum the enemy महावाहो mahābāho O mighty-armed कामरुपम् kāmarūpaṁ of the form of desire दुरासदम् durāsadam hard to conquer

Thus knowing Him as superior to the intellect, restraining the self by the Self, slay, O mighty-armed, the enemy in the form of desire, difficult to overcome. 43

When desire is centred on body, the senses, mind and intellect the Jīva consciousness or individualized little self is fostered. This little self is ever wrought with misery. Foolishly do people think it is imbued with happiness. Every happiness associated with the body, the senses, mind and intellect is bound, sooner or later, to reappear as misery. There is no escape from it. Atma bodham or spiritual con-
sciousness is to be awakened. Following in its wake, the body, the senses, mind and intellect have all to serve Atman. The base desire automatically vanishes; the little self dwindles away; the real Self emerges; bliss infinitude becomes patent, never again to be clouded. Life shines in the glory of Atman.

No sooner is a thief detected than he takes to his heels. When you know the nature of maya it flees from you.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगद्विटावनिष्ठु अद्वाविवायाः योगावाते
श्रीकृष्णाःकृजनसंवादे कर्मयोगो नाम
चतुर्योध्यायः II

iti srīmad bhagavadgītāsūpanisatsu brahmavidyāyām
yogasāstre sri krṣṇārjuna samvāde karma yogo
nāma tṛtiyo 'dhyāyāh II

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gīta, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the third discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF ACTION
The Blessed Lord said:

This imperishable yoga, I declared to Vivasvat; Vivasvat taught it to Manu, Manu told it to Ikshvaku.

Moksha or the spiritual emancipation being imperishable, yoga or the means to it is also desig-
nated as imperishable. Man's endeavours for emancipation are everlasting; practice of yoga is also therefore everlasting.

Vivasvat is the name of Surya, the sun god. Manu is the ruler immortalized by his Smriti—the code of conduct Ikshvaku is the first among the kings of solar dynasty. When the rulers of kingdoms come to know of this supreme wisdom they tackle the worldly problems more diligently.

एवं परस्पराशास्तिमिः राजपर्यो विदुः।
स कोऽलेनेह महत्ता योगो नएः परंतप ॥ २

एवं परम्परा-प्राप्तमु इस्मु राज-सर्वप्रभुः विदुः।
स कोऽलेन इह महत्ता योग-नाश-नः परंतप-तप ॥

*evam paramparā prāptam imam rāja rsayo viduh ।
sa kālene 'ha mahatā yogo nastah paramtapa ॥

एवं evam thus परस्पराशास्तिमिः paramparā prāptam
handed down in regular succession इस्मु imam this
राज-सर्वप्रभुः rāja rsayoḥ the royal sages विदुः viduh knew स:
sah this कोऽलेन kālena by lapse of time इह ʿha here महत्ता
mahatā by long योगाह yogāh yoga नएः nastah destroyed
'परंतप paramtapa O Parantapa

Thus transmitted in regular succession the royal sages knew it. This yoga, by long efflux of time decayed in this world, O scorcher of foes.

When the right type of men become scarce, the right system also dwindles away. As the shadow follows the substance, a good system comes in again with the advent of proper people. Here the Lord clarifies this fact —
Sa eva 'yam mayā te 'dya yogah proktah purātanaḥ 

bhaktō 'si me sakhā ce 'ti rahasyam hy etad uttamam

Sa: sakth that eva even acyam aym this maya by me te te to thee acdy today yogah yoga proktah has been taught puratanah ancient bhaktah devotee asi thou art me my sakh friend ca and iti iti thus rahasyam rahasyam secret hi hi for etatu etat this uttama uttamam best

The same ancient yoga has been today told you by Me, for you are My devotee and friend; and this secret is supreme indeed.

Secrecy is maintained in regard to many things worldly, because of selfishness or because of their being harmful if abused. The science of yoga remains a secret not for these reasons, but because of the incompetency of man to pursue it properly. It becomes obscure when the right sort of people become rare in society. Now Arjuna, a worthy recipient has appeared and therefore, a new revelation of yoga also ensues. What a man has made himself worthy of, that comes to him spontaneously. This fulfilment is called the law by some and the grace by others.

Arjuna is here beset with a doubt. He presents it to the Lord:
The Advent and Acts of the Incarnation — 49

अर्जुन उवाच

अपरं भवते जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।
कथमेवतिजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥ ५

अ परम् भवत जन्म परम् जन्म विवस्वतः ।
रथम् एतद् वि जा-नीयाम् तथू शादी प्र-उपमान् इति ॥

arjuna uvāca

aparam bhavata janna param janna vivasvatah ।
katham etad vyānum tvam adau proktavān iti ॥

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said

अपरम् aparam later भवत bhavatah thy जन्म janna birth परम् param prior जन्म janna birth विवस्वत vivasvatah of Vivasvat कथम् katham how एतद् etad this विजानीयां vyānu am I to understand त्वम् tvam thou आदि adī in the beginning प्रोक्तवान् proktavān taught इति iti thus

Arjuna said

Later was your birth, earlier the birth of Vivasvat; how then am I to understand that you told it in the beginning?

You are the son of Vasudeva of today Vivasvat appeared in the beginning of creation How can a modern man instruct an ancient one? This is Arjuna’s question

श्री भगवानुपाध

मद्वनि मे व्यवतितानि जन्मानि तय चार्जुन ।
तान्यह वेद मर्गाणि न नं वेदं परलप ॥ ५

द्रवति मे वि अनि द्रवति मर्गानि तय च विशूद्ध ।
तानि अद्वै वेदं मर्गाणि न लघु वेदं परम् तय ॥
The Blessed Lord said:

Many are the births taken by Me and you, O Arjuna. I know them all while you know not, O Parantapa.

Arjuna is a Jivatman bound by karma. So he has no memory of his previous births. But Krishna is an Incarnation of Iswara. He is therefore ever pure, ever free and omniscient. He can call to the mind how the Cosmic Intelligence assumed a form previously and enlightened Vivasvat.

Incarnations are all the personifications of Iswara. In the ocean of Sat-chit-ananda a wave rises up in one place at one time and it is called Krishna. Another wave rises at another place some time later and it is called Christ.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The bound souls are born to work out their karma. But the Lord is above karma. How then does He incarnate? The revelation comes:

अजोंकिय जनन्यात्मा भूतानामीवैवरोधि सन्
प्रकृपि सामविद्याय संभवायामस्माया
a jo ’pi san na avyayātmā bhuṭānām iṣvaro ’pi san
prakṛtim svām adhisthāya sambhavāmy ātmamāyayā

ābh āyāh unborn ābh āpi also san san being ābh
bhāya āvyayātmā of imperishable nature bhūtānām
iṣvarah the Lord ābh āpi also san san being
prakṛtim nature svām svām my own
adhisthāya ruling sambhavāmi: come
into being ātmamāyayā by my own maya

Though I am unborn, imperishable and the Lord
of beings, yet subjugating My Prakṛti, I come into
being by My own Maya.

Prakṛti or maya-sakti has her part to play both
with the Jīvatman and with the Incarnations of
Iswara, but her function with these two entities is on
diametrically opposite bases. She enslaves the former
and is enslaved by the latter. It is by manipulating
His maya-sakti that the unborn Lord puts on the
appearance of being born and of growing. The One
supremely above karma apparently assumes it. That
karma again is not capricious. The collective karma
of the society as it ought to be, gets itself embodied
in the Incarnation. He does not stand in need of
making any experiments with the various factors of
life. His advent simply explains the sublime plan
and purpose of the human life. He is the benign
model to be followed by the others.

Everything in nature has its time to appear. Does the Incarnation of God also come under this
law in any way? The statement comes. –
yadā-yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya tadā ātmānāṁ srjāmy aham

Whenever there is decay of dharma and rise of adharma, then I embody Myself, O Bharata.

Dharma is verily the karma that is conducive to man’s growth and progress; what impedes them is adharma. At every time adharma prevails and prevents man’s evolution, the Cosmic Intelligence embodies Itself, as a matter of course.

Having personified Himself, what does the Lord do? He proclaims:—

paritrāṇāya sādhūnāṁ vināsāya ca duskrām
dharma samsthiṣṭāpanārthāya saribhavāmi yuge-yuge
For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked and for the establishment of dharma I am born yuge yuge in every age.

Purgation is an unfailing process of Nature. The cleansing takes place at all levels in various ways. In the agricultural field it goes on as weeding and manuring. When the wicked become more in number in the world dharma would not thrive in their midst. War, pestilence, famine and such like forces inevitably come in both to strike a balance of the population and to set aright the perverts.

Among the three Gunas the predominance of Rajas and Tamas aggravates adharma which threatens to topple down the social fabric. The function of the Incarnation is to induce Sattva, the chief and foremost of the three Gunas into society. And along with it dharma begins to thrive. A balance of power among the three Gunas is necessary for social order to work on right lines.

A viceroy is deputed by the monarch to quell lawlessness and disorder in a distant dominion. Similarly an Incarnation is the man of authority sent by Iswara into society. He comes to put in order all lapses and deviations in the practice of dharma.

— Sri Ramakrishna
Is the living of a righteous life on earth, an end in itself, or is it a means for some other end? The elucidation comes:

जन्म कर्म च ये दिव्यमेव थे वेति तत्वतः ।
त्यक्तवा देहं पुनर्जीवं नैति मामेति सोऽहूः ॥ ९ ॥

janma karma ca me divyam evam yo vetti tattvatah ।
tyaktvā deham punarjanma nai 'ti mām eti so 'rjuna ॥

jahna janma birth karma action ca and ca and me my divyam divine evam thus y: yah who vetti knows tattvatah in true light tyaktvā having abandoned deham the body punah again janma birth na not eti eti gets mām to me eti comes sat he arjuna ॥

He who thus knows My divine birth and action in true light, having dropped the body, comes not to birth again, but comes unto Me, O Arjuna.

The unborn Iswara puts on the appearance of birth and growth by His divine power. Similarly the actionless Entity stages holy activities for the good of the world. Those spiritual men who intuit these facts about the Lord are able to live unaffected by the world even as the Incarnation does. Ultimately, while yet in the human frames and after casting them off, those blessed ones get themselves merged in the Absolute. Pondering over the play of the Divine as the human, is a sure means to get at this great goal.

Treat not the personalities such as Rama, Sita, Krishna, Radha and some others as mere allegorical entities. They were
once in body and flesh as you are now. But because of their spiritual perfection they seem more fictitious than factual. Iswara and His Incarnations are one and the same even as the ocean and the waves are.

A visitor to a palace can see only some portions of it. But the prince apparent can have free access to all parts of the palace. Likewise Incarnations of God easily get into the various states of spiritual consciousness.

It is rather difficult to comprehend the infinite sporting in the finite human form.

During the advent of Sri Rama it was given to seven Rishis only to understand His divine descent. This way all Incarnations are understood by only a few during their life time.

—Sri Ramakrishna

By what process did the wise make themselves worthy of comprehending the Divine? The explanation comes:

वीतरागभक्तिकोणा मन्मया मादुपाधिता: ।
वहनो ज्ञातपसा पुत्ता माध्यमभागता: ॥ १०
विद्वत्त-राग-भय-कोपे: मद्ध-नया मामु उप-माध्यिता: ।
वहन: ज्ञात-पसा पुत्त: मद्ध-भावमु ज्ञ-पाप: ॥

vita rāga bhaya krodha manmayā mām upāsrītaḥ
bahavo jñāna tapasā pūtā mad bhāvam āgatāḥ

वीतरागभक्तिकोणा: वितरा रागा क्रोधाक मन्मयाः माम उपास्रीतः
बहस्वो ज्ञाना तपस्वा पुत्राः मद्भावम् आगताः

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, man many manmayā absorbed in me माम me उपास्रीत: upāsrītaḥ taking refuge in महावं many ज्ञातपसा ज्ञाना tapasā by the fire of knowledge पुत्रा pūtāḥ purified मद्धवम् mad bhāvam my being आगता agatāḥ have attained.

Freed from passion, fear and anger, filled with Me, taking refuge in Me, purified by penance in the fire of Knowledge, many have entered into My Being.
It is only after filtering that muddy water becomes fit to be mixed with pure water. Mind purged from passion, fear and anger assumes competency to grasp the Divine. Then getting absorbed in It becomes easy. Through absorption the glory of the Divine is increasingly realized. There is then no difficulty whatsoever in taking refuge in what is known to be Benign. Fuel consigned to fire becomes fire itself. It is penance when individuals seek to know of the Divine and give themselves over to It. This way many have ascended from the human to the Divine. There is no purification greater than this. *Mukti* or emancipation in this wise is an eternal process.

*Maya* is inherent in Iswara. This *maya* is constituted of both *vidya* and *avidya*—knowledge and ignorance. *Vidya-maya* is made up of discrimination, devotion, detachment and love of beings. It takes the aspirant Godward. *Avidya-maya*, on the other hand, estranges man from God.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Are the ignorant ones allowed to go astray? The plan is expounded:—

*Diverse Means to the Same End* — 11

वे यथा लां श्राप्रचलने तान्त्रिकैः बलामायः \\
सम वस्मांस्थतलने मनुष्यः पार्थ समेदः || १२ \\
वे यथा नाम । च-पद्यमज सतां तथा एव भजाति भाम ||

सम कल्य चतु-बलने मनुष्यः पार्थ समेदः ||

*yeyathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathā'va bhajāmy aham ||

mumā vartāṁ 'muvarante manuṣyāḥ pārīha sarvasaḥ||*
In whatever way men identify with Me, in the same way do I carry out their desires; men pursue My path, O Partha, in all ways.

Different kinds of food suit different beings. What is food to one may be poison to another. But each being receives nourishment from the food it takes. Religions are similarly divergent to suit the varying temperaments. Worship with the aid of an image, for example, is a help to one and a hindrance to another. An act held as the adoration of the Almighty by one path, is abhorred as blasphemy by another. But the same Lord recognizes the need for all these divergent paths, understands the urge in the hearts of the various types of devotees and graciously helps them all to attain perfection. It is incumbent on the aspirant to see into this universalism of the Lord. He sees into the glory of the Lord who sees how He is shaping all beings through their various paths.

The same Reality presents Itself as Nature when contacted through the senses, mind and intellect. Therefore, the sense-bound pleasure seekers are also adoring the same Reality in accordance with their understanding and attainments. All beings are verily resting in God and enjoying Him only,
while their readings and interpretations of Him vary infinitely.

Why are people running after little things instead of seeking the Lord Himself? The fact is explained:—

Fruit of the Worship of the Minor Deities— 12

kāṅkṣantaḥ karmaṇāṁ siddhiḥ yajante iha devatāḥ
kṣipram hi māṇuṣe loke siddhir bhavati karmajā ā

kāṅkṣantaḥ longing for karmaṇāṁ of action siddhiṁ success yajante sacrifice iha in this world devatāḥ gods kṣipram quickly hi because māṇuṣe in the human loke (in the) world siddhiḥ success bhavati is attained karmaṇa karmajā born of action

Longing for success in action on earth, they worship the gods; for quickly is success born of action in this world of man. 12

The higher the ideal the more arduously one has to prepare oneself for it and the longer one has to wait for it. Self-knowledge is harder to attain than the fruits of action. What is perceived by the senses is portrayed as the world of man, where quick results can be obtained; but they are impermanent in character. The ignorant seek for sense-objects easily obtainable. Access to a monarch is hard to get, but
it is very consequential. Acquaintance with a petty page of a monarch is easily got, but it is of no consequence. Devotion, wisdom, salvation and such like divine gifts come to the worshipper of Iswara. Votaries of the minor gods get their deserts accordingly. Ideals vary according to the mental attainments of people.

How are we to know of the attainments of people? The explanation comes:—

The Four Grades of People—13-15

चातुर्वर्ण्यम मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।
तस्य कर्तारसमेत मां विद्वद्यकर्तारसमयम् ॥ १३

चातुर्वर्ण्यम् मया सृष्टं गुण-कर्म-विभागश: ।
तस्य कर्तारसमेत मां विद्वद्यकर्तारसमयम् ॥

cāturvarṇyaṁ mayā srṣṭam gunakarma vibhāgasāḥ ।
tasya kartāram api mām viddhy akartāram avyayam ॥

The fourfold caste was created नया mayā by me सृष्टम् srṣṭam has been created गुणकर्मविभागशः gunakarmavibhāgasāḥ according to the differentiation of Guna and karma तस्य tasya thereof कर्तारसमेत kartāram the author लावे api also माम् mām me विद्वद्वi viddhi know अकर्तारम् akartāram non-doer अव्ययम् avyayam immutable

The fourfold caste was created by Me by the different distribution of Guna and karma. Though I be the author thereof, know Me to be the actionless and changeless.

Creation is effected by variation in the distribution of Gunas. That Jīva in whom Sattva-guna predominates is classified as Brahmaṇa. He is a
Kshatriya in whom *Sattva* seasoned with *Rajas* prevails. The man third in rank is the Vaisya imbued mainly with *Rajas* and sparingly with *Sattva* and *Tamas*. In Sudra the last man *Tamas* regulated by *Rajas* is in the forefront.

*Varna* literally means caste as well as colour. White, red and black are the respective colours of *Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*. It may be mentioned here that the entire universe is an imprint of *tri-gunas* or tricolour. With the variations of the three Gunas in man his colour undergoes change. The four classes of men are respectively white, lotus-red, yellow and black in colour. But this does not refer to the colour of the skin. If it did, all white races would be Brahmanas, Red Indians of America, Kshatriyas, Mongolians Vaisyas, and persons like Rama and Krishna Sudras. Facts in Nature do not warrant this position.

The worth of man is in the mind and not in the body. Mind has its colour according to Guna. As man evolves, Guna and mind which are interrelated get refined. The colour or the class of man goes up accordingly. From Sudrahood to Brahmanahood man evolves mentally, passing through Vaisyahood and Kshatriyahood. The enlightened alone see into the colour of the mind and know who is who among men.

The worldly man's classification of himself into the four castes based on birth and parentage is merely a convention hardly ever tallying with his attainments. But the Vedanta philosophical position
is that among four brothers all the four Varnas may be evident. The real classification is based on the degree of ethical and spiritual perfection. (The actions of the four castes are explained in chap. 18 stanzas 42, 43 and 44)

Things sentient and insentient are all constituted of the three Gunas. They lend themselves therefore to the natural division into the four Varnas mentioned by the Lord. The plan of Nature is that beings low in Varna evolve into those high.

If the social structure fabricated by man conforms with the divine plan of the fourfold caste, there is progress in that society; but it deteriorates to the extent it deviates from the divine plan. The Incarnations of God that come age after age set aright the fallen Varna dharma.

How the Lord remains actionless and changeless even while propelling the whole universe is explained in chapter 9 stanzas 5 to 10.

Is there any benefit to an aspirant from the Lord’s statement that He is in fact actionless and changeless? It is explained:

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पति न मे कर्मफले स्वहाः
ि ति मां योजितान्तिति कर्मां स वच्यते ॥ १४ ॥

न मामु कर्माणि लिम्पति न मे कर्मफले स्वहाः
ि ति मामु न: अनि जानाति कर्मानि न स बधु-यते ॥

na mañi karmāṇi limpanti na me karmaphale sprhā || iti måm yo 'bhijānāti karmabhīr na sa bhadhyate ||

न na not mām mām me karmāṇi karmāṇi actions limpanti taint न na not me my पर्ष्क्षेष karmaphale
in the fruit of action खङ्ग sprhā desire इति iti thus माम mām me य: yah who अबिजनाति abhijānāti knows कर्मशः karmabhiḥ by actions न na not स: saḥ he बध्यते badhyate is bound

Nor do actions taint Me, nor is the fruit of action desired by Me. He who thus knows Me is not bound by actions.

Karma produces modifications of the mind in the egoistic man. 'I do', 'I enjoy'—attitudes such as these are the modifications. But the Lord is free from egoism. He is therefore untainted by actions. It is desire when one seeks a thing not one's own. The Lord has everything contained in Him and He transcends them all too. Therefore, He has nothing to desire. The spiritual aspirant who comes to know of this glory of the Lord would like to be himself untainted by egoism and free from desire. Emulation of the great is the way of the elite.

Did they, who knew of the actionlessness of the Lord, neglect their duty? The Lord deals with that point:

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वेऽपि सुमुक्षुभिः: ।
कुरु कष्टथः तस्मात्चः पूर्वेऽपि कुर्म: ॥ १५
एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वेऽपि सुमुक्षुभिः: ।
कुरु कष्टः एव तस्मात् लघः पूर्वेऽपि कुर्म: ॥
evam jñātvā kṛtam karma pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ
kuru kṣaṭṭhaḥ tasmāt pūrveḥ api kṛtam
evam jñātvā kṛtam karma pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ
kuru kṣaṭṭhaḥ tasmāt pūrveḥ pūrvataram kṛtam

एवं evam thus ज्ञात्वा jñātvā having known कृतम kṛtam (was) done कर्म karma actions पूर्व: pūrvaiḥ by
ancients अपि.api also सुमुक्षुभिः: mumukṣubhiḥ seekers
after freedom कुरु perform कर्म karma action एवं
even तस्मात tasmāt therefore त्वम् tvam thou पूर्वे
पुर्वप्राइ बy ancients पूर्वतर्स् पुर्वतारम् in the olden
time कृतम् kṛtam done

Having known thus even the ancient seekers after
freedom performed action; therefore do you perform
action, as did the ancients in the olden times. 15

The knowing aspirant abandons egoism and
desire, he does not give up karma. The seekers of
freedom walked this way through ages. This prin-
ciple has not been enunciated newly for the sake
of Arjuna. Why was he then confused on this issue?
There was nothing strange in it. The fact is —

The Philosophy of Action—16-22

किम कर्म किमकर्मेऽति कर्योपप्तं मोहिता: ।
तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्ये य dosage द्वारात् ॥

किम तत्ते कर्म इति कवयिष्ठि तथा मोहिता ।
तत: ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यदृ यज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्ये य dosage द्वारात् ॥

kim karma kim akarme 'ti kavyo 'py atra mohitaḥ
tat te karma pravaksyami yaj jñātvā mokṣyaśe 'subhāt

kimap kim what कर्म karma action किम kim what
अकर्मम् akarma inaction इति iti thus कवयिष्ठि kavyaḥ sages
प्रवक्ष्यामि pravaksyami (I) shall teach यदृ यज्ञात्वा jñātvā
having known मोक्ष्ये mokṣyaśe (thou) shall be libera-
ted अशुमार्ग asubhāt from evil

Sages too are perplexed as to what is action, what
inaction. Therefore I shall tell you what action is, by
knowing which you shall be freed from evil. 16
The worst of all evils is that pertaining to the wheel of birth and death. To put an end to this endless evil, the way of action should be understood. It should not be thought that merely toiling to the utmost is the way of karma. For,

कर्मणो हापि बोधव्यो बोधव्यस्थ च विकर्मणः।
अकर्मणस्य बोधव्यस्य गहनाः कर्मणो गतिः॥ १७

कर्मणः हि अपि बोधव्रतः तत्वमू च विकर्मणः।
अ कर्मणः च बोधव्रतः तत्वमू च गहनाः कर्मणः गतिः॥

Karmano hy api bodhavram
bodhavram ca vikarmaṇah ।
akarmaṇaḥ ca bodhavram
ghana karanō gatiḥ ॥

कर्मणः: karmaṇaḥ of action हि hi for अपि also बोधव्रतः bodhavram should be known बोधव्रतम् bodhavram should be known च ca and विकर्मण: vikarmaṇaḥ of the forbidden action अकर्मणः: akarmaṇaḥ of inaction च ca and बोधव्रतम् bodhavram should be known गहना gahanā deep कर्मणः karmaṇaḥ of action गति: gatiḥ the path

It is needful to discriminate action, to discriminate forbidden action, and to discriminate inaction; inscrutable is the way of karma.

What the scriptures advocate as auspicious work is here designated as action; and what they prohibit as harmful and inauspicious work is described as forbidden action. But the forbidden action is not dealt with here. It is elaborately explained in chapters 16 and 17.
The characteristics of action and inaction are:

कर्मण्यकर्मि यः पश्येद्कर्मणि च कर्मि यः |
स बुद्धिमान्यास्तेषु स युक्तः कृत्तकर्मेऽहृतः ॥ १८

कर्मणि अकर्मि यः पश्येत अकर्मणि च कर्मि यः |
सं बुद्धि-मान्यं मनुष्येऽि सं युक्तत: कृत्त-कर्म-हृत ॥

Karmany akarma yah pasyed akarmani ca karma yah |
sa buddhimăn manusyesu sa yuktah krtsnakarmakrt ॥

कर्मणि karmani in action अकर्मि akarma inaction यः |
yah who pasyet pasyet would see अकर्मणि akarmani in |
inaction च ca and कर्म karma action यः yah who स: saः |
he बुद्धिमान् buddhimăn wise मनुष्येऽि manusyesu in men |
स: saः he युक्त: yuktah yogi कृत्तकर्मेऽहृत krtsnakarmakrt |
performer of all actions ,

He who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, he is wise among men, he is a yogi and accomplisher of everything. 18

1. Action is innate in Prakriti and inaction in Atman. The former is kinetic and the latter static; one is the becoming and the other the Being; one is the perishable and the other the Imperishable. The ignorant are confused being unable to distinguish between the two. A passenger in a running train mistakes the nearby trees as running in the opposite direction. Here motion is attributed wrongly to the motionless. Action is seen in inaction due to ignorance. A man on the shore mistakes a sailing ship at a distance in the sea as one that stands still. Here inaction is seen in action. Thus it is seen that actions and inactions in nature do not always present themselves in their true perspective. The characteristics of
the one are often imposed on the other due to ignorance. The ignorant man thinks of himself as the body. "Now I work; now I rest" — thus does he transpose the function of Prakriti on Atman. Mistaking the non-Self for Self is egoism. There is agency in the egoistic man. The agency-laden egoistic man may be sitting quiet abandoning all his duties. Even in that inert state he is verily a doer of karma. This ignorant condition is designated as action in inaction. In contrast with this, there is no trace of egoism in the man of Self-realization. While his body works incessantly, the Self remains as a witness. Atman is in nowise entangled in karma. The sense of overwork, under-work or neglect of duty is not in the knower of the Self. This supreme position is recognized as inaction in action. Only they who have attained Self-knowledge and they who are on the right path to Self-knowledge can be in this benign state.

— Sri Sankara

2. Activities taking place in and through the body, mind and senses are designated as karma or action; and the Knowledge Supreme as akarma or inaction.

A man earnestly takes to cookery. He occupies himself with cooking. This results in his acquiring knowledge of cookery. Seeing inaction in action is the process of adding to one's knowledge by doing one's duty properly. He who has a wide knowledge in cookery is able to execute that art efficiently. This leads to seeing action in inaction. This way karma enriches knowledge and knowledge brings in proficiency in work.
Karma known as living a righteous life culminates in Self-knowledge. The man of Self-knowledge discharges his earthly duties to the best of his ability. Karma and Jnana are complementary to each other.

— Sri Ramanuja

3. What the individual soul views as his personal effort is karma, action. The unfailing Cosmic Function of the Supreme Lord is Akarma, inaction.

Man in his ignorance thinks that he is the sole agent of his action. But when he sets aside his egoism and agency and feels that his actions are in reality the doings of the Lord, he is said to see inaction in action. Man is not responsible for what he does in dream; but whatever takes place in that state is also the Lord’s doing. With or without the instrumentality of man, the Lord’s work goes on perfectly. He who sees this great fact sees the Lord’s action in man’s inaction too. Such a man gains in wisdom.

— Sri Madhwa

4. The nature of karma is to bind man to the wheel of birth and death. But that karma which is performed without egoism, purely for the glory of the Lord does not bind man. Furthermore it disentangles man from the bondages of his previous karma. To see, therefore, inaction in action is to convert all bondage-creating actions into freedom-creating actions. Work done for the sake of the Lord has this effect.

Desisting from obligatory action, due to laziness or ignorance, is highly harmful. New fetters
are thereby created. Giving up auspicious action is inaction leading to encumbrances. Creating new entanglements in this way or seeing action in inaction, is not the way of the enlightened.

— Sridhara

5. Mind requires to be cultured both in society and in solitude. If the mind can maintain its equilibrium and calmness while being engaged in a roaring battle, it is seeing inaction in action. While one is bodily detached from the tumults of the world and placed in a far off deep mountain cave, if one’s mind goes Godward steadily and earnestly, it is seeing action in inaction.

It will not do for the mind to be lop-sided in its development. There are those who are habituated to solitude. If such people be dragged into the tumultuous society, they go mad. There are others immersed in the throngs of the world. A day of solitary confinement is enough to turn them insane. Both of these types of men are partially trained. The perfectly trained alone are at their best both in solitude and in society. They are tuned both to action and inaction.

— Swami Vivekananda

6. Sri Krishna and Arjuna arrive at Kurukshetra, the former driving the chariot and the latter impatient to fight. The implications of the war that is about to commence flash in Arjuna’s mind just now. He throws away the bow and arrows. “I want not this vainglorious warfare,” says he and sits quiet.

Sri Krishna and Arjuna now present two different pictures, one contradicting the other. The Lord
is the embodiment of inaction in action. His duty is to drive the chariot. With the left hand He wields an iron grip at the reins of the four spirited white horses, ever ready to dash forward. His right hand assumes chinmudra, the finger pose of imparting wisdom to His dejected devotee, Arjuna. While the hands are fully engaged this way, the benign face beams with some other message. Calmness reigns supreme on the countenance, indicating that the mind within is firm as a rock. Action belongs to Prakriti. Atman embodied as Sri Krishna is ever established in inaction. Poise in the midst of purpose, inaction in action—this inspiring principle gets revealed through Yogeswara.

Arjuna, on the other hand, has cast off his bow and arrows. He puts on the appearance of inaction, though the fact is otherwise. Great commotion goes on within. Fear is on one side wrecking his heart. Pang is on the other side piercing his body to pieces. He who seems to have easily renounced his duty is tortured by the conflict of duty. His face indicates the storm within. The miserable Arjuna embodies action in inaction.

A yogi ought to be in the world but not of the world. He keeps his head in solitude and hands in society. He works incessantly and enjoys eternal holiday. Through His personal life Sri Krishna offers this grand philosophy of action and inaction to the world. How the half-educated man errs and deviates from the profound path is demonstrated by Arjuna at the outset. But that his earnestness com-
bined with the grace of the Lord weans him to the right path is also made evident. The commentaries of all the great Acharyas are contained in the careers of these two characters—Sri Krishna and Arjuna. He who diligently inquires into this becomes wise among men; he is verily a yogi; he gains the here and the hereafter.

7. Sri Ramakrishna seemed all inaction externally, but the greatest of all actions, the quest of the Infinite, was going on within. Swami Vivekananda was energy personified and action was his message, but at the core of his heart he was established in Atman designated here as inaction.

The lad holding fast to a pillar spins speedily round it without the fear of falling down. Similarly you fix your mind on God and do the earthly duties as best you can. All good will come out of it.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Does the action in the embodied get terminated at all? The answer comes:

\[
\text{स्याय सर्वं समारम्भं कामसंक्लप्यवजितं।} \\
\text{ज्ञानादिन्द्रकर्मणुं तमाहुः पणिदतं चुः।॥} \\
\text{स्याय सर्वं सम्-वा-रुम्भं काम-सम्-कल्य-वजितं।} \\
\text{ज्ञान-शक्ति-क्रूर्त-कर्मणुं तमू बाहुः पणिदतम् चुः।॥}
\]

\text{yasya sarve samārambhāḥ kāmasaṁkalpavarjitaḥ} \| \\
\text{jñānāgni dagdhakarmāṇām tam āhuḥ panditam budhāḥ} \|
burnt by the fire of knowledge तम् tam him आहुः āhuh
call पणित्रम् panditam a sage बुधा. budhāḥ the wise

Whose doings are all devoid of design and desire for results, and whose actions are all burnt by the fire of knowledge, him, the sages call wise.

Action actuated by design and desire has the power to bind the doer. But if the doer of action assumes the attitude that all actions emanate from Iswara and that whatever takes place through him as a mere instrument, is all the glory of the Lord, he is not bound by action. There is neither agency nor egoism in him. As a burnt string may retain its form but is unfit for tying, the doings of the yogi do not bind him. They are all burnt away in the fire of the knowledge that God alone is the real author of all that takes place in the universe. He is called the wise by the sages because of his being endowed with this supreme knowledge.

My Cosmic Mother is the real propeller of everything in the world. Beings are all puppets in Her hands. The ignorant think that they are the doers

— Sri Ramakrishna

How is the wise man established in inaction in action? The elucidation comes:

त्यक्ता कर्मेऽवलसहं नित्यदृषो निराभ्रयः ।
कर्मणिःविभवहतोऽपि नैव किन्तुकरोति सः ॥ २०

त्यज्य-सः कर्म-पद-आ-राज्यः निल-लृत निर्द-आ-भयः ।
कर्मणि अभि-श्रुत्त-तः कपि न एव विदु-विधृत वर्णिते सः ॥

tyaktā karmaphalāsangam nityatṛptō nirāśrayāḥ ।
karmany abhuprayṛttō 'pi nai 'va kimeit karoti saḥ ॥
Having abandoned attachment to the fruits of action, ever content, depending on nothing, though engaged in karma, verily he does not do anything.

What inaction is, is not to be gauged with things and affairs external. It is truly the state of the mind that indicates action and inaction. The postman delivers letters containing happy as well as unhappy tidings which affect the addressees, but not the deliverer. The wise man similarly engages himself in actions which are all according to him adorations of the Lord. He has no desire whatsoever. Unattached that he is, he is ever content. There is no need for him to depend on anybody, great or small. The man with this frame of mind is fixed in inaction.

Spiritual discipline is indispensable for the attainment of Self-knowledge. But the case of men of adamant faith is different; they get at this knowledge very easily.

The Gopis returning home once found no boatman to ferry them across the river Yamuna to Brindavan. The perplexed milkmaids presented their plight to the sage Vyasa who had also arrived there just then with the same intent. “Be not worried on this score; I shall lead you all to the other bank. But give me something first to appease the hunger,” said the sage. Cream, butter and condensed milk were offered to him accordingly.
After doing full justice to the dainties, Vyasa stood up and implored. “O Yamuna Devi, if it is a fact that I am fasting today, stop flowing and make way for us to get to the other bank.” The river did stop flowing and the group safely walked to the opposite side. The Gopis then pleaded with the sage to explain the anomaly in his statement that he fasted while actually he feasted on the delicacies which they had supplied him. Vyasa explained himself: “The ceaseless hankering of my heart for Sri Krishna is my spiritual fasting. The idea ‘I eat’ is not allowed to enter the mind. Your dishes were all offered as oblation to the Maker presiding over this body.”

Maharishi Vyasa’s life in conformity with Truth and his faith in the Almighty worked this miracle.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The mental make up of the yogi is further explained:

निराशीत्वचात्मका त्यौतत्वेनायार्थः ||
शारीरं केरले कर्म कुष्ठान्नीति किल्लिपम् || २१
निरु-आशी नत-नित्त भाषाा त्राध-न सर्व-परिषेधः ||
शारीरम् केरलम् कर्म कुष्ठान्नी न आशु-नोति किल्लिपम् ||

nirāśir yatācittātmā tyakta sarva parigrahah |
sārtram kevalam karma kurvan nā 'āpnoti kīlīsām ||

निराशी nirāśih without hope यतत्वचात्मका yatācittātmā one with the mind and self controlled त्यौतत्वेनायार्थः tyakta sarva parigrahah having abandoned all possessions शारीरम् sārtram bodily केरलम् kevalam merely कर्म karma action कुष्ठान्नी kurvan doing न na not 'आशु-नोति āpnoti obtains किल्लिपम् kīlīsām sin

Hoping for naught, his mind and self controlled, having abandoned all possessions, performing karma by the body alone, he incurs no sin.
That karma is classified as sin which retards the moral and spiritual growth of man. Sins are all born of desire. A yogi is he who has conquered desire; so he incurs no sin. His body, mind and senses get themselves purified because of desirelessness. Nobody makes exclusive ownership over air so essential to living. Similar is the attitude of the yogi towards all bodily requirements, which he reduces to the bare minimum. He avoids accepting gifts that would put him under obligation. Owning unnecessary things would distract the mind. There is no thought in him of ownership of the few things kept for proper physical sustenance. He who maintains this state of mind is said to have abandoned all possessions. Useful bodily activities take place in him automatically. The consciousness in him is released from the material plane to revel in the glory of Atman. The question of sinning does not arise in this exalted state.

How will bodily sustenance be kept up if no thought be bestowed on material possessions? The answer comes:

वह्दच्छालाभसंतुष्टो इन्द्रातीलो विमलसः ।
समः सिद्धावसिद्धो च कुस्वापि न निवध्यते ॥ २२ ॥

वह्दच्छाविभूम-स्थ-स्व-हुः इन्द्र-अक्ष-हुः वि-पलसः ।
समः सिद्धि शं-सिद्धि च क-व्या भैर न नि-वस्य-पवेः ॥

yadrechā labha santusṭo dvandvātito vimatsaraḥ ।
samaḥ siddhāv asiddhau ca kṛtvā pī na nibadhhyate ॥

वह्दच्छालाभसंतुष्टः yadrechā labha santusṭaḥ content with what comes to him without effort इन्द्रातील: dvand-
Content with what he obtains without effort, free from the pairs of opposites, without envy, balanced in success and failure, though acting he is not bound.

Egoism prompts the action-bound man to exert himself for the procurement of his bodily needs. An attitude of this type is born of ignorance. But a spiritual aspirant is he who is not obsessed with the thought of bodily sustenance. Providence provides for him who is attuned to the Supermundane. The aspirant is therefore content with what comes to him unsought. Happenings such as success and failure, honour and dishonour are the pairs of opposites. He is not affected by any of these happenings. Whatever falls to his lot, he accepts as divine dispensation. A worldling becomes envious of the prosperity of his neighbour, but the sadhaka is free from that canker. He is, instead, happy over the prosperity of the world. A man of this frame of mind is not bound by karma in the midst of his being tightly engaged in it.
gatasangasya muktasya jñānāvasthitacetasāḥ
yajñāya ācarataḥ karma samagram praviliyate

Gatasangasya one who is devoid of attachment muktasya of the liberated Jñānāvasthitacetasāḥ whose mind is established in knowledge yajñāya for sacrifice ācarataḥ acting karma action samagram whole praviliyate is dissolved

Of one unattached, liberated, with mind absorbed in knowledge, performing work for Yajna alone, his entire karma melts away.

Bondage and liberation are born of the attitude of the mind. He performs Yajna who engages himself in karma for the glory of God. Any amount of activities cause no harm to the man freed from attachment. All actions melt away even as heaps of salt consigned into the sea get dissolved.

The palms and the knife have to be besmeared with oil before cutting open the jack fruit and removing the pulp. Otherwise the gummy juice in it would stick to the fingers and cause hindrance. In that wise protect yourself with self-knowledge before you seek wealth and other worldly things which would otherwise entangle you.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How should the sadhaka view the worldly life?
The clue is given:

वहार्पणं वहा हविशंहासी वहाणा हुतम्
वहीव तेन गतनत्वं वहाकर्मसमाविना

वहा ओर्पणम् वहा हवि: वहा-अती वहाणा हुतम्
वहा एस तेन गम्त-तत्त्वम् वहा-वर्म-सम्भ-वा-विना

बहार्पणं वहा हविशंहासी वहाणा हुतम्
बहीव तेन गतनत्वं वहाकर्मसमाविना ॥ २४
brahmā 'rpanam brahma havir
brahmāgnau brahmanā hutam

brahmaī 'va tena gantavyam
brahmakarma samādhinā

The oblation is Brahman, the clarified butter is Brahman, offered by Brahman in the fire of Brahman; unto Brahman verily he goes who cognizes Brahman alone in his action.

He who holds himself the agent to the performance of a sacrifice cherishes the feeling of distinction between himself, the Deity to be propitiated, the things offered, the medium of the fire and so on. But he who takes to jnana-yajna, the process of enlightenment, views all these as Brahman, the Thing-in-Itself.

Consuming the daily food regularly is obligatory on all including the enlightened; but the latter converts eating itself into jnana-yajna. The food, the eater of it, the digestion—all these are mere modifications of Brahman even as the waves are of the sea. The one established in brahmāvastha in this wise attains Brahman.
Devas and Devis such as Ganesa, Subrahmanya, Ganga, Parvati, Lakshmi and Saraswati are all facets of Brahman. Sacrifices and adoration done to them with devotion are conducive to spiritual growth. The senses are also called devas because of their benign function. Sublimation of the senses is the sacrifice that certain sadhakas perform devoutly. Jivatman or the individual self is also termed Yajna. Sacrifice, therefore, of the self by the self is to dedicate oneself to Iswara. It is surrendering the individual consciousness to the Cosmic Consciousness, even as the river re-enters the sea. Crucifying the ego, the apparent man becoming the real man—these are the other ways of expressing the same spiritual fact. This solemn act is verily jnana-yajna.
Some offer hearing and other senses as sacrifice in the fire of restraint, while others offer sound and other sense-objects as sacrifice in the fire of the senses. 26

Two diametrically opposite types of Yajna are enunciated here. The function of the one is to make the senses ineffective and that of the other to make them super-effective.

Fire which transforms the nature of things consigned into it is the medium in ritualistic Yajna and symbol in jnana-yajna. The fire of restraint carried to its extreme becomes total sense-control. The performer of this form of Yajna eats wholesome food merely for the nourishment of the body, the act of relishing and the idea of enjoying a meal are all eliminated. The other senses are suspended except for the bare maintenance of the body. The mind is completely withdrawn from the senses and made
introvertive. The physical life goes on mechanically while the mind revels in the Self within.

In the second type of Yajna the senses are made best use of for the adoration of the Almighty. In the fire of the senses, the sense-objects are offered as oblation. Forms perceived by the eyes are beheld as the manifestations of the Lord. Auspicious utterances are sumptuously heard. Sacramental food is partaken of with piety. The smelling of the aroma associated with the worship of the Divine, is felt as a form of holy communion. Garlands of flower and sandal paste that come as grace from the adored Deity, are reverently put on the body. The objects of all the five senses are thus sanctified and made liberal use of. The sensual is in this way transformed into the spiritual; the depraving into divinizing.

Of the two methods, that of the sense-control is negative and sense-sublimation positive. Though they seem antithetical to each other, the result produced by them is the same—purification of the mind. The negative method is given to the daring and advanced few and the positive to the aspiring many.

सर्वाणीप्रीतिुक्र्मर्मणि प्राणकर्मणि चापरे।
आत्मसंतग्नस्योगानां छहति ज्ञानादिपिते॥ २७॥

सर्वाणि इन्द्रिय-कर्मणि प्राण-कर्मणि धर्म परे।
आत्म-वन-श्रव-श्रग-वची छहति ज्ञान-दीपिते॥

*sarvāṇi 'ndriyakarmāṇi prānakarmāṇi cā 'pare ॥
ātmasanīyama yogāgnau juhvati jñānadīpīte ॥*
Others again offer all the actions of the senses and the functions of the life-energy, as a sacrifice in the fire of self-control, kindled by knowledge.

The category of mind is a combination of the sentient and insentient. Its function is very much like that of a piece of charcoal which when put into fire becomes ember and charcoal again when extinguished. Mind creates the link between the self within and the objects outside. When mind is suspended in wakefulness as it does involuntarily in sound sleep, the objective world experienced by it gets negated, when mind gets identified with Atman, like live charcoal, it assumes the characteristics of Atman. This identification of the mind with Atman is here referred to as the fire of self-control. This act is a great and rare sacrifice. When the mind gets merged in Atman, all the actions of the senses and life-energy automatically become sanctified. The performer of this Yajna becomes Brahman.

मा्लि 

90—20
dravyayajñās tapoyajñā yogayajñās tathā 'pare
svādhyāya jñānayajñās ca yatayah samsita vratāh

Yet others offer wealth, austerity and yoga as sacrifice, while still others, of self-denial and extreme vows, offer sacred study and knowledge as sacrifice. 28

There are other forms of Yajna suited to the sadhaka’s disposition and desert. Acquiring wealth by honest means and utilizing it for the public weal, is a form of Yajna. The scrap iron is melted and recast anew. Similarly man reforms himself through austerity or self-purgation. This is another form of Yajna. Constant practice of Rajayoga or Ashtanga yoga constitutes the Yajna of yet others. Sacred study is superior to secular study. It requires a good deal of self-preparation. Being established in wholesome habits is the result of extreme vows. Through devoted study and reverent exposition, the divine knowledge in one increases. This is done as an act of Yajna by some. That thing which a man devotedly contributes for the welfare of others multiplies in him. This is the law governing Yajna.
apâne juhvatī prânam prâne ’pânam tathā ’pare
prânâpânanagati ruddhvâ prânâyânaparâyanâh

The incoming breath juhvatī sacrifice prânam prâne in the outgoing breath prâne in the outgoing breath apânam incoming breath tathā thus pare others prânâpânanagati courses of the outgoing and incoming breaths ruddhvā restraining prânâyânaparâyaṇa prânâyâma parâyanâḥ solely absorbed in the restraint of breath.

Yet others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming, and the incoming in the outgoing, restraining the flow of the outgoing and incoming breaths, solely absorbed in the regulation of the life-energy.

There is close relationship between man's mentation and his breathing. The regularity or otherwise in the one has a corresponding effect on the other. Unwholesome mentations such as fear, lust and anger disturb and hinder the flow of breath. Calmness, contentment, affection and such like healthy attitudes lead to rhythm in breathing. Conversely, if the flow of breath be voluntarily regulated, its effect on mind is beneficial. Yogis took note of this fact and evolved the science of prânâyâma.

Breathing through the mouth is to be avoided. Air taken in through the nostril is known as apâna and that thrown out, as prâna. Inhaling is technically called pûraka; and exhaling, vechaka. Arrest-
ing the breath within or without is kumbhaka. Violent and incorrect practice of prānāyāma shatters the nerves and brings in neural complications. Correct practice of it heals diseases, tones the system, enhances health and pacifies the mind. Attractive and inviting as this science is, adepts in it are few and quacks many. A novice will therefore do well to refrain from it.

A yogi endowed with a serene mind may practise deep rhythmic breathing avoiding kumbhaka as far as possible. A good walker takes no note of his legs. Similarly a sadhaka who does good prānāyāma is hardly ever obsessed with it. Measured breathing and a blissful attitude constitute a good prānāyāma.

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्त्याणेऽणु जुहति ।
सर्वेद्वैतं यज्ञविदी यज्ञविष्कपितक्लमपा: । ३० ॥

अपरे नियमस्व-त-आ-हाराः प्राणान्त्याणु जुहति ।
सदेः शशिष एते यज्ञ-किद: यज्ञ-क्षतिक-कल्मपा: ।

apare niyatāhārāḥ prānān prāneṣu juhvati ।
sarve ’py ete yajñavidō yajñakṣapita kalmaṣāḥ ॥

अपरे apare other persons नियताहाराः niyatāhārāḥ of regulated food प्राणान् prānān life-breaths प्राणेषु prāneṣu in the life-breaths जुहति juhvati sacrifice सर्वे sarve all अष्ट अष्ठ api also ete these यज्ञविद्र: yajñavidāḥ knowers of sacrifice यज्ञविष्कपितक्लमपा: yajña kṣapita kalmaṣāḥ whose sins are destroyed by sacrifice

Still others of regulated food habit offer in the pranas the functions thereof. All these are knowers of Yajna, having their sins destroyed by Yajna. ३०
Partaking of wholesome food in a regulated manner is itself an aspect of yoga. It is like tuning the vina, in order to bring out the best music from it.

The modern medical world knows how to transfer warm and fresh blood from one body to another requiring to be revitalized. Eating and digesting is the natural way of vitalizing the body. One conserves life energy in oneself only by appropriating it from another life unit. Life lives on life. He, who is exclusively attached to his personal life is therefore a sinner. Performance of *Yajna* is the only way of redeeming oneself from sin. The individual life is dedicated to the service of the Cosmic Life, manifesting itself as millions of beings. This is what is meant by offering the functions of *prānas* in the *prānas* themselves. They who live for the common weal incur no sin.

The way of obtaining the Supreme is explained now—

यज्ञिमार्गतयुज्यान्ति यज्ञ समाजनम् ।
नाय लोकोद्वयन्तयस्य कुतोद्वयः कुलयन्त ॥ ३१

यज्ञ-वित्त अस्मि-सुजः यज्ञ यज्ञसंगो-हनम् ।
न अयुय लोक अति अयुयस्य कृत अन्यः कुत-सदृ-नमः ॥

*yajña* *sīṣāmṛta* bhuyo *yānti* brahma sanātanaṁ ।
nā 'yām loko 'sty ayajñasya kuto 'nyah kurusattama ॥

यज्ञिमार्गतयुज्यान्ति भुयाहिः eaters of the nectar—the remnant of the sacrifice यज्ञ यांति go ज्ञान brahma Brahman समाजनम् sanātanaṁ eternal न na not अयुय 'याम this लोकाहिः world अति asti is अयुयस्य
ayajñasya of the non-sacrificer तः kutaḥ how अन्यः anyah other कुः सत्तम kuru sattama O best of the Kurus

The eaters of the nectar, the remnant of Yajna go to the Eternal Brahman. This world is not for the non-sacrificer, how then the other, O best of the Kurus?

Whatever a man does must be conducive to the common welfare. The food consumed by him becomes nectar to the extent he relegates selfishness. Every act of self-denial aids man take a step towards perfection. And self-annihilation is the godliest of all of his endeavours. When the man in an individual is crucified, the divine in him manifests itself. He who offers his jivahood as oblation regains Brahmanhood, his Original State. There is no gain superior to the gain of Eternal Brahman.

When the very Highest can be gained by the performance of Yajna, the gaining of the lower things by this means would undoubtedly be easy. This earthy possession is verily the easiest for man to procure. But even this is not obtainable to him who fails to perform Yajna. The self-seeking man shrinks; he thrives nowhere; and the world views him with disdain. The attainment of heaven which is superior is beside the point to such a man.

What should the progressive man do then? The announcement comes:—

एवं वहुविष्णु यज्ञ चित्तता नास्तिकः पुष्के ।
कर्मज्ञानिविद्धः तान्संपर्किनः ज्ञात्वा विमोहयते॥ २२
Various Yajnas such as these are spread out in the storehouse of the Vedas. Know them all to be born of karma; and thus knowing you shall be free. 32

The four-faced Brahma, Veda, Prakriti, Nature, phenomenon, maya—all these terms refer to the same reality. The knower of Veda is he who knows how Nature functions. Nature is the embodiment of karma. And there is in it a divine design of karma. They who convert karma into Yajna construe and conform to the sacred plan of Nature. All the happenings in Nature are capable of being converted into Yajna. While karma in its ordinary form is binding, in the form of Yajna it is liberating.

How does liberation ensue? The clarification comes. —

श्रेयान्त्र्यमयमायाद्वाज्ञानयाद् परंतप ।
सर्वं कर्मांत्यं पार्थ हाने परिसमाप्ते ॥ ३३

श्रेयान् हथ्य-मन्याद यज्ञाद् हान-यह परस्-तप ।
सर्वं कर्मे स-लिङ्गु पार्थ हाने परि-सम्-आपु-य-ते ॥
sreyān dravyamayād yajñāj jñānayajñāhī paramātapa
sarvaṁ karmā 'khilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate

क्षेत्रात् श्रेयस्तत्र सर्वसन्धियोऽभ्यावते 

श्रेयस्तत्र सर्वसन्धियोऽभ्यावते

विशेषतः ज्ञान ज्ञेयमात्र यज्ञात् ज्ञान ज्ञेयमात्र

Knowledge-sacrifice, O Scourger of foes, is superior to wealth-sacrifice. All karma in its entirety, O Partha, culminates in knowledge.

Man lives to add more and yet more to his wisdom, and not to multiply his material possessions beyond proportion. Things material cannot be made more use of than the requirement. Over-possession fosters care and anxiety. He who gives himself over too much to mammon pays the penalty in the form of being lop-sided or stunted in intelligence. The man becomes earth-bound beyond redemption. Knowledge, on the other hand, develops into wisdom. It embellishes the personality, aids one to discern between the self and the non-self and leads man into enlightenment and liberation.

Magnificent temples attendant with elaborate and awe-inspiring ritualistic worship serve more to make man earthy than enlightened, more superstitious than spiritual, more drawn to the priests than to the prophets. A neat little sanctuary, on the other hand, serving as a symbol of the human tabernacle, takes man more effectively Godward. It tends toward jnana-vajna. The feeling that the
mind has to be kept as fresh and pure as a flower is more conducive to spiritual growth and enlightenment than offering a heap of it on the altar. The knowing man has less of the problems of life than the ignorant one. It is knowledge to intuit that one is Atman and not body. In that knowledge the karma of that individual gets absolved.

He is truly a man who has made money his slave, he is not fit to be called a man who does not know how to make use of money.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What other attitude aids the growth of knowledge and wisdom? The answer comes:—

The Supremacy of Knowledge — 34-39

तत्तदिद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवयाः ||
उपदेश्यान्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनास्ततः�र्शिनः || ३४
तद्व विद्धि म-नि-पालेन परि-प्रश्नेन सेवया ||
उप-देश्यान्ति वे ज्ञानम् ज्ञाति तद्-स्थ-दर्शिनः. ||

_tad viddhi pranipatena paripraśnena sevayā_
_upadeksyanti te jñānam jñāninas tatvā darśinaḥ_

_tat_ _tat_ that _viddhi_ _prapātana_ by long prostration _paripraśnena_ by question _sevaya_ _sevayā_ by service _upadeśyanti_ will instruct _te_thee _jñānam_ _jñānam_ knowledge _jñāninas_ the wise _tattvā_ _tattvā_ _darśinaḥ_ those who have realized the Truth

Seek that enlightenment by prostrating, by questions and by service; the wise, the seers into the Truth will instruct you in that knowledge.
A commercial attitude may be paying elsewhere but never in the realm of the knowledge divine. Even the secular study gets sanctified if the relationship between the teacher and the taught be wholesome. But the bond between the two in spiritual enlightenment is ever sacred: The disciple prostrates before the master as a mark of making himself over to the other. He adds to his attainments by raising submissive questions pertaining to the real and the non-real, bondage and freedom. Through a reverent personal service he offers himself as oblation in the sacrificial fire of the personality of the master. The body, speech and mind of the disciple are this way dedicated to the bestower of knowledge.

The master in his turn is all mercy to the disciple. He has no motive other than propagation of spirituality. As a burning lamp lights another, an enlightened soul alone can carry light to another competent enquirer. Spiritual fulfilment takes place this wise.

Of what avail are prayer and devotion to an aspirant who views his master as a mere human being? The disciple ought not to hold the master as a man. Before getting the vision of the Deity, the novice sees the form of the guru as a preliminary. This form metamorphoses into the Deity. The disciple thereby understands that God and guru are one and the same. The master awakens the spiritual consciousness in him. More than that, he leads the initiated into Brahman Itself.

If the aspirant is earnest about spiritual enlightenment, the Lord sees to it that he comes in contact with an enlightened one. Seek and the light is sent to you.

— Sri Ramakrishna
What is the hallmark of enlightenment? The answer comes —

यज्ञात्वा न पुनमोहक्ष्यति यास्यसि पाण्डवः ।
येन भूतान्य्योपेय द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयी ॥ ३५

yaj jñātvā na punar moham evam yāsyasi pāndava ।
yena bhūtāny asesena draksyasy ātmany atho mayī ॥

yat which jñātvā having known न na not पुन मोहम again मोहम delusion एवम evam thus यास्यसि yāsyasi will get पाण्डव pāndava O Pandava येन yena by this भूतानि bhūtāni beings असेसेना aseśena all द्रक्ष्यसि draksyasi (thou) see अत्मनि ātmani in (thy) self अथो atho also मयी mayī in Me

Knowing this, O Pandava, you will not again fall into this confusion; by this you will see the whole of the creation in your self and in Me.

Two apparently opposing detachments encountered each other at midnight and lay in ambush to deal on the enemy a decisive blow at daybreak. But to the surprise of both, they discovered in the morning that they belonged to the same army. Their attitude and action changed accordingly. The world is viewed by the ignorant as made up of conflicting forces. But with the dawn of enlightenment all diversities disappear. One Reality is presenting itself as the many.

Knowledge leads to unity ignorance to diversity

— Sri Ramakrishna
The means to transcend the evil of the many is now delineated:

अपि चेदसि पापेः सर्वः पापःक्तः ।
सर्वः ज्ञनःवेने द्विजसंसतिरिष्यसि ॥ ३६

अपि चेत् क्षति पापेः सर्वः पापःक्तः ।
सर्वः ज्ञनःवेने एव द्विजसंसतिरिष्यसि ॥

api ced asi pāpebhyaḥ sarvebhyaḥ pāpakṛttamaḥ ।
sarvam jñāna plavenai 'va vrjinaṁ samtariṣyasi ॥

अपि api even चेत् cet if असि asi (thou) art पापेः
pāpebhyaḥ than sinners सर्वः sarvebhyaḥ (than) all
pāpakṛttamaḥ most sinful सर्वम् sarvam all
ज्ञानःवेन jñāna plavena by the raft of knowledge एव eva
alone द्विजसंसतिरिष्यसि samtariṣyasi (thou)
shall cross

Even if you be the most sinful of all sinners, yet shall you cross over all sin by the raft of knowledge.36

Sin and virtue are the obverse and reverse of the same fact which is karma. According to the use made of it, the same karma presents itself as sin or virtue. The ignorant do karma so as to get entangled in it as sin. The enlightened do the same karma to reap merit and also to be emancipated from it. Knowledge therefore is the only means to absolve all sin. As the unfordable river is crossed over by a raft, the meshes of karma are got over by knowledge.

How does Jnana do away with karma? It is explained:

यथाधासि समिद्रान्वित्सात्तुसत्त्वेःव्यत् ।
झानामि: सर्वेक्षमाणि भस्सतसत्त्वे तथा ॥ ३७
As the blazing fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge reduce all karma to ashes.

While in ignorance the Jivatman shares in karma in all its three forms—samchita, ägamin and prårabdha. Of these three, the first remains stored up to bear fruit in the distant future and the second in the near future. The third is working itself out in the present body. The fire of knowledge destroys the first two and renders the third ineffective though operating. The Jnani pays no more heed to it than he does to the shadow of his body.

The solemnity that self-knowledge brings can never be over-emphasized—


na hi jñānena sādṛṣam pavitraṁ iha vindīyate
tat srayam yogasamsiddhah kālenā 'tmante vi datī
Verily there is no purifier in this world like knowledge. He that is perfected in yoga realizes it in his own heart in due time.

A man dreams that he is being tortured to death. All remedial measures adopted in that dream are of no avail to the victim. The dream requires to be snapped and the man brought to wakefulness. This done he clarifies to himself that nobody subjected him to torture and that his agony was his own creation. Wakeful state here is the purifier of the self-imposed ignorance in dream. Likewise, Self-knowledge cleanses man of the delusion of birth and death. It reinstates him in his original blessedness. Knowledge is, therefore, the best among the purifiers of man. The proper practice of karma yoga transforms the life of the yogi into jnana-yajna. His mind thereby gets purified and he becomes competent in course of time for Self-knowledge.

The baby takes ten months for its development in the womb. Similarly is there any time limit for the attainment of Jnana? The explanation comes:—
The man of sraddha, the devoted, the master of his senses obtains knowledge. Having obtained knowledge he goes promptly to the Peace Supreme. 39

In the midst of the devotion to the preceptor, whole-hearted service to him and searching inquiries into the nature of the real and non-real, the disciple may not be making rapid progress, due to lack of adequate zeal, the criterion for spirituality. To the extent sraddha or zeal beams in one, progress is made in the path of knowledge. One is said to be devoted when one's mind is given wholly to the Ideal. Perfect mastery over the senses is a prerequisite to the development of intuition. Variance in the fulfilment of these conditions leads to quick or slow gain of knowledge. The time factor for it varies from a trice to the duration of several births. Along with the gain of Brahma-jnana comes Peace that cannot be described.

"When will I have the vision of God?" asked an ardent disciple of the master. Instead of giving a direct answer he took the novice to the sea shore and held him immersed in water for
a while. He was then asked how he felt. "I thought I would die for want of air to breathe," came the answer. "Such a quest of God would reveal Him immediately," was the answer given by the master.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Doubt is Derogatory — 40-42

अस्रद्धाश्रद्धानां संस्कार्यमां विनास्यति ।

नायो लोकोदशितः न परो न सुखः संस्कार्यमां: ॥ ४० ॥

अस्रद्धां च अस्रद्धानां च संस्कार्यमां विनास्यति ।

अन्यम् लोकः आश्चर्य न परः न सुखम् संस्कार्यमां: ॥

ajñāḥ cā 'sṛradhāh nā ca samsāyātmā vinasāyatī ।

nā 'yāṁ lokośti na paro na sukham samsāyātmānāh॥

अज्ञात: ajñāḥ the ignorant च ca and अश्रद्धानां: aṣradadhānāh the faithless च ca and संस्कार्यात्मा samsāyātmā the doubting self विनास्यति vinasāyatī goes to destruction न na not अयत्म ayaṁ this लोकः lokaḥ world आश्चर्य asti is न na not परः parah the next न na not सुखम् sukham happiness संस्कार्यमां: samsāyātmānāḥ for the doubting self

The ignorant, the man devoid of sraddha, the doubting self, goes to destruction. The doubting self has neither this world, nor the next, nor happiness. 40

Ignorant is that man who is uninformed about Atman. Divine qualities such as self-confidence and noble effort are all born of sraddha; but doubt is the very negation of these great qualities. The doubting man does not trust anybody in the world. He suspects the words and deeds of the others. Through disbelief he alienates himself from the others and feels miserable. For want of faith in the right path he fails to pursue it and brings ruin to himself.
Fallen as he is, he neither enjoys this world nor is he fit for the next

Unless one has the faith of a baby one cannot have access to the Lord. If mother points to somebody and says, "He is your brother," the baby believes it. The grace of the Lord comes to him who has this kind of faith. The calculative and doubtful estrange themselves from the Divine

— Sri Ramakrishna

The way to cure oneself of doubt is as follows —

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माण ज्ञानसिद्धिसंस्थापयम्।
आन्मवन्त न कर्माणि निग्रसन्ति धनञ्जय॥ ४१॥

The one who has renounced actions by yoga ज्ञानसिद्धिसमस्थाप्यम्. ज्ञानसिद्धिसमस्थाप्यम् ज्ञानसिद्धिसमस्थाप्यम् ज्ञानसिद्धिसमस्थाप्यम्.

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणम् योग संन्यस्त कर्माणम् योग संन्यस्त कर्माणम् योग संन्यस्त कर्माणम् योग संन्यस्त कर्माणम् योग संन्यस्त कर्माणम् योग संन्यस्त कर्माणम्.

With work absolved in yoga, and doubts rent asunder by knowledge आत्मवन्तम् अत्मवन्तम् अत्मवन्तम् अत्मवन्तम् अत्मवन्तम् अत्मवन्तम् अत्मवन्तम् अत्मवन्तम्.

The mud fish remains unaltered by mud, though wallowing in it all the while. A yogi is he who is not tainted by karma though ever occupied with it. Nature is infallible. There is a divine plan and purpose in its functioning. It trains and disciplines the Jivatman stage by stage to perfection.

80–21
He who understands this does not fall prey to doubt, but applies himself with all earnestness to self-fulfillment in tune with the cosmic plan. This wholesome attitude and right application develop into enlightenment. The enlightened man, ever established in the Self, neither shuns work nor is entangled in it. In freedom he works.

Therefore, severing with the sword of knowledge this ignorance-born doubt about the Self, dwelling in your heart, be established in yoga. Stand up, O Bharata.

Doubt is the originator of all evils. It takes its stand on ignorance. In the night of ignorance, things cannot be viewed in their true perspective. Therefore understanding remains in a confused state. Ignorance and inertia are interrelated. The urge to be up and doing is absent in this drowsy
state. But at daybreak sleep is shaken off, things are seen in their true shape and the man goes about his work with all zeal. The dawn of knowledge is similar to this. It drives away the soul-killing doubt. Knowing and doing go hand in hand, and the man is at his best.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिपत्ति अहविद्वार्यां योगशाले
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ज्ञानकर्म सन्त्यासयोगो नाम
चतुर्थोध्व्यायः ॥

iti srimad bhagavadgītāsūpanisatus brahmavidyāyāṁ
yogasāstre sṛt kṛṣṇārjuna samvāde jñānakarma
samnyāsa yogo nāma caturtho 'dhyāyah ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fourth discourse designated

THE YOGA OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION IN KNOWLEDGE
SANYASA YOGA
CHAPTER V

Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa—Karma Pertains to Prakriti and not Parusha—Same-sightedness Ensues from Knowledge—Bliss of Brahman Different from Sense-pleasure.

Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa—1-13

अर्जुन उवाच
संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्णः पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।
यच्चैव एतयोऽर्कं तन्मेव बृहि सुनिधितमः ॥ १
समु-नि-आतम-कर्मणां कृष्णः पुनः योगम् च शंस-असि ।
नवं अवं एतं एतोऽर्के एकम् तत् मे बृहि कृतिम् नितम् ॥

arjuna uvāca

samnyāsam karmanāṁ kṛṣṇa punar yogam ca samsasi ।
yac chreya etayor ekam tan me brūhi suniscitam ॥

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

संन्यासम् samnyāsam renunciation karmanāṁ of actions kṛṣṇa O Krishna punah again yogam yogam yoga ca and ॠतसिस samsasi (thou) praisest यत् yat which ॠषय better एतयोऽ etayoh of these एकम् ekam one तत् tat that me me to me brūhi tell सुनिधितम् suniscitam conclusively

Arjuna said:

Renunciation of action, O Krishna, you commend, and again its performance. Of the two, which one is the better? Tell me that conclusively.

In Chapter IV verses 18, 19, 21, 24, 32, 33, 37 and 41 the Lord advocated the renunciation of action. But in the last verse of the same chapter he com-
mended the performance of action. Two conflicting courses cannot be adopted simultaneously. Hence Arjuna raises this doubt.

श्री भगवानुवाच  
सन्यासः कर्मयोगस्त नि:श्रेयसकराश्च ।
तयोऽस्तु कर्मसन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विदिषयते ॥ २
समृद्धां कर्म-योगः च नि:श्रेयस करी उभोः ।
तयोऽहुः कर्म-समृद्ध्यात्मः कर्म योगः वि: जिष्यते ॥  

sri bhagavan uvaca  
samyasaḥ karmayogas ca nihatreyasakaraḥ ubhau ।
tayos tu karmasamnyasaśāt karmayogama visiṣyate ॥  

śrī bhagavān uvāc Śri Bhagavāna said  
सन्यास सामन्यासः रेनुक्ति फर्मयोगः कर्मयो- 
गाह योगः अफ च ca and ni: śreyaśakara- 
rau leading to the highest bliss jagō ubhau both tayo: 
tayoh of these two tu tu but कर्मसन्यासात् karmasamnyā- 
śāt than renunciation of action कर्मयोगः karmayogah  
योगः अफ नविष्यते visiṣyate is superior  

The Blessed Lord said  

Renunciation and performance of action both lead 
to freedom; of the two, performance of action is 
superior to the renunciation of action.  2  

Mukti or the emancipation of the soul is con- 
tained in Sreyas, and it is the acme of the human  
life. It can be gained either by the renunciation of  
action or by its performance. The sacred Badrika-  
shrama in the interior of the Himalayas may be  
reached either by a plane or on foot. Of the two,  
the latter means is preferable because of the wide
experience and the fruitful contact with people that it brings. Karma yoga is akin to walking to Badrika-shrama, while karma sanyasa is like reaching that place by plane. Through the karma yoga method wide experience is gained, the divine possibilities in the human is being processed to perfection and benign communion with the Lord’s creation is established. These great purposes of life are denied to karma sanyasa.

The inexperienced player at a game of dice wants somehow to score a victory and he is intent on it. But an adept in it takes to the display of his talents first and attends to the gain next. Sadhakas who want to escape from the turmoils of the world are second to those who serve the world but are not bound by it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

*Karma sanyasa* too has its own reward. Blessings such as quietude and tranquillity ensue from it. Action, on the other hand, necessarily means disturbance of equilibrium. Objections to this effect may be raised; but they are met as follows:—

\[ \text{ते} \text{ निनित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेषि न काह्यति} \]

\[ \text{निन्द्रेते हि महाबाहो सुखं कामात्रामुच्यते} \]

\[ \text{ते} \text{ निमित्ते यह न द्वेषि न काह्यति} \]

\[ \text{निमित्ते हि महाबाहो सुखम् कामात्रामुच्यते} \]

\[ \text{जीयह} \text{ sa nityasamnyāsī yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣati} \]

\[ \text{nirdvandvo hi mahābāho sukham bandhāt pramucyate} \]

\[ \text{जीयह} \text{ should be known स: sak he} \text{ nityasamnyāsī} \]

\[ \text{nitya samnyāsī steady ascetic य: yah who न na not} \]

\[ \text{dveṣṭi hates न na not काह्यति kāṅkṣati desires निमित्ते} \]

\[ \text{nirdvandvah one free from the pairs of opposites} \]
हि hi verily महाबाहो mahābāho O mighty-armed तुहम् sukham easily कथान bandhāt from bondage प्रमुच्यते pramucyate is set free

He should be known a constant Sanyasin, who neither hates nor desires; free from the pair of opposites, O mighty-armed, he is easily set free from bondage.

It is not sanyasa if a man renounces duty due to dislike, neither is it sanyasa if he delights in escaping from duty. Selfishness masquerades here as self-denial. Then there is the man who mistakes the inertia in himself for equilibrium. His delight in slothfulness is interpreted as delight in the Self. It is not action but attitude that binds or liberates man. The emptiness of the posed tranquillity gets itself exposed in tribulation. But the karma yogi is proof against imaginary quietude. In the midst of intense activities he is free from likes and dislikes. True tranquillity is therefore tangible in him. While acting he is not the agent; while being in the world, he is not of the world. Therefore the karma yogi alone is the true karma sanyasi.

This subtle distinction is further elucidated:—

साह्ययोगोऽप्रथमभागः प्रवद्नति न पणिताः।
एकमभवाभिः सम्युग्मयोविन्दते फलम्॥

साह्य-योगोऽप्रथमभागः प्रवद्नति न पणिताः।
एकमभवाभिः आ-सिद्धस्य सम्यगुथायोः किरदते फलम्॥

sāmkhyayogau prthag bālāḥ pravadanti na panditāḥ
ekam apy āsthitāḥ samyag ubhayor vindate phalam
सांख्ययोगी samkhya samkhya (knowledge) and yoga (yoga of action or performance of action) प्रथक prthak distinct बाला: bālāḥ children प्रवद्दित pravadanti speak न na not पण्डिताः panditāḥ the wise एकम् ekam one अपि api even आस्थित: āśthitaḥ established in सम्यक् samyak truly उभयोः ubhayoḥ of both विनादते vindate obtains फलम् phalam fruit

Children, not the wise, speak of knowledge and performance of action as different; he who is truly established in one obtains the fruit of both. 4

Karma sanyasa which culminates in jnana is described here as samkhya. Those who do not understand the purport of the Scripture are designated as children. Theory and practice are interrelated and interdependent. Right understanding leads to right doing; right doing brings in right knowing.

The truth is this:—

एकं सांख्यमं च योगं च य: पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ ५
yat sāṁkhyaṁ ca yogam ca yah pashyati s pashyati ॥

yat sāṁkhyaṁ prāpyate sthānam
tad yogair api gamyate ॥

ekam sāṁkhyaṁ ca yogam ca
yah pasyati sa pasyati ॥

yat that सांख्य: sāṁkhyaḥ by the Samkhyaśāstra prāpyate is reached स्थानम् sthānam place तत् tat that योगः yogas by the yogis (karma yogins) अपि api also गाम्यते gamyate is reached एकम् ekam one स्थान्यम्
sāmkhyāṃ the Samkhya (knowledge) ca and yogam yoga (performance of action) ca and yah who pāṣyati pāṣyati sees sah he pāṣyati pāṣyati sees

The state reached by the Jnanis is also reached by the karma yogis. He sees who sees Jnana and karma-yoga as one.

Knowledge and action are the obverse and reverse of the same spiritually evolving entity. The one is not to the exclusion of the other. He who knows truly acts rightly. He who does things perfectly knows them in their true perspective. Know and do, or do and know, are interchangeable. The contact with the one side of a coin necessarily leads to the contact with the other side. Jnana and karma are in this wise two readings of the same spiritual attainment of the sadhaka. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahma. The knowing aspect here is sāmkhya and the becoming aspect, yoga.

Of these two paths which is more beneficial? The elucidation comes —

सन्यासस्तु महावाहो दुश्मान्तयोगः।
योगयुक्तो मुनिरेखा नन्दिरेखाथिपिच्छिति॥ ६॥

समू-निव-वास दु महा वाहे दु ब्रह्म भाज्यम अ-योगः।
योग-नयुक्त मुनि ऋषि नन्दिरेख आधि चच्छिति॥

samnyāsas tu mahābāho duḥkham āptum ayogataḥ
yogayuktō munir brahma nacirenā 'dhigacchati

Sānyās samnyāsah renunciation tu tu but mahāvāhe mahābāhe O mighty armed duḥkham hard bātunā āptum to attain ṛyogetat ayogataḥ without yoga yōgayuktāḥ yoga harmonized muṇi munih Muni āh
brahma to Brahman nacirena quickly अधिगच्छति adhigacchati goes

Sanyasa, O mighty-armed, is hard to attain to without karma yoga; the man of meditation, purified by karma yoga quickly goes to Brahman.

A tender and unripe fruit clings fast to the tree that bears and nourishes it; but when fully ripe it severs connection from its sustainer. Similarly, the karma yogi gets from Prakriti the experience that matures into wisdom. He is a philosopher who translates principle into practice. Theorization and make-believe have no place in his spiritual career. By experiment he knows that life in the supersenses is superior to that in the senses. The mind of the unselfish man is more magnanimous than that of the selfish one. Life blossoms better in him who lives for others than in him who lives exclusively for himself. Just as sound sleep is possible only for him who works hard, deep meditation comes to him who has negated his individuality in the service of others. It is self-denial that brings in purification of the heart. The one pure in mind becomes one with Brahman who is all purity. Here karma yoga fruitions in karma sanyasa.

The purification of the personality of the yogi takes place in this way:—

योगःक्रो विश्रूतात्मा बिजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुवेचनि न हिष्यते ॥ ७

योग-सुक: वि-श्रुद्ध-अत्म: वि-जित-अत्म: जित-इन्द्रियः ।
सर्व-भूत-वात्स-भूत-वात्स: कुवेवात् अष्टि न हिष्य-नये ॥
yogayuktō visuddhātmā vijñātātmā jītenādriyāḥ
sarvakṛṣṭātmā bhūtātmā kuryān api na lipyate

Yogayuktah devoted to the path of action
Visuddhātmā a man of purified mind
Vijnaatātmā one who has conquered the self
Jitenādriyāḥ one who has subdued his senses
Sarvākṛṣṭātmā one who realizes his
Self as the Self in all beings

With the mind purified by karma yoga, and the
self disciplined, and the senses subdued, one who
realizes one’s self as the Self in all beings, though
acting, is not affected.

There is a contrast between the earth bound
man engaging himself in action and the soul liberating karma yogi doing so. Bondage increases in the
former and diminishes in the latter. The action of the
yogi not being motivated by any desire, his understand-
ing gets progressively clarified. As his desires
in all forms get liquidated his self-control tends to
perfection. The desirelessness in him gets transformed
into clarity of understanding. This clarity itself
ultimately becomes the intuition which cognizes the
one Cosmic Consciousness apparently appearing as
the multitudinous forms of consciousness. Karma
yoga itself is karma sanyasa because it brings in these
successive stages of spiritual enlightenment.

An individual has the delusion, ‘I am the doer’ as long
as the philosopher’s stone has not converted the base metal of
his mind into the noble one of the divine eye. When he is in
ignorance he entertains the feelings of agency such as ‘I am the
doer of this virtuous act,” and “I am the doer of this vicious act.” This attitude is the cause of the continuation of the wheel of birth and death. But when one realizes God, one is freed from the feelings of agency and bondage. One remains convinced in the truth that God is the real doer of everything.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The signs of freedom from the bondage of karma are as follows:

नैव विशिष्टकरोमीति युक्तः सन्येत तत्त्वविवः
पश्चाभ्यानस्यात्मानं ज्ञातात्मवेशः सन्
हृदया मीनुस्मुद्भवं ज्ञातात्मवेशः सन्
इन्द्रियानां न वर्तन्ते इति भाषयति

पाठान् युक्तं स्वरूपं बिज्ञानं अस्मात् गच्छन् सन्धनं
हृदया विन्दुस्मुद्धरं गहनं उद्वः विपुनं विनिपुरं अवि
इन्द्रियानि इन्द्रिय-अर्तं वर्तन्ते इति भाषयति

nai ’va kincit karomi ’ti yukto manyeta tattvavit
paśyaṁ srīvan spṛsaṁ jighrann asnan gacchan svapaṁ
svasan

pralapan visṛjan grḥnam unmīsan nimīsan api
indriyāṇि ’ndriyārthasu vartanta iti dhārayata

ना ना not eवa even किंचित kincit anything करोमि
karomi I do इतi thus युक्तः yuktah yogi सन्येत manyeta
thinks तत्त्वविवः tattvavit the knower of truth पाठान्
pas- yan seeing श्रवणं srīvan hearing स्वरूपं spṛsaṁ touching
गंग्रान् jighrann smelling अस्मात् asnan eating गच्छन्
gacchan going स्वपनं svapan sleeaping इति svasan
breathing

प्रलापं pralapan speaking विस्रजन visṛjan letting go
gṛhan grḥnam seizing ज्ञातात्मवेशः unmīsan opening (the eyes)
निर्मिति निन्दित closing (the eyes) यथा api also ज्ञात्रः प्रणि इन्द्रियानि the senses संत्रयांक्षु इन्द्रियार्थेशु amongst the sense-objects वर्तन्ते वैरान्ते move इति iti thus प्रायम् dhārayan being convinced

The sage centred in the Self should think, “I do nothing at all”—though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, emptying, holding, opening and closing the eyes—firm in the thought that the senses move among sense-objects.

All activities pertaining to bodily existence take place in the non-Self. The Self is actionless. The knower of the Self is therefore free from agency. The person seated in an automobile does not himself move. He identifies himself with the moving vehicle and says, “I am going.” The person who blurs in sleep is not in reality the agent of that act. A man absorbed in some deep thought is not aware of the taste of the dish he partakes. In all these cases the activities are not actually of the persons concerned. Similar to these, the Jñāni established in Atman is not the doer of the activities going on in the body, the senses, mind, intellect and the life-energy called prāna.

He who comes to know that he is only an instrument in the hands of the Lord, has no egoistic feeling. He is aware that he is only a tool with which God has His work done. Such a man causes harm to nobody. The poison of egoism is no more in him. A steel knife becomes a gold knife with the touch of the philosopher’s stone. Though the form of the knife is there, it is not useful any more for cutting. Similarly the Jñāni retains a seeming individuality, but no ignorance born activity occurs in and through him.

—Sri Ramakrishna
What is the relationship between the Jnani and the karma that takes place through him? The clarification comes:

कर्माणि सङ्गमि त्यक्तवा करोति यः |
लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रभिमवाम्भसा || १०

कर्माणि आ-भा-य कर्माणि सङ्गम त्यक्तः त्य करोति यः |
लिप्यते न स: पापेन पद्म-पलमु इव अभ्यम्भसा ||

brahmany adhaya karmani sangam tyaktvā karoti yah |
lipyate na sa pāpena padma patram ivā 'mbhasā ||

कर्माणि brahmani in Brahman आधाय शंगम having placed कर्माणि karmāni actions सङ्गमः sangam attachment त्यक्तः tyaktvā having abandoned करोति karoti acts यः |
yah who भिन्यते lipyate is tainted न na not स: saḥ he पापेन pāpena by sin पद्मपलमु padma patramā lotus leaf इव ivā like अभ्यम्भसा ambhasā by water |

He who acts, abandoning attachment, dedicating his deeds to Brahman, is untainted by sin as a lotus leaf by water.

The life, growth and sustenance of the lotus are all dependent on water. It dries away when severed from it. While constantly in touch with it, the lotus leaf does not permit being wetted with water. Man is born with karma and sustained by it. While fully availing himself of it, the yogi does not get affected by it.

How does the yogi avail himself of karma? It is explained:

कायेन सनसा तुदूच्या केतन्निन्त्रित्विषयि ।
योगिन: कर्म कृयात्त तदं त्यक्तवत्मशुद्धम || ११
kāyena manasā buddhyā
kevalair indriyair api
yoginah karma kuryanti
sangam tyaktvā 'tmasuddhaye

kaśeṣe mānasaḥ buddhaḥ
ekave śraddhāḥ api
yogīṁ kāma kavyaṁ kurya
sāngasaḥ tyaktaḥ 'tmasūddhaye

The yogi, abandoning attachment, performs work with the body, the mind, the intellect and the senses only, for self-purification.

The motive-power of desire creates the evil of attachment and propels the mind and the senses on baneful missions. When the evil is eliminated the instruments become available for the service of the divine. The more they are engaged on holy purposes the better they get sanctified. Self-purification is effected this way. Karma is verily the means to this great end.

Elucidation through contrast comes as follows —

युक्त: कर्मेन त्वम-कल्पम् शान्तिमार्गिति नैषिकिंक्रोः ।
अयुक्त: कामकारणं फले सको निविष्णवे । १२

युक्त तम-कल्पम् श्यामतम् वासु तत्त्वतः नैषिक्षिष्ठिं ।
अयुक्त तम स्वरेण फल नान्त-त नि बुध विवेचं ॥
yuktah karmaphalam tyaktvā sāntim āpnoti naiśthikīṁ
ayuktah kāmakāreṇa phale sakto nibadhyate ||

युक्तः: yuktah the united one (the well poised) कर्मफलक्षणम् karma phalam fruit of action त्याग्यत्वः tyaktvā having abandoned शान्तिम् sāntim peace आपनोति āpnoti attains नैस्थिकीम् naiśthikīṁ final अयुक्तः: ayuktah the non-united one कामकारेṇ kāmakāreṇa impelled by desire फले phale in the fruit (of action) सक्तः: saktah attached निषद्ध्यते nibadhyate is bound

Abandoning the fruit of action, the yogi attains peace born of steadfastness; impelled by desire, the non-yogi is bound, attached to fruit. 12

Performance of karma is common to both, the yogi and the non-yogi. But the difference between the two is in the disposition. The feeling of agency to action is no more in the former. Whatever takes place through his instrumentality is the Lord’s work. His steadfastness consists of his mind being released from work and of its being immersed in the Lord. In this state of the mind there is no anxiety; there is calmness instead; the mind gets itself steadily purified. It becomes fit for enlightenment. On the other side, the non-yogi gets entangled in work; anxiety is on the increase in him.

The exuberance of the spiritual mood of the yogi is further elucidated as follows:—

सर्वखम्पणि सभस्ता संन्यस्यस्यस्ते सुर्ख्यवस्ती ।
नवहरे पूरे देही नैव कुवेच्छ कारयत् ॥ १३

.सर्व-खम्पणि सभस्ता सम्प-विभिन्न आसु-ते सुर्ख्यवस्ती ।
नव-हरे पूरे देही न एव कुवेच्छ न कारयत् ॥
saryakaṁñi manasā samnyasyā 'ste sukham vasi
navadvāre pure dehti nai 'va kurvan na kārayan

svekāraṁ sarva karmāni all actions munya manasā by
the mind śanvāya samnyasya having renounced aatā
āste rests sukuṁ sukham happily vaṁ vasi the self-con-
trolled navaṁre navadvāre in the nine-gated yūre pure in
the city dehi dehti the embodied na not eva even
kurvan acting na not kārayan causing to act

Having mentally renounced all actions, the self-
disciplined indweller rests happily in the city of nine
gates, neither acting nor causing to act.

Karma varies in pattern according to the
temperamental difference. There are also forms of
karma distinct in themselves. The indispensable
one among them is the obligatory work, nitya karma,
such as eating, sleeping, bathing and praying. By
doing these acts no new merit is acquired but by
failing in them there is a sure set back. Naimitya
karma are special activities that are performed on
occasions such as Sivarātri, Ekadasi and eclipse
Kamya karma or desire-impelled activities are those
performed for certain earthly ends. Again, there
are the nishiddha karma, the prohibited acts that run
counter to ethics. While the obligatory works alone
go on automatically by sheer force of habit, the yogi
does not engage himself in any of the other forms of
karma. This is possible because he is completely
rid of egoism and agency.

The body with its openings is aptly compared to
a city of nine gates. Like a monarch, Atman stays
enthroned in this citadel the administration of which is carried on by the ministry of egoism, mind, intellect, life-energy and the senses. The reign over the region of the body lasts until the momentum of the *prārabdha karma* gets exhausted. Even while residing in the body, the consciousness of it and domination over its activities is entirely absent in the yogi. Self-revelling in Its own glory is the gain that the yogi has.

The yogi holds that all activities belong to Iswara and not to himself. Is Iswara then the real doer of all deeds? The answer comes:—

*Karma Pertains to Prakriti and not Purusha — 14-17*

\[\text{na kartrtvam na karmāni lokasya srjati prabhuh} \]
\[\text{na karmaphala samyogam svabhāvas tu pravartate} \]

\[\text{na na not kartrtvam agency na na not karmāni} \]
\[\text{karmāni actions lokasya for this world} \]
\[\text{srjati creates prabhuh the Lord na na not karmaphala} \]
\[\text{samyogam union with the fruits of} \]
\[\text{actions svabhāvas nature tu tu but pravartate leads to action} \]

The Lord does not create agency or actions for the world; He does not create union with the fruits of action. Nature does all this. 14

Due to ignorance the individual self identifies himself with Nature or *Prakriti* and assumes owner-
ship over karma and its consequences. Actually, all work belongs to Nature and not to Atman. It is further explained—

नाद्दे कस्यचित्तपार्थ न चेत सुकृते विभुः।
अज्ञाननाश्वत ज्ञान तेन मुद्यन्ति जन्तवः॥

न आ दस्ते कृत चिद पापः न एव स्वकृतम् विभुः।
अ-ज्ञानम् आ दस्तम् ज्ञानम् तेन मुह्यं वन्नति जन्तवः॥

nā 'datte kasyacit pāpam na ca tva sukṛtam vibhuh |
ajñānenā 'vṛtam jñānam tena muhyanti jantavyah.||

na na not ādattē takes kasyacit of
any one pápam demerit na na not ca and eva
even sukṛtam merit vibhuh the Lord ajñānen
ajñānas by ignorance ajñānatm avratham enveloped jñānam
knowledge tēna by this mucyantī are
deluded jnānich jantavyah beings.

The Omnipresent does not take note of the merit or demerit of any. Knowledge is veiled by ignorance; mortals are thereby deluded

Prakṛti or Nature is constituted of five elements—akāsa, vāyu, agni, āpah and prithivi (ether, air, fire, water and earth.) Akasa which is equated with space, is the substratum on which the other four elements play their parts. Good and evil emanate from them in the course of their interaction, but Akasa remains unaffected by these modifications. In the same way Iswara remains unaffected by the merits and demerits in beings. A crystal glass seems to take the hue of the flower brought to its proximity, but actually the crystal remains ever itself. Similarly, Atma seems to take the characteristics of
Prakriti, while actually It does not. People who are in ignorance impose the traits of Prakriti on Atman and get deluded.

The relationship between Purusha and Prakriti is very well explained in these two verses. Iswara is Bliss and Perfect Poise. Karma has no place in His Blessedness. Prakriti gets itself vitalized in the proximity of Purusha. Jivatman gets bound when he identifies himself with Prakriti; he gets emancipated when he detaches himself from Prakriti. And this is the essence of Vedanta.

The burning lamp gives light to one and all, all round it. Some use that light for cooking their food, others for reading sacred books and yet others for forging false documents. The merits and demerits in these several acts do not in any way affect the light coming from the lamp. In this wise the consciousness equally present in all beings makes all sorts of activities possible in them because of Its proximity. The good and bad deeds, however, of beings do not go to the Pure Consciousness, which is Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna

If it is a fact that the Lord does not take note of the good and bad acts of people, why then should they be exhorted to do good and eschew evil? The answer comes:


dhanen tu tadavam paryam nashitamastman: 1

tepamadityatvaham prakarahspiriti tatparasm 1 16

dhanen tu tad avam avam nashitam astman: 1

tepam adityatvaham prakarahspiriti tatparasm 1 16

jnanena tu tad ajnanam yesam nasitam atmanah 1
tesam adityavaj jnanam prakasayati tat param 1
SANYASA YOGA

by wisdom the ignorance is destroyed. The self knowledge like the sun reveals that highest.

Shining like the sun, knowledge reveals the Supreme in them, in whom ignorance is destroyed by Self-knowledge.

Darkness vanishes when the sun rises, ignorance ceases to be with the dawn of knowledge. As the sunlight reveals things in their true perspective, Self-knowledge or Brahma-jnanam posits the Reality of Brahman and the evanescence of Prakriti. The knower of Brahman knows he is Brahman and none else.

The process of getting at Self-knowledge is now explained —

tadbuddhayas tadātmānas tannīsthās tatparāyanāh ।
gachchhanty apunārāśrītum jñānāntardhūtakalmaśāh ॥ १७

intellect absorbed in that their self being that established in that with that for their supreme goal go not again returning
Those who think on That, merge in That, get fixed in That, have That as the goal, they attain to non-return, their taints being dispelled by knowledge.

The sun can never see darkness wherever it may go. It is ever in brilliance. The knower of Brahman has nothing but Brahman to cognize. Distinctions such as inside and outside do not exist for him. One undivided, interminable consciousness is for him. The man of this experience does not take birth again; he attains *mukti*.

Brahman is experienced vaguely through discrimination, somewhat vividly through meditation and in Its Original Splendour in Samadhi.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How are we to know of the state of liberation while yet living in the body in the mundane world? The elucidation comes:

Same-sightedness Ensues from Knowledge — 18-19

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि चैव श्यापके च पणितता; समदस्विनः || १८
विद्या-विनय-संपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।
शुनि च एवं श-पके च पणितता; सम-दशिनः ||

*vidyā-vinayasaṃpanne brahmāne gavi hastini ।
shuni chāv śyāpake ca paniṭṭa; samadvisuḥ || 18*

विद्याविनयसंपन्ने *vidyā vinaya sampanne* upon one endowed with learning and humility ब्राह्मणे ब्रह्म्मने on a Brahmana गवि gavi on a cow हस्तिनि hastini on an elephant शुनि shuni on a dog च ca and एवं eva even श्यापके
svapāke an outcaste ca and पण्डिताः panditāḥ sages समद्विंति sama darsināḥ seeing equality

Men of Self-knowledge are same-sighted on a Brahmana imbued with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and an outcaste. 18

Sunlight fails equally on all things. It makes no difference between the sacred Ganga and sewage water. The knower of Brahman cognizes Brahman only everywhere. The distinction which the worldly make among beings, is born of ignorance. To them an ideal Brahmana is one who is to be revered. An outcaste is one who is to be shunned. Among men the former is topmost in rank and the latter the last. Similarly, among animals the cow is to be revered, the elephant admired and the cur kept aloof. But the man of Self-knowledge does not see into the assumed differences in men, animals, birds and other creatures. He cognizes the same Omniscience present in all these forms which are unreal. The Jñāni sees truly while the worldly see erroneously.

Nescience creates plurality and difference among beings. Omniscience reveals unity behind the seeming multiplicity.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Is it possible for the worldly to rise up to this same-sightedness in all beings? The dictum comes —

इहैवै तैलिंवित्र सभौ वेयो साम्ये स्थितं मनः।
निन्दिवेव हि सम गय तस्मादेकाणि ते स्थिता॥ १९
इहैवै जित सम वेयाम् साम्ये स्थितम् मनः।
निरू-प्रेरयं हि समु बहु तस्मात भद्राणि ते स्थिता॥
Thy mind and mine are of the same mind; there is no difference between the two.

Transitory existence is overcome even here by them whose mind rests on equality. Brahman is flawless and the same in all; therefore they are established in Brahman.

Objects appear distorted when seen through a heterogeneous glass; but they present themselves just as they are when seen through a homogeneous glass. A clean and even glass causes no hindrance to right apperception. Mind in man occupies the position of the spectacles. A vibrant mind cognizes phenomenon outside; a mind in equilibrium cognizes noumenon or the Thing-in-Itself which is Brahman. As there is no vibration in Brahman It is the same in all. It is Pure Consciousness and therefore there is no modification in It. Changes such as increase, decrease and transformation do not take place in It; and for this reason It is said to be flawless. Those who have gained equanimity of mind are able to cognize Brahman. Once obtained, this intuition becomes permanent. No interruption whatsoever takes place in it. They that remain in Brahmanyastha
or Cosmic Consciousness transcend transitory existence. They are not therefore bound by the limitations of this world even while living in it.

_Maya_ is compared to the snake in motion and Brahman to the same snake at rest. Kinetic energy is _Maya_ and potential energy Brahman.

—Sri Ramakrishna

How to know that there is no blemish in the knower of Brahman? It is explained thus—

_Bless of Brahman Different from Sense-pleasure_—20-29

न प्रह्येविन्य ग्राभ्य नोविन्य चाप्रिययां।
स्थिरविद्वसमुद्रे ब्रह्मचिद्वकणः स्वित। ॥ २० ॥

न प्रह्येविन्य विग्रह्य न-अश्व-य न उद्विशेष ब्रह्म-न्य प्रीवयम।
स्थिर-विद्व अस्मूद्र ब्रह्म-विद्व ब्रह्मचिद्वकणः स्वित। ॥

_na prahṛṣyet priyam prāpya_

no 'dvijet prāpya ca 'priyam।

sthirabuddhir asammūḍho

brahmavid brahmanī sthitah।

न na not प्रह्रेषय प्रह्रेषय should rejoice विप्रयम प्री-यम the pleasant ग्राभ्य prāpya having obtained न na not उद्विशेष 'dvijet should be troubled ग्राभ्य prāpya having obtained च ca and अविप्रयम aprīyam the unpleas-\n
nt स्तिरविद्वि sthirabuddhiḥ one with steady intellect अस्मूद्र asammūḍhaḥ undeluded ब्रह्मविशय brahmavit Brahman-knower ब्राह्मण brahmanī स्वित: sthitah established

Established in Brahman, with firm understanding and with no delusion, the knower of Brahman rejoices not, getting what is pleasant and grieves not, getting what is unpleasant.
Likes and dislikes, happiness and misery—feelings of this kind are all associated with one’s entanglement in the body. He who thinks of himself as the body gets deluded. But he who is established in Brahman is completely free from mentation.

What remains in the man from whose mind lust and greed are entirely eliminated? The Bliss of Brahman beams in him. — Sri Ramakrishna

The characteristics of one who is established in Brahman are as follows:—

बाह्यस्पर्शेषु ब्रह्मयोगायुक्तत्माः स विन्दत्यात्माः विन्दतिः विन्दतिः विन्दतिः विन्दतिः
स ब्रह्मयोगायुक्तत्माः स विन्दत्यात्माः विन्दतिः विन्दतिः विन्दतिः विन्दतिः
ब्रह्मस्पर्शेषु सहस्त्रस्तु न योगायुक्तत्माः स योगायुक्तत्माः स योगायुक्तत्माः स योगायुक्तत्माः

bāhyasparsēṣu asaktātmā vindati ātmāni yat sukham ।
sa brahmayogā yuktaṁśa sukham akṣayam aṣnute ॥

bāhyasparsēṣu in external contacts the one whose mind is unattached finds the Self which \( \text{sukham} \) happiness \( \text{sah} \) he with the self engaged in the meditation of Brahman \( \text{sukham} \) happiness \( \text{akṣayam} \) endless enjoys

With the self detached from the external contacts he realizes the bliss in the Self. Devoted as he is to the meditation of Brahman, he enjoys imperishable Bliss.

Those pleasures are perishable which are born of contact with the objects outside. They are styled...
sense-pleasures. The purified mind enjoys the Bliss of Atman; and this Bliss suffers from no mutation. It is therefore held as being imperishable.

There are signs of the awakened ones — those that have got into Atma bodha. Those blessed ones are like the mythological Chakravaka bird which, even when parched with thirst to the point of death, does not alight on earth full of water, but seeks to slake it with the rain water only if and when available up in the sky. The God-intoxicated ones revel only in Him and in nothing else.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Why are sense-pleasures shunned by the enlightened? Because:

\[
\begin{align*}
ye \text{ hi } & \text{ samsparsaj\text{ä} bhog\text{ä} du\text{k}h\text{kayonaya} eva te } \\
\text{\textit{ādya anta vantaḥ kaunteya na teṣu ramate} budhah } \\
ye \text{ ye which hi verily samsparsajaḥ contact-born bhogaḥ bhogāḥ enjoyments du\text{k}h\text{kayona-}
\text{yäḥ generators of pain eva only te te they \textit{ādya anta vantaḥ} having beginning and end kaunteya O Kaunteya na na not teṣu teṣu in them rama-te rejoices duṣu budhāḥ the wise one }
\end{align*}
\]

The delights that are contact-born are verily the wombs of pain; they have, O son of Kunti, a beginning and an end; no wise man rejoices in them.

Misery to which man is so much prone is ever the outcome of the search for sense-pleasure. When the senses create contact with their objects, the
initial agreeableness presents itself as pleasure. The prolongation of the contact as well as the separation of the senses from their objects transforms itself into misery. Like a flash of lightning the sensation called pleasure appears and disappears, and man pays dearly for it in the form of pang. The discerning one refrains oneself from this empty game, while the sense-bound one hunts after it.

If people ever sighted a venomous cobra, they used to supplicate, "O deity of deadliness, may you hide away your head from our sight and present the powerless tail alone to our view." It is good to recoil in this manner from sense-objects that drag down the mind. Instead of falling prey to them and then praying for redemption, it is better ever to keep aloof from them.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What measures ought one to adopt to do away with desire? The clue is given:—

शक्तोत्हैः यो सोद्रु ग्रावशीरचिमोक्षणात् ।
कामकोथोज्ज्वं बेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ २३
शाक्ती-नैति इह एव यः सोभम् आकृ वीरविन-मोक्षणात् ।
कम-मींथ-उदु-अष्ट्रं बेगम् स: युक्तः स: सुखी नरः ॥

saknoti 'hai 'va yah sodhum prāk sariravimokṣanāt
kāmakrodhodbhavāṁ vegam sa yuktah sa sukhī narah

शक्तिः saknoti is able इह iha here (in this world)
एव eva even यः yah who सोहम् sodhum to withstand आकृ
prāk before sariravimokṣanāt liberation from the body कामकोथोज्ज्वं kāma krodhodbhavāṁ born
of desire and anger बेगम् vegam the impulse स: saḥ he
युक्तः yuktah yogi स: saḥ he सुखी sukhī happy नरः narah
man
He who is able to resist the impulse of desire and anger even here before he quits the body—he is a yogi, he is a happy man.

Desire or its counterpart anger is bound to make its appearance as long as life lasts in the body. They are capable of raising their hoods even while man is at the point of death. It is in and through indulgence, indulgent observation and covetous imagination that desire thrives. Anger, its negative expression, sprouts when the sense-objects prove themselves unpleasant. Desire fostered in the mind expresses itself in the physique by directing the senses covetously on their objects, there is then a longing for them visible in the countenance. Anger has its physical expression as perspiration, throbbing of the body, quivering of the lip and reddening of the eyes. A yogi is he who has quelled the impulses of desire and anger. This done, the bliss of the Self becomes tangible to him.

Lust and greed have immersed people in sin. If you behold women as the embodiments of the Divine Mother, you will escape from the snares of lust and its aftermath, misery.

God vision is impossible until desire is vanquished.

— Sri Ramakrishna

To whom is the bliss of Brahman possible? The Lord clarifies:

मोडन्तः सुप्रोक्तरामस्तथान्त्वस्योत्तिरेव यः ।
स योगी वहनिर्वाणं वर्णभूतोश्विगच्छति || २४

ग अन्त शुद्ध अन्त-आरामः तथा अन्त योगि एव यः ।
म यागी अभ्र निर्विलामः अभ्र भूत अभि मच्छिति ||
yāt sukho 'ntarārāmas tathā 'ntarjyotir eva yahi
sa yogi brahmanirvānam brahmacāto 'dhigacchati

व: यह who अन्तःसुक्खः antah sukhaḥ one whose happiness is within अन्तःसुखवत्वः antarārāmaḥ one who rejoices within तथा tathā also अन्तःसुखवत्वः antarjyotih one who is illuminated within एव eva even व: यह who सः sah that योगी yogi ब्रह्मानिर्वाणम् brahma nirvānam absolute freedom ब्रह्मसूतः brahma bhūtaḥ becoming Brahman अधिगच्छति adhigacchati attains

He whose happiness is within, whose delight is within, whose illumination is within only, that yogi becomes Brahman and gains the Beatitude of Brahman.

The ignorant man hunts for happiness in the external world. He fancies he is obtaining it there; but no sooner he clutches at it, than it vanishes. This is due to happiness not being inherent in things external. The projected happiness is actually in the Self. Similarly, repose and joy are in the Self and nowhere else. In search of enjoyment the senses get extroverted, only to be foiled. Atman is Bliss; therefore, real happiness is in Itself. In short, whatever is sought after externally, is actually in oneself. The core of one’s being is Brahman, realizing which, everlasting Beatitude is gained.

Knowledge is not for him who is attached to the world. Enlightenment and bliss ensue in direct proportion to disentanglement with the sense-objects.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Furthermore:—

उमने नद्यानिर्वाणम् दीपकल्प्याः: ।
खिङ्घैर्या यतात्मान: सर्वभूतिते रताः ॥ २५ ।
labhante brahmanirvānām rsayah kṣinakalmasāh
chinnadvaidhā yatātmānāh sarvabhūtaḥ tute ratāḥ

With sins destroyed, doubts (dualities) removed, minds disciplined, being delighted in the welfare of all beings, the Rishis attain the Beatitude of Brahman. 25

Rishis are they who have realized the substratum of all the things. Perfect enlightenment is theirs because of complete detachment from the mundane. Though detached, they engage themselves in the welfare of all. Because of complete self-control they commit no sin. The Beatitude of Brahman is theirs as a matter of course.

Their excellence is further elucidated —

kāma krodha viyuktānām yātānāṁ yatacetāsām 1
abhito brahmanirvānām vaśate vidistātmanām 1
कामक्रोधितिज्ञानाम् kāma krodha viyuktānāṁ of those who are free from desire and anger वतिनाम् yatinnāṁ of the self-controlled ascetics यतेचेतसाम् yata cetasāṁ of those who have controlled their thoughts अभिताक on all sides श्राविष्मणं brahma nirvāṇam absolute freedom वर्तते vartate exists विदितात्मनाम् viditātmanāṁ of those who have realized the Self

The Beatitude of Brahman is both here and hereafter for those Sanyasins who have shed lust and anger, subdued their minds and realized the Self.

Nyasa is sublimation; Samnyasa or Sanyasa is total sublimation. This is the positive meaning of the word Sanyasa. Negating the phenomenon is its negative meaning. In whichever way Sanyasa is practised, the attainment of the Beatitude of Brahman is the result. The Sanyasin is no more conscious of the body than the ordinary people are of their shadows. He is therefore liberated even while in the body. The here and hereafter become one endless Brahmāvastha to the Sanyasin.

Mind has to be vanquished for the attainment of Beatitude. The process is as follows:

स्पर्शन्यत्वा चतुर्विष्काश्याम्यान्त्वतायेंत्यत्र: ।
प्राणायामैं सत्य ब्रह्म नासात्मन्त्रवचारिणोऽि ॥ २७

येषुत्तमतेषुविद्यक्तिनिर्दर्शस्यपरायण: ।
विगतेष्वरायामक्रौऽव सदा धुतक एव सत: ॥ २८

स्पर्शन्यत्वा ब्रह्म नासात्मनात्तब्रह्मायांत्वतायेंत्यत्र: ।
प्राणायामैं सत्य नाय वचारिणोऽि ॥ २९
śparśan kṛtā bahir bāhyāms
caksuṣa caī 'vā 'ntare bhruvoh
prānāpānau samau kṛtā
nāsābhīyatantaracārīnau

yatendriya manobuddhir munir mokṣa parāyanaḥ
vigatecchā bhaya krodho yah sadā mukta eva saḥ

Śparśāṁ, śparśāṁ contacts kṛtā rendering
bahiḥ outside bāhyāṁ external cakṣuḥ
eye (gaze) ca and eva even antare in the
middle bhruvoh of the (two) eyebrows prānāpānau
the outgoing and the incoming breaths
samau equal kṛtā kṛtā having made nāsābhīyatantaracārīnau
nāsābhīyatantaracārīnau moving inside the nostrils

 yatendriya manobuddhīḥ with senses, mind and intellect controlled munih the sage
mokṣa parāyanaḥ having liberation as
his supreme goal vigatecchā bhaya krodhaḥ free from desire, fear and anger yah who sadā
for ever muktaḥ free eva verily saḥ he

Shutting out external objects, fixing the gaze
between the eyebrows, equalizing the outward and
inward breaths moving in the nostrils, the sage who
has controlled the senses, mind and intellect, who is
solely pursuing liberation, who has cast away desire,
fear and anger, he verily is liberated. 27-28

When sound and other sense objects are excluded
from the mind, they are said to have been shut out.
The eyes remain half closed in meditation, their
gaze simply seems to be fixed between the eyebrows
while actually they are at rest. The breath exhaled is called *prāṇa* and that inhaled, *apāna*. Regulating and harmonizing the inward and outward flow of breath is called *Prāṇāyāma*. Stilling the mind and equalizing the passage of breath either way through *Prāṇāyāma* are interrelated. When mind ceases to function, breath stops, and when breath stops mind ceases to function.

Mind gets disturbed and depraved every time desire, fear and anger make their evil appearance in it. The reflection of an object gets hazy and broken on the surface of disturbed water. Likewise the presence of Atman is obscured in a disturbed mind. It should first of all gain quietude through the conquest of desire, fear and anger. Meditation then becomes easy and spontaneous.

*Muni* is the original word for sage. He is a *Muni* whose mind flows incessantly towards the Lord. He is liberated who is established in Pure Consciousness.

The next chapter elaborates on the ideas contained in these two stanzas.

Directing the mind incessantly towards Iswara, how should the *Muni* behold Him? The answer comes:

```plaintext
भोजारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वोक्षमहेष्वरम्।
हृदसं सर्वःनृतात्वा जात्वा मां शान्तिं मृणुः॥ २९
भोजारम् द्व-तपसाम् सर्व-लोक-भाव-हेष्वरम्।
हृदसं सर्व-सुसानाम् जात्वा माम् शान्तिम् अजुन्छिति॥

bhoktāram yajñatapasāṁ sarvaloka mahēsvaram
suḥdām sarvabhūtānām jñātvā māṁ sāntim rechati
```
bhoktāram the enjoyer yajña tapasām of sacrifices and austerities sarva loka mahēśvaram the great Lord of all worlds suhṛdām friend sarvabhūtānām of all beings jñātvā having known mām me shāntim peace rcchati attains

Having known Me as the Lord of Yajnas and asceticisms, as the Ruler of all the worlds, as the Friend of all beings, he attains Peace.

It is through the grace of the Lord that the earnest souls take to the performance of Yajnas and practice of asceticism. The Lord again is the goal of their great endeavours He is the Overlord of the entire universe. Not only does He rule over all, but also protects them as their genuine Friend. He resides as Conscience in the hearts of all beings and assigns the fruits of their various activities. As karma emanates from Him, knowledge and wisdom also come to beings from Him. The Mun who gives his ceaseless thought to these divine glories of the Lord gains supreme Peace.

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fifth discourse designated:

SANYASA YOGA
Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa—The Favourable Environment—
The Method—The Criterion for Progress—Progress in Yoga—
Perfection in Yoga—The Restive Mind has to be Resisted—The
Fate of the Imperfect Yogi—Yoga is Unparalleled.

Karma yoga is Karma sanyasa — 1-9

श्री भगवानुवाच
अनास्रित: कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति य: ।
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निराधिन्न साक्षिकः ॥ १ ।
\[अन्न-शा-शि-तः कर्म-फलम् कार्यम् कर्म करोति यः।
सः सदू-शा-शि-च योगी च न निरू-शा-शि: न च अ-क्रियः।\] ॥

sri bhagavan uvaca

anāsritaḥ karma phalam kāryam kārma karoti yah ।
sa samnyāst ca yogī ca na niragnir na cā 'kriyāḥ ॥

श्री सगवानुवाच sri bhagavan uvāca Sri Bhagavan said:

अनास्रित: anāsritaḥ not depending (on) कर्मफलम् karma phalam fruit of action कर्मम् kāryam bounden कर्म karma duty करोति karoti performs यः yah who सः sah he संन्यासी samnyāsi Sanyasi (ascetic) च ca and योगी yogī yogi च ca and न na not निराधिन्न nir agniḥ without fire न na not च ca and अक्रियः akriyāḥ without action

The Blessed Lord said:

He who discharges his duty without seeking its fruit, he is the Sanyasin, he is the yogi; not he who is without sacred fire and without rites.

People in general have a misconception about sanyasa. That the Sanyasin should not shoulder any
responsibility and that he should be a drone, is the prevalent notion. Lighting fire is a symbol of performing Yajna. The general wrong belief is that the Sanyasin is not to do any altruistic work. Arjuna's plea that he would not engage himself in the impending war and that he would beat a retreat and live on holy alms, is an example of this wrong idea. But the Lord's contention is different. What He upholds is the true practice of Vedanta. No person should ever discard action. Each has his duty and it has to be well executed. Among the doers of duty, he is a Sanyasin, he is a yogi, who discharges duty for duty's sake and in no way attached to the fruits of his action. Because of the renunciation of attachment to work and its effect, he is a Sanyasin and because of his doing the duty very efficiently he is a karma yogi.

What is then the relationship between karma sanyasa and karma yoga?

The explanation comes:

य संन्यासमिति प्राहुयोगेः त विद्मि पाण्डवः।

न दस्ते संन्याससाक्षी योगी भवति कस्यन् ॥ २॥

मनः मदनः य-असम् इति प्राहुः योगाः तस्मि विद्मि पाण्डवः।

न हि अ-सम्व-निः-समु त समं-निः योगी भवति क-सम् ॥

yam samnyasam iti prahur yogam tam viddhi pandava || na hy asamnyastasamkalpo yogi bhavati kacana ||

Yam which sannyasam renunciation iti it thus prahu (they) call yogam yoga that viddy viddhi know pandava O Pandava na not hi ili verily asamanysatam sam-
kalpaḥ one who has not renounced thoughts 顶 left yoga 
顶 left yogi सबचि bhavati becomes कश्चन kaścana anyone

Know that as yoga, O Pandava, which is called Sanyāsa; for none becomes a yogi without renouncing Sankalpa.

It is sankalpa to create a formative imagination in the mind about the fruits of action. Sankalpa is the selfish motive behind an action. It is actuated by desire. Endless projects taking place in the mind, one nullifying or modifying the other are all born of sankalpa. He who is a prey to it can never become a yogi. Sanyāsa is the renunciation of sankalpa. He who succeeds in renouncing it qualifies himself for the practice of yoga. Strength of mind is his who practises yoga. Only a man of strong mind can meditate as well as discharge his duties very efficiently. This is how sankalpa sanyāsa and karma yoga become identical.

How sanyāsa augments yoga is being explained now:

आरुक्षोऽवेष्योऽङ्ग कर्म कारणसुच्चते ।
योगारुक्ष्य तस्येऽः कारणसुच्चते ॥ २

शा-कर्त्ता: सुने: योगम् कर्म कारणम् उच्यते ।
शोग-शा-कर्त्ता तस्य एव शम: कारणम् उच्य-य-दते ॥

ārurukṣor muner yogam karma kāraṇam ucyate ।
yogārūḍhasya tasyai 'ya samaḥ kāraṇam ucyate ॥

आरुक्षोऽः ārurukṣol wishing to climb सुने: munel of a Muni or sage योगम् yogam: yoga कर्म karma action कारणम् kāraṇam the cause उच्यते ucyate is said योगारुहस्य yogārūḍhasya of one who has attained (to
yoga) तत्य tasya of him एव eva even शम: samah inaction (quiescence) कारणम् kāraṇam the cause ज्ञाते ucyate is said

Karma is said to be the means of the Muni who seeks to attain to yoga; serenity is said to be the means when he has attained to yoga.

He is a Muni in the making who applies himself ardently to the practice of meditation. Though practising regularly, his mind does not easily get concentrated. It wanders away in spite of himself. In that case the yogi ought to engage himself eagerly in karma yoga. The non-yogi who busies himself with the work he undertakes, is rewarded by nature with sound sleep at night. The yogi is busier definitely in the discharge of his duty, but with no attachment and selfish motive. Good concentrated meditation is the reward he gets for his disinterested work. He can know this fact by experience day by day. Clarity of mind is the result of deep meditation. It is this clarity that gets itself settled as serenity. Through proper meditation the mind gets poised in equilibrium. As the crystallization of a stuff takes place in a restful condition, so the mind gets fixed in equilibrium through meditation. On the attainment of serenity it becomes fit for all purposes personal and public. Deep meditation is the yogi's personal activity in which he delights in the sublimity of the Self. At other times the external work that he carries on is done to perfection. Serenity is the sure means for his attaining all these excellences.

Serenity is the foremost of all the accomplishments of the yogi. From this divine gift emanate
merits such as unison, equality, truthfulness, good conduct, steadfastness, straightforwardness, non-injury to beings and detachment from the world.

What are the marks of the yogi who has attained perfection in yoga? The explanation comes:—

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मसंज्ज्ञाते ।
सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगार्धस्तदोष्टे ॥ ४ ॥

यदा हि न इन्द्रिय-अर्थेषु न कमेत्र विद्व-प्राप्ते ।
सर्व-समु-कल्य नन्न-निवासी योग-आर्थेषु: तस्मां उच्च-य-ते ॥

Yadā hi ne 'ndriyārtheṣu na karmasv anuṣajjate ।
sarvasamkalpasamnyāst yogārūḍhās tado 'cyate ॥

Yadā yadā when hi hi verily na na not indriyārtheṣu in sense-objects na na not karmasu in actions anuṣajjate anuṣajjate is attached sarvasamkalpasamnyāst renouncer of all thoughts yogārūḍhaḥ one who has attained to yoga tadā then ucyate is said

Then alone is one said to have attained to yoga, when, having renounced all Sankalpas, one does not get attached to sense-objects and actions.

Yogārūḍha is one who has attained the acme of yoga. Human perfection reaches its zenith in him. Deep dhyana or the meditation of the yogi develops into samadhi or Enlightenment. In this state, the external world which is the projection of the mind; is no more for him. There is no mentation in him to manipulate the senses. ‘As in sound sleep, so in this self-sufficiency and beatitude of samadhi the obligatory duties even get suspended. Freed from
sankalpa, his mind is calm like an ocean without waves. In this plenitude of bliss the thoughts of this world and of any others likely to come, are all blotted out. The Eternal Presence alone is.

Desires and doings are all born of sankalpa.

— Manu II-2

O desire, I know wherefrom you take your origin. You are born of sankalpa. I shall refuse to make sankalpa of you. Annihilation then, is your lot.

— Santi Parva 177-25

The brilliant presence of Iswara cannot be perceived in that mental firmament which is disturbed by the gale of desires.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What should, therefore, the sadhaka do? The injunction is:

उद्यद्वात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसाद्येत् ।
आत्मेऽव नात्मानो चन्द्रुरास्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ ५ ॥

उद्दोगेष्व ज्ञात्मन ज्ञात्मानम् न ज्ञात्मानम् यद्वानाद्वैते ।
ज्ञात्मा पुन हि ज्ञात्मा: कथा: तथा गुण: ज्ञात्मा पुन रिघु: ज्ञात्मा: ॥

uddhared ātmanā 'tmānam nā 'tmānam avasādayet ।
ātmaī 'va hy ātmano bandhur ātmaī 'va ripur ātmanah ॥

उद्देहरेत uddharet let (him) lift ज्ञात्मन ātman by the self ज्ञात्मन ātmānam the self न na not ज्ञात्मनम् ātmā- nam the self अवसाद्येत् avasādayet let (him) lower ज्ञात्मा ātmā the self पुन eva only हि hi verily ज्ञात्म: āt- manah of the self कथा: bandhuḥ friend ज्ञात्मा ātmā the self पुन eva only रिघु: ripuh the enemy ज्ञात्म: ātmanah of the self
Let a man raise himself by his own self; let him not debase himself. For he is himself his friend, himself his foe.

One is oneself responsible for one's distinction or debasement: The contributions that others make in these respects are secondary. It is but usual that one complains that one's enemy has done havoc to one. But no one can be hurt without oneself contributing to it. It is possible for a sadhaka to avail himself of a wrong done to him by his enemy for self-purification. Because of misunderstanding and maladjustment man paves the way for self-debasement. And by doing so he becomes his own enemy. On the other hand, by right understanding and right conduct he elevates himself and thereby becomes his own friend. One is one's own arch-friend or arch-foe. The one that understands this fact, learns an invaluable lesson for life.

No one courts enmity; friendship alone is sought after by all. That being the case, how shall one choose to be one's true friend? The solution is offered on this wise:—

\[
\text{वन्तृत्वात्मायात्मस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जित: ।}
\text{अनात्मयात्मस्तृशुत्वः वर्तेतात्मनिर्मिते श्रद्धवत् ॥ ५ ॥}
\text{वन्तृत्व: आत्मा आत्मन: तस्य येन आत्मा एव आत्मना जित: ।}
\text{अनृ-आत्मन: दु श्रद्ध-रवी वर्ते-हृत्व आत्मा एव श्रद्ध-वत् ॥}
\text{bandhur ātmā 'tmanas tasya yenā 'tmai 'vā 'tmanā}
\text{jitāḥ ।}
\text{anātmanas tu sattrute varietā 'tmai 'vā satruvat ॥}
\]
कथु bandhuh friend आत्मा ātmā the self आत्मन ātmanah of the self तस्य tasya his वेन yena by whom आत्मा ātmā the self एव eva even आत्मन ātmanah by the self जित jītaḥ is conquered अनात्मन anātmanah of unconquered self तु tu but शत्रुष्के satruve in the place of an enemy चर्चा varteta would remain आत्मा ātmā the self एव eva even शत्रुष्के satruve like an enemy

To him who has conquered his (base) self by the (divine) self, his own self is the friend; but to him who has not subdued the self, his own self acts as the foe. 6

The base and the divine are the two mutually opposing natures at work in man. When either of them predominates the other gets vanquished. Where the body, mind and senses are under perfect control, the divine nature prevails and pulls the man up. Progressively he evolves into high orders of existence. But when he submits to the base nature it ruins him completely. The foe outside hurts or attempts to hurt occasionally. Even then it is possible for the self-disciplining yogi to turn that adverse situation to advantage, every ordeal calmly handled adds to the calibre of one's mind. The foe of the base nature within oneself, on the other hand, is constantly causing havoc. The reckless man therefore is personally responsible for the evils that he has brought on himself. He is the worst enemy of himself. The yogi is the only one who is a genuine friend of himself causing self-emancipation in all respects. Barring him, the others are enemies of themselves in varying degrees.

Both bondage and freedom are in the minds of men. "I am a liberated soul, I am the child of God, none can bind me —
If one can assume this attitude with firm conviction one becomes liberated. If a man bitten by a venomous snake strongly suggests to himself that there is no poison, he falls no prey to the bite.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the benign good that the self-emulating yogi can do to himself? The answer is:

जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।
शीतोष्णसुखदुःख्क्षेपु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ ७

जित-आत्मनः प्र-शान्तस्य परस-आत्मा सम-आहितः ।
शीत-उष्ण खुल-दुःख्क्षेपु तथा मान-वल-मालयोः ॥

 jitātmanah prasāntasya paramātmā samāhitaḥ ।
sitoṣṇasukhadukkheṣu tathā mānāpamānayoh ॥

 jitātmanah of the self-controlled prashāntasya prasāntasya of the peaceful paramātmā the supreme Self samāhitaḥ balanced sitoṣṇa sukha dukkheṣu in cold and heat, pleasure and pain tathā as also mānāpamānayoh in honour and dishonour.

The self-disciplined and serene man’s Supreme Self is constant in cold and heat, pleasure and pain, as also in honour and dishonour.

The good and evil that befall the yogi through the agency of the elements in nature and the living beings, do not in any manner affect him. The external world is not viewed by this man of self-mastery as benign or malign. Clarity of mind is his who is established in self-control. His mind reveals the Supreme Self enshrined in it. To the yogi this holy revelation is superior to everything else. Once contacted, this holy cognition becomes constant.
Fluctuations in nature such as heat and cold, praise and censure do not affect him any more than the ravings of the delirious patient affect the operating surgeon. Indifferent to everything else, the yogi is in constant communion with the Supreme Self. This is the Sreyas sought after by the wise.

The mind that delights in its communion with God detaches itself easily from sense-pleasure. This is how the devotees get themselves emancipated. Contrary to this, the mind that delights in the mundane gets entangled

—Sri Ramakrishna

The constancy of the yogi is further explicated on:—

ज्ञानविद्वान् तुषारम् कुटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।
युक्तं इत्युपयुपलेयोगी समतोष्टाश्मकायनः ॥ ८

ज्ञान-बिज्ञञ तृप्त-त-आर्यं कुटस्थं विजित-न्द्रियं ।
युक्त-त त्रिति उः-य-ने योगी सम-तृष्णा-क्रम-वाणः ॥

jñāna-vijñāna trpātmā kūṭastho vijñendriyaḥ ।
yukta ity ucyate yogī sama loṣṭāsaṁ kāncahaḥ ॥

ज्ञानविद्वान्तुषारम् jñāna-vijñāna trpātmā one who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom (self-realization) kūṭasthaḥ unshaken vijñendriya. vijñendriyaḥ who has conquered the senses yu̇kṣa yuktaḥ united or harmonized tri tī thus ucyate is said yogī yogī sama loṣṭāsaṁ kāncahaḥ one to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same

That yogi is steadfast who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom, who remains unshaken, who has conquered the senses, to whom a clod, a stone and a piece of gold are the same.
The clarity of understanding obtained through the intellectual pursuit and pious study of the scripture goes by the nomenclature, *jnana* or knowledge; but this is not sufficient in itself. It has to culminate in *vijñāna*—intuition which is mentioned here as wisdom. The Truth cogitated upon becomes cognized and the yogi delights both in the process and attainment. While everything else in nature shifts and changes, Akasa or space alone remains ever itself. Similarly the Self is the substratum behind the fleeting universe. It is therefore termed as *kāstha*. The senses get quelled subsequent to the mind being controlled. The achievement of the yogi is that he is the conqueror of the senses. Mud pie and toys are of immense value to children; but adults look on those things with indifference. While the worldly-minded ones grade the values of a clod, a stone and a piece of gold, the yogi beholds them all as modifications of the transient nature. He views all the things of the world with an equal eye, his mind being established in Brahman.

Worldly people are they who seek after the impermanent things of the earth. Godly people are they who seek God and nothing else.

― Sri Ramakrishna

Inert things are all viewed with an equal eye by the yogi; but how does he view people of varying status? The clarification comes:

trinsicitydasaqri sahasradepragnaahu ।
saasvamya va paapeuu samvdhinitishyate ॥ ९
He stands supreme who has equal regard for friends, companions, enemies, neutrals, arbiters, the hateful, the relatives, saints and sinners.

It is but natural for an ordinary man to react differently with people in varying levels of attainments and relationship. They are not normal human beings if they did not behave appropriate to the worth of the persons they contact. But the yogi’s angle of vision is different. To him the whole world is a stage. Beings in it are all different manifestations of the same Divinity. As the actors of the different characters in a drama are all viewed alike by the stage manager, the yogi has nothing but a benign attitude even to those hostile to him. His supremely benevolent attitude is the greatest gift made by him to the conflict-ridden humanity.

When seen from the plains the grass on the lawn and the deodar tree on the border of the lawn present strikingly contrasty pictures. But if they be seen from the peak of a mountain they would all blend into one even verdure. Similarly the earth-
bound man views one as a sovereign and another as a sweeper, one as father and another as son, and so on. But after intuiting God, these differences vanish. There is no more of the good and the bad, the high and the low. God-perception alone prevails everywhere.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the self-preparation that one ought to undergo to come by this universal outlook? The process is presented:

The Favourable Environment — 10-11

योगी युन्जित सततपरात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरियिः ॥ १०

योगी युन्जित सत्तमं आत्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।
एकाकी यत-चित्त-आत्मा निरू-आशी: व-परि-पहः ॥

yogi yuñjita satatam ātmānām rahasi sthitah
ekāki yatacittātmā nirāstr aparigrahaḥ

योगी yogi the yogi yuñjita let him keep the mind steady satatam constantly ātmānām self rahasi in solitude sthitah remaining ekāki alone yatacittātmā one with the mind and body controlled nirāshī free from hope aparighraḥ free from greed

A yogi should always try to concentrate his mind living alone in solitude, having subdued his mind and body and got rid of desires and possessions. 10

It is in solitude that the mental worth of one is truly seen into. When an aspirant shuts himself up in a room, he knows that there are people in the other rooms and they know that he is confined to a particular room. A setting like this does not fulfil the condition of the sadhaka being alone in solitude.
Others should not know of his whereabouts and he should have none but God to commune with. The thought of food rushes to the forefront when one chooses to fast. Akin to it, the untrained mind becomes more turbulent when placed in solitude, suppressed desires would then try to gain ground. But if the mind chooses to commune with the Divine, instead, it augurs well for it. That is really the state of desirelessness. It is by being alone in solitude that one's mind can truly be assessed by oneself.

He is not a good chauffeur who has not learnt to apply the brake properly and stop the motor car. The human body may be likened to a car. People have learnt ever to drive it on, but they do not know how to suspend its activities voluntarily. Instead of being masters of the body, they are slaves to it. He is a yogi who has learnt to make proper use of the body and to keep it quiet at his will. Quieting down the body and mind is meditation.

Minimizing the bodily requirements is imperative for spiritual advancement. He is a yogi who has reduced his bodily needs to the bare minimum. And no thought whatsoever is to be given to the possession of those few things, lest they should interfere with his meditation. Relinquishment of possessions and idea of possessions, is a prelude to good meditation.

The truly virtuous man is he who commits no sin even when he is all by himself. That is no virtue which is practised for fear of public opinion. He alone is established in self-control who does not lustfully think of a woman in privacy or in public.
He alone is established in self-control who does not cast a covetous eye on the gold coins that he comes across even in a deserted house. That alone is virtue which is practised quietly and unostentatiously.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What sort of setting ought one to have for the practice of meditation? Here is the direction given:

शूचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरसंस्मात्मनः ।
नात्स्युचित्तं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोजरम् ॥ ११

शूचौ देशे प्रति-स्थाप्य स्थिरम् भासनम् भासमः ।
न-अति-उद्ध-श्रितम् न-अति-नीचम् चैल-अजिन-कुश-उत्तरम् ॥

sucau dese pratiṣṭhāpya sthiram āsanam ātmānāḥ ।
nā ’tyucchritam nā ’tinctam cailājina kusottaram ॥

शूचौ sucau in a clean dese spot pratiṣṭhāpya having established sthiram firm āsanam seat ātmānāḥ his own n na not ati chitrā- 

tam āti ucchritam very high n na not ati nīcam very low chail ājina kūra uttaram

caila ajina kusa uttaram a cloth, skin and kusa-grass one over the other

Having firmly fixed in a clean place, his seat, neither too high nor too low, and having spread over it the kusa-grass, a deer skin and a cloth, one over the other;

There is a close relationship between the environment and the cast of the mind of the person placed therein. Living in a dirty hovel naturally leads the dweller to baseness and depression of mind. Living in a clean place of natural beauty invigorates and elevates the mind.
Seats like a lounge, a swing or a hammock are no good for meditation. A heap of grass or pebbles, a pile of logs — things such as these are also to be avoided. A rock or a platform constructed about two feet above the ground is quite suitable for this purpose. One would feel dizzy if the pedestal be too high. A seat on the ground would provide no protection against creeping insects. The provision on the platform, of a sacred kusa-grass mat, a deer skin and a cloth, one over the other would make an ideal seat for meditation.

How should one practise meditation? The process is explained:—

The Method — 12-15

तत्रेक्षणाम मनः कृत्वा यत्चित्तेनिद्रियक्रिया ।
उपविश्वसनेयुञ्जयोगमातमवियुग्धये ॥ १२

तत्र एकाक्षम मनः कृत्वा यथस-स्व-बिलं-इन्द्रिय-क्रिया ।
उप-विपश्य-य आस्त-अन्य युञ्जया सौम्यम् आत्म-सत्य-हुम्हस्ये ॥

tatrai 'kāgram manah kṛtvā yatācittendriyakriyāy āpavisyā 'sane yuñjyād yogam ātmavisuddhayeye ॥

तत्र tatra there एकाक्षम ekāgram one pointed मनः manah the mind कृत्वा kṛtvā having made यताचित्तेनिद्रियक्रिया yata cittendriya kriyā one who has controlled the actions of the mind and the senses उपविश्य upavisyā being seated आस्ते āsane on the seat युञ्जयात्य yuñjyāt let him practise योगम् yogam yoga आत्मवियुग्धये ātmavisuddhayeye for the purification of the self.

Sitting there on his seat, making the mind one-pointed and restraining the thinking faculty and the senses, he should practise yoga for self-purification. 12
Mind loses its innate purity to the extent it contacts objects through the senses. It is very much like the rain water contacting the earth and becoming muddy. Suspending the senses and resting the mind in the Self is the only means to reclaim it to its original state. Like bathing and cleansing the body with water, mind has to be purified by repeatedly merging it in the Self. And this process is life-long. It is to be as obligatory as bathing and eating. The power and potentiality of the mind increases as it progresses in self-purification.

Milk gets easily mixed with water; but if it is churned into butter and put in water it floats maintaining its individuality, instead. Man’s mind that easily gets lost in the sense-objects has to be cultivated in devotion to the Lord in solitude. Worldly contact that comes subsequent to the development of devotion to the Lord causes no harm.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Should the body be in any manner disciplined to bring about concentration of mind? The injunction in this respect is:

समम कायशिरोग्रीवधारणसह शिरः ||
संख्रेष्ट्यानासिकांग्राम् दिशार्धानकलाकारयन् || १३
समाय काय-शिरो-ग्रीव-धारण-अश्रय-श-चतुर्थ-शिरः ||
सम-न-ईक्ष्यानासिकाः-अग्रम् समयां दिशत: न अनु-शय-शोक-अयन् ||

saman kāyasirogrivam dhārayann acalam sthirak
sampreksya nāsikāgram svam disas ca 'navalokayan'

saman samam erect kāya shri: śriyam kāya siraḥ grivam
body, head and neck dharayam holding akchatm
acalam still shri: sthirak steady sānpreksya
gazing at naśikāgam tip of the nose śma
Let him hold the body, head and neck erect and still, gazing at the tip of his nose, without looking around.

When the body, head and neck are held erect, the spinal cord becomes vertical. In this posture harmonized breathing takes place easily and freely and good thoughts come in naturally. The posture assumed for meditation should be firm, facile and deliberate. Consciousness of the body is got over in this manner. As the mind calms down in meditation, the eye-balls assume steadiness and seem as if they are gazing at the tip of the nose, while actually at rest. In meditation all modifications of the mind merge in the Self beaming as Bliss or as Pure Consciousness.

When a bird is brooding on her eggs for hatching, she puts on a vacant look taking no notice of things around her. Even such is the case with the eyes of the yogi in meditation.

In meditation there is one-pointedness of the mind. Then eyes see not and ears hear not, body becomes inert, as it were. Any snake crawling on the body is not sensed then by the yogi, nor does the snake apprehend any danger from its contact with the human body.

—Sri Ramakrishna

If there be any trace of mentation while in meditation, how does the yogi engage that pacified mind? The blissful brooding is now dilated upon:

पशान्तात्मा विगतमन्त्रेंखचारितते स्थितः
मनः संयम्य महिचो युक्त आत्मेशत मत्यः

14
Serene and fearless, firm in the vow of a Brahmacari, subdued in mind, he should sit in yoga thinking on Me and intent on Me alone.

That mind is said to be serene, which is as placid as a rippleless lake. As there is in the yogi a heroic deliberation to train the mind this way, fear finds no place in him. He is a Brahmacari who, untouched by lust, is pure as a baby in thought, word and deed. As his mind has not been allowed to become Satanic, subjugation of the mind is a matter of course with him. No two conflicting things simultaneously occupy one's mind. The yogi's mind is dedicated to serve and commune with Paramatman only. He is therefore ever intent on Iswara.

When a person observes the vow of Brahmacarya rigidly for twelve years he develops a new sensory nerve known as Medhanadi. It is the intuitive faculty. Intricate and knotty problems of life are no problems to him. That penetrating faculty makes it possible for him to intuit Iswara as well, it being the acme of enlightenment.

— Sri Ramakrishna
Sreyas or the good flowing out of yoga is explained now:

युञ्जनेवं सदा त्मानं योगी नियतमानं।
शान्ति निर्वैर्ग्यानं मत्स्वस्थामिष्णीति॥ १५॥

युञ्जन सनं एवं सदा बायनमपि योगी निय-यम्-मानं।
शान्तिििि निर्-वाण-परमाः मदु-सधू-स्थाम अधि-भवचित्ति॥

युञ्जन evam sadā 'tmānam yogi niyaratmanānasah
sāntim nirvānāparamāṁ matsamsthāṁ adhi-gacchati॥

युञ्जन yuñjan balancing एवम् evam thus सदा always बायनम्भ ātmānam the self योगी yogī yogi नियतमानं: niyata mānasah one with the controlled mind शान्तिः sāntim to peace निर्वैर्ग्यानं nirvāna
c-paramāṁ that which culminates in Nirvana (Moksha) matsamsthāṁ abiding in me अधिगच्छति adhi- gacchati attains.

Keeping himself ever steadfast in this manner, the yogi of subdued mind attains the Peace abiding in Me and culminating in Nirvana.

Hunger is appeased by the one who partakes of food. The Peace of Blessedness comes to him who has reached the culmination of yoga. As heat is inherent in fire, Peace pertains to Paramatman. This Peace or sānti is synonymous with mukti or emancipation. And this is the fruit of yoga.

The one who newly visits a city must first procure a good lodging for himself. Then he may roam about the city, seeing many interesting things. If the lodging be not fixed first, at sunset he will have difficulties in that respect. Similarly, the man who has newly come into this world shall have to seek the everlasting shelter first at the feet of the Lord. Then he may
live in this world care-free and go about his undertakings. Otherwise, the sunset of death will harass him much.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What are the regulations that the yogi has to observe in his earthly life? They are presented as follows:—

The Criterion for Progress — 16-20

नायङ्गशतस्तु योगोअस्ति न चैकान्तमानश्ततः ।
न चाति ब्रम्हशीलस्य जायते नैव चातुर्यन् ॥ ९६

न च अन्तिः अस्व-नत: तु बोगः अति ।
न तु अन्तिः स्वप्न-शीलस्य जायत: न एव न अस्व-नत: ॥

nā 'tyaṣnatas tu yogo 'sti na cai 'kūntam anaśnataḥ ।
na cā 'tisvapnasīlasya jāgrato nai 'va cā 'rjuna ॥

न na not अत्यङ्गतः: atyaṣnataḥ of one who eats too much तु tu verily बोगः: yogāḥ yogāḥ अति asti is न na not 
च ca and एकान्तम् ekāntam at all अत्यङ्गतः: anaṣnataḥ of one who does not eat न na not च ca and अतिर्वास्तीलस्य 
ati svapna sīlasya of one who sleeps too much जायत: jāgrataḥ one who is awake न na not एव eva even च ca and अस्व-नत: arjuna O Arjuna

Yoga is not possible for him who eats too much or for him who abstains too much from eating; it is not for him, O Arjuna, who sleeps too much or too little.

The wire of a vina snaps if tightened too much and becomes devoid of music if loosened too much. In the art of partaking of food, the yogi is to act like a properly tuned vina bringing out the best music. If he over-eats he becomes a dullard; if he under-eats he becomes weak. In regard to the quantity
and sort of food, one's physique is not the standard for another's. Each sadhaka has to fix them for himself. Sleep brings rest and relaxation and tones the system, but over or under indulgence it aggravates Tamas or inertia, which is a hindrance to the practice of meditation.

Eat sumptuously in the daytime, but let your food at night be sparse and easily digestible.

A sadhaka ought to help himself to that food only which is not heating to the body and exciting to the mind.

— Sri Ramakrishna

And what are they that conduce to yoga? They are delineated —

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तेष्ठस्य कर्मेनुः ।
युक्तासमावनोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ १७

युक्त ज्ञा धार-विहारस्य युक्त-चेतस्य कर्मेनुः ।
युक्त-धान्य-खण्ड-रेरोधस्य योग भवति दुःखहा ॥

yuktāhāra vihārasya yukta cestasya karmasu ।
yukta svapnāvabodhasya yogo bhavati duḥkhaḥ ॥

युक्ताहार विहारस्य yukta ahāra vihārasya of one who is moderate in eating and recreation (such as walking etc.) युक्तेष्ठस्य कर्मेनुः yukta cestasya karmasu of one who is moderate in exertion in actions युक्त स्वप्नावबोधस्य yukta svapna avabodhasya of one who is moderate in sleep and wakefulness योग योग भवति bhavati becomes दुःखहा duḥkhaḥ the destroyer of pain.

For him who is moderate in eating and recreation, temperate in his actions, who is regulated in sleep and wakefulness, yoga becomes the destroyer of pain । १७
Physical exercise, as much as the spiritual sadhanas, is incumbent on the yogi; but it has to be resorted to, moderately. The duties of the yogi are very consequent and they have to be discharged meticulously and as regularly as the movements of the planets. The merit in him in the midst of these activities is, he is free from body-consciousness. Meditation therefore becomes easy and spontaneous to him. Pain is always associated with diseased body and mind. But the yogi takes no note of the body and he is sound in mind. Therefore yoga becomes the destroyer of pain to him.

When may it be said that the yogi is an adept in meditation? The clarification comes:—

Yadā vinīyatam cittam ātmany eva'vatiṣṭhate
iḥsphṛhaḥ sarvakāmebhyaḥ yuktā ity ucyate tadā
dhā

Yadā vinīyatam cittam ātmany eva'vatiṣṭhate
niḥsphṛhaḥ sarvakāmebhyaḥ yuktā ity ucyate tadā

Yadā when vinīyatam perfectly controlled cittam mind ātmani in the Self eva only abhijñate avatiṣṭhate rests niḥsphṛhaḥ free from longing sarvakāmebhyaḥ from all desires yuktah yogi īti iti thus ucyate is said tadā then

When the disciplined mind rests in the Self alone, free from desire for objects, then is one said to be established in yoga.
Wind creates storm in the sea. The wind of desire creates commotion in the mind. Desirelessness makes the mind constant and pure. Fixed in yoga is that mind which is impregnable against all desires. It rejoices exclusively in the Self. The yogi endowed with such a sterling mind is naturally an adept in meditation.

The mustard that gets scattered from a torn bag, cannot easily be gathered again. Likewise, the mind dissipated in worldly things does not come under easy control. Possession of the mind in its entirety is yoga.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The one-pointed mind is being defined now:—

यथा दीपो निवात्स्वो नेत्रते सौप्तमा स्न्तता ॥
योगिनो यत्सिद्धिः युज्तो योगायतनः: ॥ १९

यथा दीपः नि-वात-स्थः । न इत्त्वते ता उपमा हि-तः ।
योगिनः: यमू-निर्भितः: युज्यते योगम् आत्मनः ॥

यथा दीपः dipah lamp निवातस्वः nivātasthaḥ placed in a windless place न na not इत्त्वते ingate flicker सा sā that उपमा upamā simule स्न्तता smrtā is thought योगिनः yoginah of the yogi यत्सिद्धिः yata cittaṣya of one with controlled mind युज्यते yujñataḥ of the practising योगम् yogam the yoga आत्मन indriyah of the Self

‘As a lamp in a windless place does not flicker’—this is the simile used for the disciplined mind of a yogi practising concentration on the Self.

The flame of a lamp in a place perfectly sheltered against wind, is as steady as the flame of a lamp in a
picture. When the mind of the yogi is completely sheltered against the wind of desire, the Self in him shines in its original splendour. He is to identify himself with that unbroken consciousness.

‘Mukti is easy of access to the one deep and strong in meditation’—so goes the saying. Do you know when one is said to be perfect in meditation? When he sits in meditation, divine effulgence engulfs him. His little self merges into the Cosmic Self.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The other indications of advancement in yoga are as follows:—

yatro 'paramate cittam niruddham yogasevayā
yatra ca īvā ītmanā ītmanam paśyann ātmani tuṣyati

yatra where upasmat ē where upasmat ē paramate attains quietness cītmat mind niruddham restrained yogasevaya by the practice of yoga yatra where ca and ēva only ātmanā by the self ātmanam the Self paśyan seeing ātmani ātmani in the Self tuṣyati is satisfied

When the mind, disciplined by the practice of yoga, attains quietude, and when beholding the Self by the self, he is satisfied in the Self;

Quietude of mind and the experience of satisfaction in the Self are concomitant. Self-knowledge and Self-satisfaction are interrelated.
Progress in Yoga — 21-28

sukham atyantikaṁ yat tad buddhigrāhyam atindriyam vetti yatra na caī 'vā 'yam sthitas calati tattvataḥ

sukham bliss आत्मनि क्षम अत्यांतिकम् यत् that which विद्यमाणम् buddhi grāhyam that which can be grasped by reason जतीत्रियम् atindriyaṁ transcending the senses वेति vetti known यत् yatra where न na not ca and et eva even एवाम् aham this स्थित ई sthitaḥ established चलति calati moves तत्त्वतः tattvataḥ from the Reality

When he feels that supreme bliss which is perceived by the intelligence and which transcends the senses, and wherein established he never moves from the Reality;

Bliss is the characteristic of the Atman; therefore the extroverted senses cannot have access to it. Purified intellect grasps it to some extent. Bliss is everlasting because of its belonging to the Atman. The yogi does not want to divert himself from this bliss to the impermanent pleasures of the senses any more than the fish wants to get to land abandoning its watery abode.

While in Samādhi the yogi dives deep into the ocean of sat-chit-ananda In that state his senses become defunct.

— Sri Ramakrishna
The fleeting earthly pleasures are all ever selective. But getting into the infinite beatitude of the Self, the yogi has nothing else to seek, even as the fish in the ocean has no other abode to seek. The yogi established in the bliss of Brahman has no body-consciousness. The body hangs on him just as a shadow hangs on to a body. Any harm done to the shadow does not hurt the body; any harm inflicted on the body does not afflict the yogi established in the Self.

Whatever may be the suffering that falls to the lot of the body, the power and glory of the devotion and knowledge of a true devotee do not in the least get diminished thereby. What all tribulations the Pandava brothers had to undergo during
their exile. But the exuberance of their wisdom was in no way affected even for a moment by those ordeals.

— Sri Ramakrishna

तम विद्यातुः सत्योगवियोगं योगसत्त्वतम् ||
स निद्ध्रये योक्तन्यो योगोदनिर्विभिन्नचेतसा || २३

tam vidyād duhkhasamyogaviyogam yogasamyūtam ||
sa niscayena yoktavyo yogo 'nirvinna cetasa ||

तम that विद्यात vidyāt let (him) know दुः सत्योग dukkha samyoga viyogam a state of severance from union with pain योगसत्त्वतम् yoga sannyātam called yoga स sah that निद्ध्रये niscayena with determination योक्तन्य yoktavyyah should be practised योग yoga अनिर्विभिन्नचेतसा anirvīnna cetasa with undisturbed mind.

Let this disconnection from union with pain be known by the name of yoga. This yoga should be practised with determination and with an undistracted mind.

Bliss is the real nature of man. It is because of ignorance that he courts misery and suffers under its weight. When this assumed state of affair is alienated, he beams in his original bliss again. This act is like rousing up a man from the pangs of a dreadful dream and putting him again in his wakeful state. The meaning of yoga is to yoke one with one's supreme nature. There is no justification for anybody to invite sorrow on himself. That person who makes himself over to affliction is unfit for yoga. He who takes to yoga with buoyancy of
mind, fixed intention and constancy of purpose, achieves it. Sound mental climate is a prelude to the yogi's getting back to beatitude, his original state.

Milk in a vessel continues to boil and bubble so long as there is fire underneath. But when the fire is removed its simmering stops. On this wise, the man who takes to the practice of yoga out of curiosity pursues it vehemently for sometime and then abandons it once for all. He gains nothing. Steadfastness in yoga is essential.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The other traits of yoga are:

\[ \text{sāmkalpa prabhavān kāmāṁs tyaktvā sarvān aṣeṣataḥ} \]
\[ \text{manasai 've 'ndriya grāmam vininamya samantataḥ} \]

\[ \text{sāmkalpa prabhavān born of sankalpa (imagination) kāmaān kāmān desires tyaktvā having abandoned sarvān all अङ्कोपूर्त} \]
\[ \text{asceptah without reserve manasā by the mind eva even इंद्रियग्रामम indriya grāmam the whole group of senses vininamya completely restraining samantataḥ from all sides} \]

Abandoning without reserve all desires born of sankalpa, and curbing in, by the mind, all the senses from all sides;

The formative thought lurking in the mind is sankalpa. It is this seed of sankalpa that sprouts and grows into the plant of desire. The desire that is like a spark today is capable of developing into a
conflagration tomorrow. It is therefore to be entirely eliminated with the weapons of discrimination and dispassion. The senses are safe only when freed from desire.

However carefully a man may move about in a room full of soot, his clothes are bound to be stained a little at least. In the same way he who lives in the midst of sense-objects is bound to be tainted with a trace at least of lust.

— Sri Ramakrishna

श्यानं शनीरपरमेष्टेवुद्वध्या धृतिगृहितया।
आत्मसंस्थेः मनः कृत्वा न किंचिदपि चिन्त्येत्॥ २५॥

श्यानं शनीं उपरस्थेत् युद्धरथा धृतिगृहितया।
आत्माक्षभाः मनः हस्तवा न किंचित्विचि किंचित्व-रघुटे।॥

sanaik-sanair uparamed buddhyā dhrtigrhitayā
dāmasamstham manakah kṛtvā na kimcid api cintayet ॥

श्यानं सनाईं शनीं सनाईं उपरमेत्
उपरमेत् उपरमेत् उपरमेत् उपरमेत्

With his intellect set in firmness let him attain quietude little by little; with the mind fixed on the Self let him not think of anything.

Dhrti or firmness is a virtue born of disciplined life. Some are smart enough to distinguish academically between the permanent and the impermanent. But in the day to day life they are slaves to the impermanent sense-pleasure. As mind gets fixed in
the Self, it ceases to deviate into sense-indulgence. Constant thought of the Lord excludes all other thoughts from the mind.

Mind is the main factor in you. As is your mind, so are you: It may be compared to a washed white cloth which is capable of taking any dye dipped in. When you have learnt a new language you cannot help uttering a few words from it in your conversation. Contact with the undesirables contaminates the mind. Holy company on the other hand elevates it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Since the Lord has sanctioned the attainment of quietude little by little, the sadhaka is likely to lapse into mediocrity. He may slacken his endeavours with the consolation that in some distant future at least, he will attain perfection in yoga. But such a set back is not sanctioned by the Lord. He exhorts—

यतो यतो नित्यरति मनस्वाधरमसतिरस्य ।
ततात्ततो नियम्येतदत्तमन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ २६ ॥

यत: यत: नित्य-चरति नन: चतुर्थम् अ-स्थिरस्य ।
तत: तत: नि-यम्य-एव ततः आत्मनि एव शस्त्राम् नय-वेत् ॥

yato-yato niścarati manas cañcalam asthiram ।
tatas-tato niyamyai 'tad ātmany eva vāsam nayet ॥

yat: yat: yatah-yatah from whatever cause नित्यरति niścarati wanders away यत: manah mind चतुर्थम् cañcalam restless अस्थिरस्य asthiram unsteady तत: तत: tatah-tatah from that नियम्य nīyamya having restrained etat this आत्मनि ātmani in the Self एव eva alone बश्यम् vāsam (under)control नयेत् nayet let (him) bring

By whateyer cause the wavering and unsteady mind wanders away, let him curb it from that and subjugate it solely to the Self.
There are miscreants who, while posing to act within the bounds of law, try to circumvent it to their selfish ends. Mind plays the same mischief while yet in the process of subjugation. When weaned away from one object, it gets unwittingly attached to another. With proper discrimination it has to be saved from several pitfalls and placed safely at the feet of the Lord. This is the purport of His exhorting the attainment of calmness stage by stage. The danger of a fall is possible until the mind is completely made over to the Lord.

The vision of the Lord is not possible as long as even an iota of desire is left lingering in the mind. You ought to, therefore, fulfil the innocent and harmless little desires before doing away with them and to mercilessly exterminate the baneful ones with the sword of discrimination.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What is the aftermath of wiping out all desires? The result is recounted:—

प्रशान्तमस्मि द्वनं योगिनं सुखमयस्मि ।
उपैति शान्तरजस्मि महाभूतमयकर्ममय ॥ २७

प्र-शान्त-मनस्मि हि एनम् योगिनम हृदम् उत्सनम् ।
उप-एति शान्त-रजस्मि सम्भूतम् श-कर्ममय ॥

prasāntamanasam hy enam yoginam sukham uttamam
upaiti santé rajasam brahma bhūtam akalmasam ॥

प्रशान्तमस्मि prasānta manasam one of peaceful mind
हि हि verily एनम् enam this योगिनम् yoginam yoti सुखम्
sukham bliss उत्तमम् uttamam supreme उपैति upaiti comes
शान्तरजस्मि sante rajasam one whose passion is quieted
अहम्मूतम् brahma bhūtam Brahma-become एकन्मपम्
akalmaṣam one who is free from sin
Supreme Bliss verily comes to that yogi whose mind is calm; whose passions are pacified, who has become one with Brahman and who is sinless. 27

It is the category of *Rajas* that creates passion, the source of all afflictions. When the impetus of *Rajas* cools down, calmness of mind comes in as a matter of course. He who cognizes everything as Brahman becomes himself Brahman. The one in *Brahmāvastha* is actionless, and as such there is no sin for him.

Before visiting the humble home of a tenant of his, the landlord sends in advance the required furniture and provision, so that the occupant may receive him in a fitting manner. Similarly, before the Lord reveals Himself in the heart of a devotee, He endows him with purity, devotion, faith and such like divine qualities.

— Sri Ramakrishna

युज्येत् सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्पः ||
सुखेन व्रद्धसंस्फळमत्यत्तं सुखमेधुते || २८

युज्यस्त्र एवम् सदा अत्मानम् योगी विगतान्तङ्कल्पः ||
सुखेन व्रद्धासंस्फळम् अति-अन्तङ्कु युज्यस्त्र सुखम् भवस्तु-ते ||

युज्यम् एवं सदा 'अत्मानं योगी विगताकल्मसाह ||
सुखेन ब्रह्मा सामस्परसाम ात्यान्तम सुखम् अझूः अझूः ||

युज्यस्त्र *yujjan* practising *yoga* एवम् *evam* thus *sadm* sadā always अत्मानम् *ātmānam* the self योगी *yogi* योगिन्य *yogini* विगतकल्पः *vigatakalmaśaḥ* freed from sin *sukha* sukhena easily प्रस्थर्पज्ञाम् *brahma samśparśam* caused by contact with Brahman अत्यन्तम् *atyantam* infinite *sukha* sukhena bliss बतूचुः *asnu te* enjoys
Constantly engaging the mind this way, the yogi who has put away sin, attains with ease the infinite bliss of contact with Brahman.

Mythology has it that there is such a thing as the philosopher’s stone, contact with which converts base metal into gold. But this is an allegorical statement. Brahman is the real philosopher’s stone. It is not easily accessible to all, but whosoever gets at It becomes transformed. Ordinary souls who are base become adorable ones after their contact with Brahman. They become heirs to infinite bliss.

An immersed vessel is permeated by water inside as well as outside. The soul immersed in Iswara cognizes Pure Consciousness everywhere.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Is there any change of vision of the world effected in the one who realizes himself as Atman?

The answer is given —

**Perfection in Yoga — 29-32**

सर्वभूतस्मातामां सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि
ईश्वरे योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वेऽत्मृतस्मानि समधेशः

| सर्वभूतावस्था | ध्यानमार्गो योगात्मकमात्र | सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि |

sarvabhūtastham ātmānam sarvabhūtāni cā 'tmanāṁ |
tksate yogayuktātmā sarvatra saṃadarsanaḥ ||

Sarvabhūtāstham sarva bhūta sthām abiding in all beings ātmānam the self sarvabhūtāni sarva bhūtāni all beings ca and ātmāni ātmāni in the self īśvare tksate sees योगस्मात्मा yoga yuktātmā one who is harmonized
by yoga सर्वत्र sarvatra everywhere समद्विन: sama
darsanaḥ one who sees the same

His mind being harmonized by yoga, he sees him-
self in all beings and all beings in himself; he sees the
same in all.

Separateness is not for him who has progressed
high in yoga. The distinction between the high and
the low, the angel and the humble creature vanishes
from his mind. He sees the same divinity in all.
In his intuition the Self in him is the Self in all and
the Self in all is the Self in him. The individualized
selves do all merge into one universal Self. This is
his realization.

Assuming individuality to oneself is like putting a dam to
a portion of the Ganga and claiming the little water in it as
one’s own.

— Sri Ramakrishna

If all the Jivatmas are actually one cosmic entity,
then what is the relationship between this commingled
entity and the Paramatman? The truth is declared:

यो मां पद्यति सर्वत्र सर्वेच मयि पद्यति ।
तद्याहं न ग्रज्ञन्यामि स च मे न ग्रज्ञन्याति ॥ ३०

व: माम पद्यति सर्वेच सर्वेच । मयि पद्यति ।
तस्य आहम् न मे न अहम्-पायि । स: च मे न अ-नाम-पायि ॥

yo mām paśyati sarvatra sarvam ca mayi paśyati ।
tasya 'ham na pranaśyāmi sa ca me na pranaśyati ॥

व: yahi who mām me पद्यति paśyati sees सर्वेच
sarvatra everywhere सर्वेच sarvam all च ca and मयि
mayi in me पद्यति paśyati sees तस्य tasya of him आहम्
aham । च na not ग्रज्ञन्यासि pranaśyāmi vanish स: sah
he न ca and me to me न na not प्रणयति pranayati vanishes

He who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me, he never becomes lost to Me, nor do I become lost to him

After realizing the unity of all beings the yogi further realizes that it is the Paramatman that manifests Himself as the multitudinous beings at all levels The One appearing as the many is not merely the yogi’s imagination It is the eternal sport of the Lord He and His manifestations are interrelated as the ocean and the waves on it He is therefore not lost to the Lord and the Lord is not lost to him

Sweetmeats in the shape of various animals birds and men are made from the same stuff sugar Likewise it is the Sat chit-ananda that has assumed the forms of the sentient and insentient in the universe

—Sri Ramakrishna

This realization being steady, the relationship between the yogi and Paramatman is further elucidated —

सर्वभूताः यो मां भजते क्षणात्मकाः स्थित:।
सर्वभयो वर्तमानो योगी माये वर्तते॥३१॥
सर्वभूताः स्थितम् यो मां भजते योगी माये
सर्वभयो वर्तमाने शरीरः स्थितम् योगी माये वर्तते॥
sarvabhuta sthitam yo mām bhajaty ekatvam āsthitah
sarvāthā vartamāno 'pi sa yogt mayī vartate
sarvabhūtasthitam sarvabhuta sthitam abiding in all beings yah who mām me bhajati worships
He who, established in oneness, worships Me abiding in all beings, that yogi lives in Me, whatever may be his mode of living.

A person discharged from prison is conscious that he is no more a prisoner, be he shut up in a room, enchained, handcuffed or tethered. Not the external setting but the attitude of the man is the main factor here. The knower of Brahma is conscious that Brahma alone is putting on the appearance of the many in the universe. Because of the Brahmāvastha in which he is established, his contact with beings is nothing short of the adoration of Brahma. His external behaviour may indicate that he is meditating, attending to the obligatory duties, or, taking rest. But subjectively he is fixed in Brahma. This is the state of liberation from all bondage. This state is technically known as Sahaja nishītha.

The ignorant one believes that God is in some far off region called heaven. The enlightened one, on the other hand, beholds Him as the core of his own being. Iswara is in the hearts of all. The seeker of God therefore realizes Him first within himself.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The merit of the enlightened yogi is:—

अत्मोपस्वेतः सर्वेऽऽः सर्वं पश्चाति योज्जुर्वः ।
हुँ वा चिदि वा हुँख स योगी परमो शतः ॥ ३२
That yogi, O Arjuna, is regarded as the supreme, who judges pleasure or pain everywhere, by the same standard as he applies to himself.

Man does not differentiate between the limbs of his own body as high and low. They are all of equal importance to him. The harm done to any limb is the harm done to himself, because he and his limb are one and the same. An ordinary man is unassailable in this conviction of his. The yogi, in his turn, beholds the cosmos as the body of the Paramatman and himself a limb of that Cosmic Personality. One limb in a body does not hurt another, all the limbs function for mutual welfare. The yogi knows that he and his neighbours are not different, they are all limbs of the same Iswara. So he works for the general welfare of all. That yogi is supreme who has this cosmic outlook.

A few holy men were living in an Ashrama in the outskirts of a township. While the oldest of them was passing through the main street of that village, he chanced to see a landlord mercilessly belabouring a tenant of his. The holy man intervened
on behalf of the helpless victim. But the landlord now directed his fury on the holy man and thrashed him to the point of making him fall down unconscious. Coming to know of this mishap the inmates of the Ashrama hastened to the spot and carried the holy man back, lying yet unconscious. When, after a long nursing, the saint opened his eyes, a tending man put the question, “Revered one, do you recognize who I am?” In gentle but clear voice came the unexpected answer, “The hand that beat then is now nursing.” He said so because he saw the same Brahman manifesting as the many. The feeling of the offender and offended was not in the saint.

—Sri Ramakrishna

A doubt now rose in the mind of Arjuna:

The Restive Mind has to be Resisted — 33-36

अर्जुन उवाच

येकस्य योगस्वयम प्रेक्षा: ताम्येन मधुसुधन।
एतस्याः न पश्यामि चत्वरलक्षालिस्तिति स्याम्॥ ३३

य: कथम् गोक: लघु प्र-उक्त: साम्येन मधु-सूदन।
एतस्य अहाम् न पश्यामि चत्वरलक्षाल श्वितिम, स्याम्॥

arjuna uvāca

yo 'yam yogas tvayā proktāḥ sāmyena madhusūdana
etasya 'ham na pasyāmi cañcālatvāt sthitim sthirām ॥

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

य: yah which अयम् ayaṁ this गोक: yogah yoga तथा
tvayā by thee प्रेक्षा: proktāḥ taught साम्येन sāmyena by
equanimitiy मधुसूदन madhusūdana O slayer of Madhu
एतस्य etasya its अहाम् aham I न na not पश्यामि pasyāmi
see चत्वरलक्षाल cañcālatvāt from restlessness श्वितिम् sthi-
tim continuance श्याम् sthirām steady
Arjuna said:

This yoga of equanimity, taught by you, O Madhusudana — I do not see any stability for it, because of restlessness.

Because of the dispersed and restless nature of mind, its being collected in equanimity is not possible. The wavy ocean of the mind cannot be made waveless; this is the objection raised.

The mind verily is, O Krishna, restless, turbulent, strong and obstinate. I deem it as hard to control as the wind.

All the unwholesome characteristics of the mind are contained in this question raised by Arjuna. Mind is labelled as restless due to its constant shifting its interest from object to object. It is as fickle as the deer. But this animal causes harm to none. Whereas the way of the mind is different; like the...
tiger it hurts the victims. It is therefore as dangerous to people as the tiger is. Hence the mind held to be turbulent and as strong as the tiger. It is possible to weaken a tiger by subjecting him to starvation; but the case of the mind is otherwise. In the manner in which a starved out leech develops toughness of its skin and resists being cleft, the mind put to privation develops obstinacy. If what it wants be not provided for, it turns petulant and scheming. Further experience makes it plain that mind is as uncontrol-

Krishna alone is capable of taming the formi-
dable mind. His name itself indicates his capacity to do this. The first part of his name 'Krish' means "to plough and process"; the latter part "na" means "the lord of." He is the Lord of the act of ploughing and processing the mind.

The way of culturing the mind is shown by the Lord:

śrī bhagavān uvāca

asamsayam mahābāho mano durnigraham calant
abhyāsena tu kaunteya vairāgyena ca gṛhyate
The Blessed Lord said

Doubtless, O mighty-armed, the mind is restless and hard to control; but by practice and non-attachment, O son of Kunti, it can be controlled.

The sum total of the habits of a man is his nature. It has come about as a result of his giving himself over to the bent of his mind. Unwillingly he has become the creature of his own mind, wonted to restlessness. But the old habits can be eradicated through new ones. In other words nature can be changed through nurture. An earnest and persistent attempt at the change of nature is abhyāsa or practice. The uncontrollable and restless mind can be controlled and made calm. Practice is the sure means to this end. To wean the mind from its wonted ways and direct it on the ideal is practice. Mind becomes pacified as it gets drawn to the Self.

On analysis it may be found that mind runs after those objects to which it has been attached. The evils of such attachments have to be repeatedly and timely presented to the passionate mind. As the force of passion gets put down, mind comes under control. When all the base attachments are
wiped out through discrimination, mind blooms into serenity. Practice of non-attachment is therefore auxiliary to the practice of meditation.

He who wants to learn swimming has to be at it repeatedly. It cannot be learnt with one or two attempts. One dares not swim in the boisterous sea just after a day’s practice. Similarly one has to train oneself much to swim in the sea of Sat-chit-ananda. Failure in the first attempt is but natural. Sporting in it becomes possible only through persistent practice.

There is a poisonous variety of spider the effect of the bite of which cannot easily be cured. A spell has to be cast first over the patient with the root of turmeric; otherwise no medicine will have any effect on the poison. The worldly man is bitten by the spider of lust and greed. Unless the spell of non-attachment be invoked on him, no spiritual practice of his will ever bear fruit.

— Sri Ramakrishna

To whom is yoga possible and to whom else is it impossible? The scope is clarified:

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्राप्र इति मे मति: ।
वस्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तमुपायत: ॥ ३६॥

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्राप्राप्तयहि इति मे मति: ।
वस्यात्मना तु यतता शक्य: अव-आपू-तुमू उपायतः ॥

asamyaatmanā yogo dusprāpa iti me matiḥ
vasyātmanā tu yatatala sakyaḥ vāaptum upāyataḥ

असंयतात्मना asamyaatmanā by a man of uncontrolled self योगो: yogah yoga दुष्राप्र: dusprāpaḥ hard to attain इति iti thus ए मे my मति: matih opinion वस्यात्मना vasyātmanā by the self-controlled one तु tu but यतता yatatala by the striving one शक्य: sakyaḥ possible अव-आपू-तुमू उपायत: avāptum to obtain उपायत: upāyataḥ by (proper) means
Yoga is hard to attain, I concede, by a man who cannot control himself; but it can be attained by him who has controlled himself and who strives by right means.

The man of self-control is he who either thinks wholesome thoughts or does not allow mentation of any kind taking place in himself. He strives by right means who applies himself steadily to practice and non-attachment.

"In those days when I took to spiritual practices I would first cleanse the mind of all earthly thoughts, make it as pure as purity itself and then invoke the presence of the Lord in it. May you also do the same!" — Sri Ramakrishna

A doubt now rises in the mind of Arjuna in regard to the aspirant who falls short of perfection in yoga. He raises his question as follows:—

The Fate of the Imperfect Yogi — 37-45

अर्जुन उवाच

अयति: अर्जुनोऽपेक्षो योग्याचल्लितमानसः।
अर्जुनोऽपेक्षो योगाचल्लितमानसः।

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca

ayatih straddhayo ’peto yogāc calitamānasah |
aprāpya yogasamsiddhum kām gatim kṛṣṇa gacchati |

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

अयति: ayatih uncontrolled अर्जुनोऽपेक्षो straddhayā by faith
उपेत: upetaḥ possessed योगान्त yogāt from yoga चलित
Arjuna said:

He who is unable to control himself, though possessed of faith, whose mind deviates from yoga, what end does he meet with, O Krishna, having failed to attain perfection in yoga?

The sadhaka is imbued with the faith that yoga leads to perfection. But he has not got the required firmness of the mind. He has not therefore attained the goal of yoga. What becomes of him who dies foiled in the attempt?

kaccin no 'bhayavibhraṣṭaḥ chinnābhram īva naśyati apratīṣṭhāḥ mahābāho vicūḍhāh brahmaṇaḥ pathi

kaccit kaccit is it that? na na not āyāmabhraṣṭaḥ ubhaya vibhraṣṭaḥ fallen from both āṇāvā chinnā rent āśraya abhram cloud īva like naśyati perishes āyāmabhram āṇāvā supportless mahābhāho O mighty-armed vīcūḍhāh deluded āṇāvā brahmaṇaḥ of Brahman pathi in the path

Fallen from both, does he not perish like a rent cloud, without any hold, O mighty-armed, deluded in the path of Brahman?
The rent cloud does not descend on earth as rainfall; it loses its distinctiveness in the firmament. Even such is the fate of the one fallen in yoga. He has neither the here nor the hereafter. Having renounced the sense-pleasures which are all of the earth, he happens to be one who has lost the here; and in not having obtained the beatitude born of the perfection in yoga he is bereft of the hereafter, the path of Brahman. This is how he becomes fallen from both. Can there be a plight more painful than this?

एतनम् संशयं क्रुः छेदुमहःस्वरेष्टः ्
त्वदन्यः संशयस्वास्य छेत्ता न हुपपवधेत् || ३८

एतत् मे सं-श्याम क्रुः छेद-तुम भृ-भ विभ-षेष-तः ।
त्वदं अन्यः सम-श्यास्य अस्त छेत्ता न हि उप-पद-यते ||

etan me samśayam kṛṣṇa chettum arhasy aṣṭatāh ।
tvadanyah samśayasyā 'syā chettā na hy upapadyate ||

एतत् etat this मे me my सं-श्याम samśayam doubt kṛṣṇa O Krishna छेदुम chettum to dispel अहःसी arhasi oughtest ब्यूरेष्टः aṣṭatāh completely त्वद् tvat than thou अन्यः anyah another सं-श्यास्य samśayasya of doubt अस्त asya of this छेत्ता chettā dispeller न na not हि hi verily उपपादेते upapadyate is fit

Deign to dispel completely this doubt of mine, O Krishna; for there is none but Yourself who can destroy this doubt.

Even the Devas and Rishis come nowhere near You in dispelling the darkness; for You are the omniscient Iswara. All the intricacies of yoga are best known to none but You.

80—26
Who is whose guru? None but Iswara alone can play the role of the guru.

Nothing is impossible to the Incarnation of Iswara. The intricate problems pertaining to the Jivatman and the Paramatman are all easily solved by Him. Even a child can easily understand His teachings. He is the sun of knowledge that drives away the darkness of ignorance accumulated through the ages.

— Sri Ramakrishna

श्री भगवानुवाच
पार्थ नैवेद नामुख विनासस्तस्त विचारते ।
न हि कल्याणकृतकसिद्धि ततात गच्छति ॥ ४० ॥
पार्थ न एवं इह न अस्थर नि-नाश तस्य तिथि अवते ।
न हि कल्याण-कुल कत्रौ-विचार इश्वरसमु ततात गच्छति ॥

sri bhagavan uvaca
partha naive ha na amutra vinashas tasya vidyate ।
na hi kalyanakrt kascid durgatim tata gacchati ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच sri bhagavan uvaca Sri Bhagavan said:

पार्थ partha O Partha न na not एवं eva verily इह iha here न na not आमुत्र amutra in the next world विनाशा vinashah destruction तस्य tasya of him विचारे vidyate is न na not हि hi verily कल्याणकृत kalyanakrt he who does good कस्यति kacit anyone durgatim bad state or ग्रीष्ठ tata O my son gacchati goes

The Blessed Lord said:

O Partha, neither in this world nor in the next is there destruction for him; for, the doer of good, O my son, never comes to grief.

The word tata means father. It is father who has become the son. Therefore a junior or a son is addressed as tata indicating affection. The disciple
is to the guru what the son is to the father. Therefore it is customary for the guru to address the disciple as son or as tāta. The Lord addressing Arjuna this way is a mark of the flow of grace.

It is open to people to inquire whether this world is intrinsically good or bad. God it is that is revealing Himself as the phenomenon. The world therefore cannot be anything but good. Viewing it as filled with evil is a misnomer. One of the profoundest pronouncements of the Lord is, “THE DOER OF GOOD NEVER COMES TO GRIEF.” And the devotees of the Lord are ever the standing testimony to this fact. A sādhaka who slips from yoga never falls to a state inferior to what he has already attained. This fact is clarified thus:

A man gets his desert in tune with his mental make up. The Lord is the kalpataru the fabled desire-fulfilling tree to the devotees.

—Sri Ramakrishna

श्राप्य पुण्यक्रताः लोकानुपित्वा शाश्वतीं समाः ।
शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगअस्त्रोपस्मात् ॥ ४१

prāpya punyakrām lokān usitvā sāsvatḥ samāḥ ।
sucinām srīmatām gehe yogabhrasto 'bhījāyate ॥

श्राप्य prāpya having attained पुण्यक्राम punyakrām of the righteous लोकान lokān worlds usitvā having dwelt शाश्वतीं sāsvatḥ everlasting समा samāḥ years शुचीनाम् sucinām of the pure श्रीमताम् srīmatām of the wealthy नेहे gehe in the house योगस्त्रेण yoga bhraṣṭah one fallen from yoga अभिज्ञाते abhyāyate is born
Having attained to the worlds of the righteous and having lived there for countless years, he who falls from yoga is reborn in the house of the pure and prosperous.

_Bhoga_—enjoyment and yoga are exclusive of each other. Where the one is, the other is not. He falls from yoga, who covets _bhoga_. Such a fallen yogi goes to heaven and enjoys celestial pleasures for a very long time. He then takes his birth again on earth in the house of the pure and prosperous, it being conducive to secular requirements and sacred pursuits. According to the law of karma, souls reincarnate in the environments befitting their attainments.

There is another type among those who fall from yoga. His destiny is being described now:

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमतामः ।
एतद्दुर्लभतरं लोके जनम यदीद्धशमः || ४२

अथ य योगिनाम् एव कुले मनुष्य-भवति प्री-मताम् ।
एतद हि दुर-लभतरस् लोके जनम यदृ द्धशम् ||

_athavā yoginām eva kule bhavati dhīmatām_ ।
etadd hi durlabhataram loke janna yad īdṛṣam ||

_athavā_ or _yoginām_ of yogis _evā_ even _kule_ in the family _bhavati_ is born _dhīmatām_ of the wise _etat_ this _hi_ verily _dur labhataram_ very difficult _loke_ in the world _janna_ birth _yat_ which _Īdṛṣam_ _īdṛṣam_ like this
Or he is born in a family of wise yogis only; a birth like this is verily very difficult to obtain in this world.

Yoga continues to be practised birth after birth until perfection is reached. The environment of the parentage obtained for this purpose is necessarily congenial. Of the two types of favourable families, that of the wise yogis is superior to that of the pure and prosperous. The how of it is being explained now:

तत्र स बुद्दिसंयोगम रमते पौर्वेदेहिक्रम ।
यतते च ततो भूय ः संसिद्धी कुरुन्त्दन III ४३
तत्र संयोगम रमते पौर्वेदेहिक्रम ।
यतते च तत: भूय: संसिद्धी: कुरुन्दन III
tatra tam buddhi samyogam labhate paurva dehikam ।
yatate ca tato bhūyah sansiddhau kuru nandana II

तत्र tatra there तम that बुद्दिसंयोगम buddhi sam-
योगम union with knowledge रमते labhate obtains
पौर्वेदेहिक्रम paurva dehikam acquired in his former body
यतते yatate strives च ca and तत: tatah than that भूय:
bhūyah more संसिद्धी: sansiddhau for perfection कुरुन्दन
kuru nandana O son of Kurus

There he regains the knowledge acquired in his former body, and he strives more than before for perfection, O joy of the Kurus.

The prospective yogi born in the house of the pure and prosperous begins his new life with the enjoyment of some harmless pleasures which he innocently harboured in his heart in the previous
birth. Facilities for the fulfilment of those sinless desires are in abundance in the new setting. No sooner are the guiltless pleasures gone through than this aspirant takes to the practice of yoga. But that yogi who is born in the family of wise yogis has a better start. The favourable environment draws out the latent yoga elements in him. He feels as though he were going through the old lessons again. His inborn tendency ministered by the helpful surroundings, leads him on rapidly towards the ideal.

Swami Vivekananda and his guru Sri Rama-krishna Paramahamsa were perfect yogis born solely for the salvation of mankind. It is very striking to note that the former was born in the house of the pure and prosperous and the latter in a family of a wise yogi.

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनेव हियते ववशोदपिः सः ।
जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातित्वतेः ॥ ४४ ।

पूर्व-अभिव-भासेन तेन एव हि-यते हि अ-भवः अपि सः ।
जि-हासः अपि योगस्य शब्द-नाम अति-वतेः ॥

पूर्वाभ्यासेन पूर्वाभ्यासेन tenai 'va hriyate hy avaso 'pi sah ।
jijñāsur api yogasya sabdabrahma 'tivartate ॥

By that very former practice he is led on in spite of himself. Even he who merely wishes to know of yoga rises superior to the performer of Vedic rites. 44
A man pressingly caught up in the midst of a marching multitude, is bound to be pushed on to the destination without much effort on his part. Similarly, the yoga propensity stored up in the mind in the previous births, combined with the present favourable and augmenting atmosphere, rapidly carries the yogi on towards the goal.

Two soldiers in the war front were taken prisoners by the enemy and forced to work for him. One of the two got himself reconciled to his captivity and chose to be a careerist under the enemy, while the other earnestly studied the ways and means of his escape, in the midst of his toiling for the enemy. People of the world are like the first prisoner, intent on making the best of the earthly life. The yoga-jijnasu or the enquirer of yoga is superior like the second prisoner in as much as he gives thought to self-emancipation. The chanters of the Vedas and those others engaged in the Vedic rites are concerned with enjoyments on earth and in heaven. Being bound to life in the senses, they are inferior. The scope of the ritualistic Vedas also is limited to the senses. The Vedas merely promote and prolong the wheel of birth and death. The enquirer of yoga gets to know of the possibilities of liberating himself from the wheel of birth and death. He is therefore greater than the earth-bound man. He who practises yoga is greater still; for, he is progressing towards perfection and liberation.

In what respect is the yogi, progressing in his sadhana, superior to the man given to the Vedic rites? The elucidation comes:
The yogi who strives with assiduity, purified from sins and perfected through many births reaches then the Supreme Goal.

Learning and wealth cannot be acquired in a day or two. One has to apply oneself to them constantly. But one is held to be learned in a measure even while in the process of studying. Similarly, one is also held as a man of means even while yet earning money. A man is likewise beheld as a yogi even when he is assiduously practising it. Learning, wealth and spirituality developed by these several individuals never go to waste. Spirituality in particular persists and progresses in the yogi through successive births. As he gets purified from sins he ceases to be affected by the inevitable fluctuations in the earthly life. Constancy of the ideal in the midst of all eventualities is his characteristic. His serenity steadily evolves into Beatitude, which is the Supreme
Goal. Whereas the man given to the Vedic rites oscillates and merely speculates about his future prospects here and hereafter.

The newborn calf totters and tumbles down several times before learning to frisk about. Similarly, the sadhaka has to struggle much before he meets with success — Sri Ramakrishna

Yoga being hard to achieve, what is the harm in the ordinary man having recourse to any other ways of accomplishing the desired ends? The sovereignty of yoga is extolled:

+ Yoga is Unparalleled — 46-47

tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogi jñānibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikāh
karmibhyas ca 'dhiko yogi tasmād yogi bhavā 'rjuna

Tapasvībhyaḥ than ascetics अधिक: adhikāh superior योगी yogi the yogi ज्ञानिष्ठ्य: jñānibhyaḥ than the wise अपि even सत: mataḥ thought अधिक: adhikāh superior कर्मिष्ठ्य: karmibhyaḥ than the men of action एव ca and अधिक: adhikāh superior योगी yogi the yogi वस्मात tasmāt therefore योगी yogi सव bhava be ज्ञेन arjuna O Arjuna

The yogi is deemed superior to ascetics, superior to men of knowledge even; he is also superior to ritualists. Therefore be you a yogi, O Arjuna.

It is incumbent on man to choose an ideal in life lest he should drift and deviate into an empty existence. The higher the ideal the harder it is to achieve. Still, an attainable great ideal has to be fixed. The highest and best of all ideals is to become
a yogi. And he is a yogi who is consciously and deliberately moving towards Divinity which is the plan and purpose of creation. As a man advances in yoga his mind gets purified and thus becomes all powerful.

An ascetic is one who undergoes a voluntary mortification to obtain celestial powers and enjoyments here and hereafter. The ritualist also has this aim in mind. But instead of self-mortification he chooses to appease and propitiate the favours of the celestials to this end. So he performs the elaborate rituals mentioned in the Vedas, putting complete faith in them. But the yogi’s case is simple, natural, direct and to the point. In and through desirelessness he comes close to the Supreme Goal—Parām Gātim. If, however, a patch of cloud of desire happens to pass through the firmament of his heart, that desire gets immediately fulfilled because of the purity of his heart. This way the yogi is superior to the ascetics and the ritualists. The men of knowledge mentioned here are those that seek enlightenment through the scriptures. But the truths revealed in the sacred books are directly shining in the pure heart of the yogi. He need not draw inspiration from books. He is therefore superior even to men of knowledge. In becoming yogi, man achieves everything.

What is the good of mere book learning? The learned may at best be adepts in aptly and accurately quoting from scriptures. One’s lifelong repeating them verbatim effects no change in one’s life. But what is told in the scriptures has to be applied to life and improvement brought on it. Scriptural knowledge is of no avail to the one attached to earthly life.
A worldly man may be as much informed in religion as the spiritual man, or he may even excel in learning and intelligence. He may even be endowed with the rigidity of a yogi’s life and the detachment of a Sanyasin. In the midst of these merits his life may dwindle into nothing if he utilizes them all not for the glory of the Lord but for self-glorification, name, fame and wealth. — Sri Ramakrishna

Who again, among the yogis, is the best one? The declaration comes.—

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्गतेनान्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धार्थनभजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ ६७
योगिनाम भजि सर्वेषां मद्गतेन अन्तरात्मना ।
श्रद्धाभजिभजते मा मां स मे युक्ततमम मतः ॥

eyoginām api sarvesām madgatenā 'ntaratmanā ।
sraddhāvān bhajate yo māṁ sa me yuktatamo matah ॥

Yoginām yoginām of yogis धजि api even सर

esām of all मद्गतेन madgatenā merged in me अन्तरात्मनां antaratmanā with inner self श्रद्धाभजन्वी sraddhāvān endu-

ed with faith भजते bhajate worships च यात who साम् māṁ me स: saḥ he मे me by me yuktatamah most devout मतः matah is deemed

And of all yogis, he who worships Me with faith, his inmost self merged in Me,—him I hold to be the most devout.

All those who practise meditation, concentration and purification of the mind are good yogis. A purified mind easily gets at whatever it wants to own. That yogi excels who, instead of turning his powerful mind on minor deities and mundane things, devotes himself to the worship of Iswara, the Supreme Goal. There is no higher state than this to be attained by man.
Meditate on Enlightenment and Bliss which are Eternal. Then you gain Bliss which is everlasting. This Bliss in the ordinary man is shrouded in ignorance. As your desire for sense pleasures declines, your devotion to the Lord develops into divine thirst.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The characteristics of Jivatman, the individual soul, have so far been expounded in these six chapters. To what extent the Jivatman can elevate himself has also been enumerated. There is no purpose superior to the devotion to the Lord, to which the highly evolved soul can apply himself. The following six chapters are devoted to the definition of Iswara and the development of Bhakti. This last stanza in this chapter gives the link between the first six chapters and the second six chapters. It is indicated here that the development of one form of yoga into another is as natural and spontaneous as the evolution of a boy into a youth. Karma yoga evolved into Raja yoga, and this again is going to evolve into Bhakti yoga.

**ITI SRIMAD BHAGAVADGITAŚŪPANIŚATSU BRĀHMAVIDYĀYĀM YOGASĀSTRE ŚRI KRŚNĀRJUNA SAHVĀDE DHYĀNAYOGO NĀMA SAṢTHO 'DHYĀYAH**

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gītā, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, this is the sixth discourse designated:

**THE YOGA OF MEDITATION**
Prakriti—Low and High — The Is ness in the Elements and Beings is Iswara — The Excellences in Beings come from God — The Maya of the Three Gunas — Four Types of Virtuous Men — The Votaries of Minor Gods — The Characteristics of Iswara — The Discerning and the Non discerning

Prakriti-Low and High — 1-7

भी भगवानुवाच

मयातक्तकमना पार्थ योगे युज्ञनमदाशयः।
असिंधग यमो मां यथा ज्ञास्यति तन्नृशु॥

रघुनाथ-सार्य-समर्ग-सार्य सापू यथा ज्ञ-सा-वि तत् श्रु॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca

Mayy āsaktamanāḥ pārtha yogam yuñjan madāsrayaḥ
asamsāyam samagram mām yathā jñāsyasi tae chirnu||

भी भगवानुवाच śrī bhagavān uvācaŚrī Bhagavan said:

भवे mayi on me ज्ञातकमना: āsaktamanāḥ with mind clinging पार्थ O Partha योगम् yoga युज्ञन्युज्ञन practising मन्त्रम् madāsrayaḥ taking refuge in me असिंधगम् asamsāyam without doubt समर्गम् samagram wholly सापू mām me यथा yathā how ज्ञास्यति jñāsyasi shalt know तत् tat that श्रु॥ śrū॥ hearken

The Blessed Lord said:

Listen, O Partha, how, with your mind clinging to Me, and taking refuge in Me and practising yoga, you will without any doubt know Me in full.
The term *mad āsrayah* connotes complete indifference to the fruits of action, fame, name and such like earthly acquisitions and a staunch attachment to the Lord alone.

*Samagram* signifies the glory, might, energy, overlordship and similar divine attributes of Iswara.

He who perceives the perfect functioning of a government cannot help appreciating it. Similarly one’s admiration is carried on to a divine level when one devotes oneself to the study of the cosmic functioning of the Lord.

\[\text{तत् तत्न्त् सविज्ञानमिदं व्यास्याम्यशेषतः।}\
\text{हां तस्मां सविज्ञानश्च देवाः योस्योऽन्या ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते॥२॥}\
\text{ज्ञानमु च वहम् तीव्र-शानामु न्द्रस्मू व्यक्त-क्यामि वा-शेष-क।}\
\text{यत् न्द्र-रंगा न इह मूर्त् अन्यत्र त तव-शिष्यते॥}\
\text{jñānam te 'ham savijñānam idam vakyāmy aśeṣatah।}\
\text{yaj jñātvā ne 'ha bhūyo 'nyaj jñātavyam avasīṣyate॥}\

\[\text{ज्ञानमु jñānam knowledge ते te to thee आहम् aham।}\
\text{सविज्ञानमु savijñānam combined with realization इदम्}\
\text{idam this व्यास्याम् vakyāmi will declare अद्वैतः aśeṣatah।}\
\text{in full यत् yat which ज्ञातव्या jñātvā having known न na}\
\text{not इह iha here मूर्त् bhūyaḥ more अन्यत्र anyat anything}\
\text{else ज्ञातव्यम् jñātavyam what ought to be known}\
\text{वशिष्यते avasīṣyate remains।}\

I shall teach you in full this knowledge combined with realization, which being known, nothing more here remains to be known.

Whatever is comprehended with the aid of the senses, mind and intellect is *jñāna* or knowledge.
And vijnana is the direct grasp of the reality, come about through self-discipline. The former is mediate and the latter immediate. The one is derived through sight and the other through insight. Tuition is needed for the one and intuition for the other. The former is paroksha jnanam and the latter, aparoksha jnanam. Endowed with both of these, the aspirant gets to know Brahman or Truth in Its entirety.

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेष्ठ कथितवति सिद्ध्ये ॥
यत्तामपि सिद्धानां कथितस्मा वेषं तत्ततः ॥ २
मनुष्याणां सहस्रेष्ठं कः-चिद्व यत-वति सिद्ध-तत्थे ॥
यत्त-भतास्व अपि सिद्ध-ताताम । कः-चिद्व मामं वेद-तत्तित तत्ततः ॥

manusyānām sahasreṣu kasciḍ yatati siddhaie ॥
yatām api siddhānam kasciṁ māṁ vetti tatvataḥ ॥

मनुष्याणाम manusyānām of men sahasreṣu among thousands कः-चिद्व yat-वति kasciḍ some one यत-वति yatati strives सिद्ध्ये siddhaie for perfection यत्ताम yatātām of the striving ones अपि api even सिद्धानाम siddhānam of the successful ones कः-चिद्व kasciḍ some one मामं māṁ me vetti knows तत्ततः tatvataḥ in essence

Among thousands of men scarcely one strives for perfection, and of those who strive and succeed, scarcely one knows Me in truth.

The original word for perfection is siddhi, which is a comprehensive term connoting quite a number of meanings all pregnant with great ideas. Fulfilment, accomplishment, complete attainment, success, the hitting of a mark, healing of a disease, coming into force, validity, payment, indisputable conclusion, solution of a problem, maturity, prepara-
tion, cooking, prosperity, good luck, bliss, beatitude, complete sanctification, final emancipation, the acquisition of supernatural yogic powers—all these and more are indicated by this one word—siddhi. It may be noted that people are all striving for the achievement of the one or the other of these features. Among them he who aspires for the attainment of the Divinity, stands supreme according to the Lord.

The higher the ideal, the harder is the achievement of it. Pitfalls are too many in the path to Divine Perfection. Competency for it is rarely found among men. The right attitude, the right understanding, the right adjustment, the right application—these are the fourfold indispensable virtues that lead the aspirant to Divinity. Men who are fully equipped with all these divine qualities are rare indeed.

The devotees who enter the temple of Mother Annapurna in Banaras cannot get out of it without receiving some consecrated food in accordance with the wont. Some get it immediately while the others have to wait long before being blessed with it. But nobody is denied the privilege of obtaining it. Similarly Mukti is assured for all. Some get it in this very birth. Others have access to it after two or three births, while yet others have to wait and go through countless births before becoming competent for emancipation. But all are destined for Mukti some time or other.

— Sri Ramakrishna

It is the knowledge of God that makes man fit for Mukti. But God-knowledge is rather vague and abstruse for the ordinary man. He has therefore to be put in the path that is discernible to him. Proceeding from the known to the unknown is natural for him. This process is as follows:
bhūmāḥ āpar āpāḥ water ānasāḥ analāḥ fire vāyuḥ air yam kham ether manāḥ mind buddhiḥ intellect eva eva even ca ca and ahamkāra egoism iti iti thus ēvam ēvam thus me my myām bhūnā divided prakṛti. prakṛtiḥ nature ēṣāṇa ēṣāṇa eightfold

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and egoism; thus is My prakriti divided eightfold. 4

An element is defined in one way by the modern science and in quite another way by the Indian systems of philosophy. According to the latter the five senses of perception are the means to take cognizance of the elements. The ear perceives sound which is characteristic of ether or Akasa. The skin all over the body is endowed with the sense of touch which is peculiar to air. The eye cognizes form revealed by light or fire. The tongue experiences taste of things dissolved in water, but for the aid and agency of water nothing can be tasted. The nose contacts smell produced by earth. These five instruments of knowledge are thus recognized as the revealers of the five elements, of which the world is constituted.

The faculty of feeling is designated as the mind. The intellect is that which distinguishes the good 80–27
from the bad, the agreeable from the disagreeable. That which creates the sense of agency is the egoism, without which action is impossible. The individuality of one is based on the peculiarities of these three internal organs.

The eightfold Prakriti mentioned here is elaborated into twenty-four categories by the Samkhya system of philosophy.

अपरेयमितस्ववन्ध्र...प्रकृति चिदिति मे परामः।
जीवभूतां महावाहो यथेऽद्भायेष्वे जगत्॥५॥

अपरा इत्यैः हु अन्नामृ। प्र-हृतस्म विद्व-धि मे परामः।
जीव-भू-नाम महा-वाहो यथा इदम् पार-वते जगत्॥

apare 'yam itas tv anyām prakṛtim viddhi me parām|
jīvabhūtāṃ mahābāho yaye 'dam dhāryate jagat ॥

अपरा aparā lower इत्यैः itaḥ from this हु tu but अन्नामृ anyām different प्रकृतिम प्रकृतिम nature चिदिति know मे me my परामृ parām higher जीवभूताम jīvabhūtāṃ the very life-element महावाहो maha-bāho O mighty-armed यथा yayā by which इदम् idam this पारेवे dhāryate is upheld जगत् jagat world

This is My lower prakriti, but different from it, know, O mighty-armed, My higher prakriti—the life element by which this universe is upheld. 5

All the five elements and the three internal organs put together form the inferior constituent of the Lord. The cosmic life principle or the sum total of the Jivatman is His superior constituent. An example elucidates this truth. The smoke that emanates from fire is its lower nature, and the spark its higher nature. The characteristics of the fire are
in the sparks, while its action in the smoke. Technically put, the smoke is the \textit{tātastha lakshanam}—accidental definition of the fire and the spark, the \textit{svarūpa lakshanam}—innate definition. Knowing of the spark is equivalent to knowing of the fire. Pure Consciousness which is the Paramatman is inherent in the \textit{Jivatman} also. The spark is that which has separated itself from the fire. But the \textit{Jivatman} is not and cannot be dissociated from the Paramatman. As a wave in the ocean, the individual soul is ever in the Cosmic Soul, though with its limiting adjuncts.

The \textit{Jiva-prakriti} or the \textit{kshetrajna} is utilizing the \textit{Jada-prakriti} or the \textit{kshetra} as its body and upholding it too. This act of the conscious principle is like the Akasa containing in itself all the other four elements.

\begin{quote}
एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीतपथार्थ I
अहँ कृतस्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा II ६
एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणि इति उप-धार्यः I
अहम् कृतस्नस्य जगतः प्र-भवः प्र-ध्यः तथा II
ee\textit{tad yontni bhūtāni sarvāni 'ty upadhāraya I}
aham kṛteṣṇasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā II
\end{quote}

एतद्योनीनि etad yontni those of which these two (Prakritis) are the womb भूतानि bhūtāni beings सर्वाणि sarvāni all \textit{iti} thus उपधार्य upadhāraya know अहम् aham I कृतस्नस्य kṛteṣṇasya of the whole जगतः jagataḥ of the world प्रभवः prabhavaḥ source प्रध्यः pralayaḥ dissolution तथा tathā also
Know that these two are the womb of all beings. I am the origin and dissolution of the whole universe.

Life has its origin in the conjugation of the sentient and the insentient. The body bereft of life becomes a corpse; life without the instrument of the body becomes ineffective. The act of living ensues from the union of the sentient and the insentient, the kshetrajna and the kshetra. The commingling of these two Prakritis—the conscious principle and the unconscious matter—is evident all over the universe. The cloud has its origin and sustenance in the Akasa, and ultimately it dissolves itself in the Akasa. Likewise, Iswara is the source, support and destiny of His Prakritis, high and low.

During those days when I was subjecting myself to spiritual discipline, I wished to know what Maya, the deluding power, was like. I saw a drop of water slowly evolving into a girl who further grew into a maid. She begot a baby and strangely enough swallowed it too. This act of hers was repeated several times. I concluded from that vision that it was Maya.

—Sri Ramakrishna

This being the truth about Iswara:

मत्त: परतरं नान्यत्किर्मिदद्वि धनान्नतयाः
मायो सर्वमिदं प्रोत्त खेते मणिगणः ह्रवम्

मद्वत: परतरस्मू न अन्यतः किंचिं द्वित्ति धनान्नम्
मधि सर्वेऽख्यः प्रोत्तम् सुध्धे समिगणः ह्रवम्

mattah parataram na 'nyat kiṁcita asti dhanamjaya
dharmi sarvam idam proto 'khete maṇi-ganāna iṣvam
dharmi mattaḥ than me purataram higher na na
tathat, anyat other kīṁcit anyone atiti asti
dhanamjaya O Dhananjaya maṁ mayi in me
सर्वम् sarvam all इत्म idam this भोक्तम् protam is strung सूत्रे sūtre on a string मणिगन्धि clusters of gems ह्व iva like

There is nothing whatsoever higher than Me, O Dhananjaya. All this is strung on Me, as rows of gems on a string.

The producer, the sustainer and the withdrawer of the universe is Iswara. There is no power, extraneous to Him, to interfere with His work, great or small. The gems strung together may vary in colour and species. But the supporting string is the same all through. The universes sustained by the Lord, may, in that fashion, vary in their appearances; but the Sustainer of all of them is the same. Sūtra is the Sanskrit word for string. The Lord is therefore called the Sūtrātman—the string-like supporter of the manifested worlds. The Pure Consciousness, which is the Substratum of all beings sentient and insentient, is the same.

What Brahman is like cannot be grasped by the ordinary mind. He therefore became Ārddhanarīswara—half-man, half-woman—in order to make Himself knowable to beings. This form of His indicates that Purusha and Prakṛti are but two different readings of the same Reality. He has further materialized Himself into the sentient and the insentient. Therefore nothing is alien to Him

——Sri Ramakrishna

Is it ever possible for us to behold Him as having become all these manifestations? The clue is given:

The Is ness in the Elements and Beings is Iswara — 8-9

रसोइहमप्तु कौन्तेय प्रभावित्म शशिक्षणयोऽ।
मणाः सर्ववेद्युत शन्द: दे पौलचन्त्रुः ॥ ८॥

The Elements are the obstructions of the senses.
raso 'ham apsu kaunteya prabhā 'smi sāsisūryayoh
prānavaḥ sarvavedeṣu sabdaḥ khe pauruṣam nṛsu

rasaḥ sapidity abhumī aham I aṣṭu apsu in water kaunteya O Kaunteya (son of Kunti) prabhā light abhumī asmi am I śaṁśīsūryayoh in the moon and the sun prānavaḥ the syllable OM sarvavedeṣu in all the Vedas sabdaḥ sound khe in ether pauruṣam pauruṣam virility nṛsu in men

I am the sapidity in water, O son of Kunti; I, the radiance in moon and sun; I am the syllable Om in all the Vedas; sound in ether and manliness in man.

The sweetness in eatables indicates the presence of sugar in them. Similarly, the innate nature of Iswara reveals itself in all the modifications He has undergone. It is imperative for the aspirant that he recognizes the presence of Iswara in the varieties of His manifestations. Jnana of this kind is conducive to vijnana. Pure water is tasteless, but the power in it to reveal the tastes of things is really the power of Iswara. But for the indeterminate sapidity in water the determinate difference in taste between a stone and a candy cannot be made out by the tongue. Fire is another element represented by the sun and the moon the light of which when perceived by the eyes bring the knowledge of the colour, form and beauty in them. Ether similarly functions as the vehicle of sound, the modifications of which are the various languages and the synthesis of which is the
syllable Om. The truths and the facts in Nature conveyed through languages are the Vedas. This way, Iswara reveals Himself as the five elements each of which has a distinctive feature in the revelation of jnana.

It is not sufficient for man simply to assume the human form and carry on the human existence. He is verily man who exhibits human excellence in all of his doings. Man fulfils himself this way and this fulfilment is for the glory of the Lord. He adores God best who fulfils himself perfectly.

पुन्यो गन्धः प्रथित्यां च तेजशाहसिः विभावसीः
जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपशाहसिः तपस्विषु

punyo gandhaḥ prthivyāṁ ca tejas cā 'smi vibhāvasau
tvanam sarva bhūtesu tapaḥ cā 'smi tapasvīṣu

puny. punyaḥ sweet gandhaḥ fragrance prthivyāṁ
prthivyāṁ in earth cā and tejas tejaḥ brilliance cā
and āstि asmi am (I) vibhāvasau in fire jīvanam
jtvānāṁ life sarvamūtēṣu sarva bhūtesu in all beings tapaḥ
apra austerity cā and āstि asmi am (I) tapasvīṣu in ascetics

I am the sweet fragrance in earth and the brilliance in fire; I am the life in all beings and the austerity in ascetics.

Odour in all of its forms is characteristic of the element earth. But the sweet fragrance is specified here because of aroma being associated with the ritualistic worship of the Lord.
The brilliance in fire and sun is one and the same. While the former is handy and always available to man the latter is to be beheld with reverence from where he is. But both of them are the physical representations of the undecaying splendour of Brahman. Meditation on sun and fire leads to the cognizance of the divine blaze within oneself.

Self-consciousness is concomitant with the manifestation of life and it persists, though in varying degrees in all beings. Meditation on the continuity of life is therefore equivalent to meditation on consciousness. There should be no difficulty for the sadhaka in having recourse to either form of meditation.

It is one thing just to live and quite another to make a conscious attempt at intensifying the life that one lives. Ascetics are they who intensify life by subjective means. The process of their effecting this end is known as tapas—austerity. The presence of the Lord is patent in this holy act. The sadhaka ought to study the austerity of the successful ascetics so that he may follow in their wake. The Lord Siva is designated as Ghora tapasvin—the One of terrible austerity.

The Excellences in Beings come from God—10-12

वीरं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्विति पार्थ सनातनम् ||
दुर्द्विद्वितिमातमसि तेजस्तेजस्तिनामहम् || १०

वीरमस् माम तर्थ-भूतानि विद्विति पार्थ सनातनम् ||
हर्ष-दिकुः दुर्द्विद्वितास्मि अतु-सि तेजस्तेजस्तिनामहम् ||
bijam mām sarva bhūtānām viddhi pārtha sanātanam |
buddhir buddhamatām asmi tejas tejasvinām aham ||

Vicām bijam seed aham mām me māyāmati sarvabhūtānām of all beings viditrī viddhi know pārtha O Partha sanātanam eternal viditrī buddhir intelligence buddhamatām of the intelligent aham am (I) tejāk splendid tejasvinām of the splendid aham

Know Me, O Partha, as the eternal seed of all beings; I am the intelligence of the intelligent; the splendour of the splendid.

The constant source is otherwise known as the eternal seed. The ocean is the eternal seed of the clouds that appear and disappear. The Lord is this wise the source of all beings. He being eternal, the varieties of beings coming into existence is inevitable and endless. Having a reverential attitude to all of them amounts to the adoration of their Source, the Lord.

Beings are classified as the high and the low in accordance with the intelligence evident in them. Clarification of the intelligence is one of the noble purposes of life. As it gets clarified the cognizance of the Atman becomes clear. He who fully understands Brahman becomes himself Brahman. In whomsoever there is intelligence, it has to be adored, even as the Lord is adored.

Tejas and Ojas are both splendours born of the ethical and spiritual excellence. While the latter is internal and invisible, the former is patent on the
body, particularly the face. Being endowed with this splendour is no accident, fluke or oddity of nature. It is the outcome of the divine life that one lives. The spiritual splendour is itself the presence of the Lord evoking adoration.

\[ \text{वल्लभलतामसि कामरागविचरितांम्}
\text{धर्माविरूढः पूर्वेपि कामोदकसि भरतपन्म्}
\] ११
\[ \text{वल्लभम्} \text{ वल्लभम्} \text{अस्मि} \text{ काम-राग-वि-रजितांम्}
\text{धर्माविरूढः पूर्वेपि} \text{ कामः} \text{अस्मि} \text{ भरत-श्रिपन्म्}
\]

\[ \text{balaṁ balavatāṁ asmi kāma rāga vivarjitam}
\text{dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo 'smi bharata ṛṣabha}
\] ।

\[ \text{चल्लम् balaṁ strength} \text{ चल्लम्} \text{balavatāṁ of the}
\text{strong अस्मि asmi am (I) कामरागविचरितां} \text{kāma rāga}
\text{vivarjitāṁ devoid of desire and attachment धर्माविरूढः}
\text{dharmāviruddhaḥ unopposed to dharma सूर्वेपि bhūteṣu}
\text{in beings कामः kāmaḥ desire अस्मि asmi am (I) भरत-श्रिपन्म}
\text{bharata ṛṣabha O lord of the Bharatas}
\]

I am the strength of the strong devoid of desire and passion. In beings I am desire, not contrary to dharma, O chief of the Bharatas.

\[ \text{Kāma or desire is the hankering of the mind for}
\text{objects that are invisible and not yet obtained, while}
\text{rāga or passion is the clinging and craving for the}
\text{visible and obtained objects. That strength is abused}
\text{which is directed towards the fulfilment of desire}
\text{and passion. On the other hand, the strength util-
\text{ized on noble and holy causes, gets sanctified. The}
\text{doings of Ravana and Rama are examples of the}
\text{abuse and proper use of strength.} \]
Desire as such is not a vice. The desire to eat is a sanctioned one, when it is prompted by hunger. The desire for self-emulation is a virtue; the desire to excel another in good conduct is laudable. The keen desire to obtain the grace of the Lord is a divine gift and a prelude to God-vision.

Why does the mind deviate when one sits in meditation? It is due to base desires. A fly sits now on sacramental food and next on filth. But the case of the bee is different. It sits on a blossom or in its hive and nowhere else. The worldly minded sadhakas are like the house fly and the Paramahamsas like the bee. The former are occasionally devoted and the latter ever devoted to the Lord.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Ye chēva tatācikābhāva rajasaśtraśāstraśāstraḥ ye ।
matya eveti tatācikîd vā tvaṁ tēṣu te māyī ॥ १२
ye ca et ca eva sattvikā bhūvā rajasās tāmasās ca ye ।
matta eva 'ti tān viddhi na tv aham tēṣu te māyī ॥

ye ye whatever ca and eva even sāttvikāḥ pure bhavaḥ bhūvāḥ natures rajasaḥ rajasāḥ active tāmasāḥ inert ca and ye ye whatever ca mat-tāḥ from me eva verily āti thus tān tān them viddhi know na not tu tu but aham aham I tēṣu tēṣu in them te they māyī māyī in me

And whatever beings are of Sattva, of Rajas or of Tamas, know them to proceed from Me; still I am not in them, they are in Me.

Prakrīti or Nature constituted of the three categories—Sattva, Rajas and Tamas—has its origin
and sustenance in Iswara. But it is not like the curd coming from milk. Just as a piece of rope appears as a snake in twilight, the Lord puts on the appearance of Nature through His inscrutable Māyā. The rope, the original stuff, does not depend for its being on snake the assumed reality; but the seeming snake depends for its existence on the rope, the reality. To put it in another way, the unreal snake is a superimposition on the real rope. Similarly, the world of the three Gunas is a superimposition on Iswara. This power of appearing as the Prakriti is inherent in Him. This is the meaning of ‘I am not in them, they are in Me’.

The goal of human life is to transcend the perception of the universe and to get fixed in the vision of Iswara. (In chapter two, stanza forty-five and in chapter nine stanzas four and five this point is variously dealt with.)

A holy man used to smile seeing the colours produced by the chandelier in a lamp. He smiled because the seeming universe is as untrue as these colours.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The Maya of the Three Gunas — 13-15

tribhir guṇamayair bhāvair ebhiḥ sarvam idam jagat |
mohitam nā 'bhijānāti mām ebhyāḥ param anyayam ||

Tribhīḥ by three guṇamayaiḥ composed of Gunas | bhāvaiḥ by natures ēṃsi: ebhiḥ by
these सर्वम् sarvam all इदम् idam this जगत् jagat world मोहितम् mohitam deluded न na not अभिज्ञानाति abhijñātī knows माम् mām me एवं ebhyah from them परमं param higher अवयवम् avyayam immutable

Deluded by these threefold dispositions of Prakriti — the Gunas, this world does not know Me, who am above them and immutable.

Brahman is here designated as Param which means the One beyond the ken of the intellect and the senses. This Reality undergoes no modification and so It is immutable.

Those who see a cinema take no note of the screen on which it is projected. The phenomenal universe is made up of the three Gunas; likes and dislikes in all forms are also born of the three Gunas. People entangled in these three categories are immersed in their experiences of the phenomenal existence and they take no note of the Basis which is unaffected by all these modifications. The Chit-akasa or Brahman the Pure Consciousness remains as the Substratum of the perceived universe. They who are bound by the Gunas are unable to cognize It.

Iswara plays at assuming the human forms He is a great magician The universe and the beings in it are all His magic, created by His inscrutable power called Maya. The magician is real while his magic is a mere phantom.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How shall one extricate oneself from this delusion? The way is shown:—

दृष्टी हेपा शुण्मची मम माया दुरस्थ्या ।
मामेव ये प्रपचन्ते मायामेतां तरिन्ति ते ॥ १४
Verily this divine illusion of Mine, made up of the Gunas, is hard to surmount; but those who take refuge in Me alone, they cross over this illusion. 14

Dāivi māyā, the divine illusion, is the cloak that the Lord has assumed. It serves as His body. Mahāmāyāḥ is one of the appellations of Vishnu. He who is an expert in creating the illusion, is the meaning of this term. He has hidden His Reality in the garb of Nature. All the same, He deigns to disclose Himself to those who take refuge in Him. The Reality in Him being known, the assumed garb of Māyā vanishes. It is like the disappearance of the phantom of the snake when the rope is perceived in its reality.

Why are we not able to behold the Divine Mother? It is because She keeps Herself concealed behind the chicks or bamboo screen after the fashion of the respectable ladies of an aristocratic family. She sees everything and guides everything, but none can see Her. But the true devotees who are Her kith and kin can cross the chicks, get near and behold Her.

—Sri Ramakrishna
Who are they that alienate themselves from Iswara? They are marked out:

न मां दुष्कृतिनी सूढा: प्रपवन्ते नराधमाः।
माययासहस्त्रानाः आशुरं भावमाधित्या॥ १५

न मां दुष्कृतिनी सूढा: प्रपवन्ते नराधमाः।
माययासहस्त्रानाः आशुरं भावमाधित्या॥

na māṁ duskr̥tinī mūḍhāḥ propadyante narādhamāḥ।
māyayo 'pahrtajñānāṁ āsuraṁ bhāvanā āsritāḥ॥

न na not मां māṁ to me दुष्कृतिन: duskr̥tinah evil-doers mūḍhāḥ the deluded propadyante seek नर अधम: nara adhamaḥ the lowest of men मायया māyayo by Maya अपहर्तज्ञान: apahrtajñānāḥ deprived of knowledge आशुर: āsuraṁ belonging to demons भावम् bhāvan nature ādhiṭṭha āsritāḥ having taken to

The evil-doers, the deluded, the lowest of men, deprived of discrimination by Maya and following the way of the Asuras, do not seek refuge in Me. 15

Asuras are they who delight in deceit, falsehood and torture of beings. Their ways are elaborately dealt with in chapter sixteen. They stand against the worship of the Divine. Practice of cruelty is their pastime.

Evil deeds hide the noble traits in man and expose the base ones. The perpetrators of wickedness become progressively deluded. They are not able to discern between the divine and the unholy. They are therefore the lowest of men. The question of pursuing any good path and pulling up in ethical life does not arise in their cases. Their understand-
ing gets completely distorted. That it is Iswara who manifests Himself as the universe, is something beyond their ken. They detest everything pertaining to the Divine. The deluded have therefore no alternative to self-destruction.

The way of the sieve is to let the fine things pass through and hold the coarse things to itself. Likewise, the way of the wicked is to let the merits go and hold the evils fast.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Who are they that get drawn to the Lord? They are delineated:

Four Types of Virtuous Men—16-19

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जना: सुकृतिनोऽवृट्यान् ।
आते निजसुरयायीं ज्ञानी च भरतपेरं ॥ १६

caturvidhā bhajante māṁ janāḥ sukṛtino 'rvrāṇa ।
ārto jijñāsur arthārthi jñāṇī ca bharata ṛśabha ॥

चतुर्विधा: caturvidhāḥ four kinds भजन्ते bhajante worship मां māṁ me जना: janāḥ people सुकृतिन: suktināḥ virtuous अर्जुन arjuna O Arjuna आते: ārtaḥ the distressed जिज्ञासु: jijñāsuḥ the seeker of knowledge अर्थार्थी arthārthi the seeker of wealth ज्ञानी jñāṇī the wise च ca and भरत ṛśabha bharata ṛśabha O lord of the Bharatas

Four types of virtuous men worship Me, O Arjuna: the man in distress, the man seeking knowledge, the man seeking wealth and the man imbued with wisdom, O the best of the Bharatas.
Distress comes to beings in one form or another and at some time or the other. Avoidance of it is impossible to the embodied. Just as medicine is resorted to, to cure disease, the way of the devoted is to supplicate the Divine for deliverance from distress. When the modesty of the Queen Draupadi was at stake in the assembly of the Kauravas, she piteously sought the protection of Sri Krishna and His help did come to save her from that situation. The lives of many a devotee bear testimony to the fact that the Lord comes to the rescue of the pious in distress.

The man seeking knowledge is here designated as jitās. It is not given to all to become seekers of God-knowledge. The rare few who seek, obtain it unmistakably. The Lord sees to it that the spiritual thirst of the devotee never goes unsated. A recent seeker of God-knowledge was Swami Vivekananda and Providence made provision for his obtaining it.

The man seeking wealth usually works for it and that is the proper way. One type of devotees work for it, praying to the Lord at the same time for the easy acquisition of wealth. Another type of devotees have no time to toil for wealth; at the same time they are in need of it for their holy undertakings. They ardently appeal to the Lord and He sends them the required resources.

The man imbued with wisdom is here classified as Jnani, the one who has realized the truth. He is one who has gained the insight that Brahman is the
Reality while the universe and the beings are all mere superimposition on It. Adoring the Reality to the exclusion of the appearance is but natural to him.

Among the people who believe in God, these are the four types who seek to contact Him, each according to his understanding and attainments. All the four groups are virtuous because of their right understanding and right doings.

Blessed are they who keep God as their goal and strive accordingly. Zeros have no value, but they gain in value when linked to the number one. God is the number one and all the worldly things are zeros. Independent of God, they are mere ciphers, but when associated with Him, they gain in importance.

— Sri Ramakrishna

But who stands supreme among these virtuous four? The answer comes:

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिनिविदिषयते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनः त्यथार्थम् स स मम प्रियः ॥ १७

तेषां ज्ञानी निल-युक्त-तः: 'एक-भक्ति: विषयः क-तः ।
प्रिय: हि ज्ञानिः अति-अर्थम् अहम् स: च मम प्रिय: ॥

tesāṁ jñānī nityayuktā ekabhaktir visisyatā ।
priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham aham sa ca mama priyah ॥

तेषां तेषां of them ज्ञानी jñānī the wise नित्ययुक्तः
nitya yuktah ever steadfast एकभक्ति: eka bhaktīḥ whose
devotion is to the One विशिष्यते visisyaḥ excels प्रियः
priyah dear हि hi verily ज्ञानिनः jñānīnah of the wise
caryatāḥ exceedingly अहम् aham I स: saḥ he
c ca and मम mama to me प्रियः priyah dear

Of these, the wise man, ever steadfast and devoted to the One, excels; for, supremely dear am I to the wise and he is dear to Me.
śiṣṭestha is one of the appellations attributed to Vishnu. He who is dear to the good, is the meaning of this name. The highly evolved ones among the human get to love the Lord.

It is but natural for beings to love themselves. The Jnani cognizes Brahman as the real entity and the very essence in himself. He is therefore supremely attached to the Reality in himself. That Reality gives the Jnani his true individuality. This is how the Jnani excels.

After God-realization the aspirant himself gets at godly qualities.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The other three are not undervalued; for —

उदासा: सर्वे एवेते ज्ञानीत्वातः मे भवतु ।
आक्षितः स हि युक्तामामामेवावृत्तमां गतिम् ॥ १८

उदासा: सर्वे एव एते ज्ञानी बु ज्ञाता एव मे सत्त-तत्तु ।
आ-क्षितः स हि युज-त ज्ञाता भास्य एव लक्ष-उत्तमाम्गम गतिम् ॥

udaraha sarva evai 'te jñānt tv ātmai 'va me matam |
āśhita sa hi yuktātmā mām eva 'nuttamāṁ gatim ॥

उदासा: udaraha noble sarve all eva surely ete |
ete these jñānt the wise tu tu but Jātma ātmā Self |

एव one very me me my सत्त-तत्तु माम माम Observation आक्षितः आक्षितः is established स: sah he हि hi verily Jñānta yuktāt-
mā steadfast-minded भास्य mām me एव eva verily अनुत्तमाम् anuttamāṁ the supreme gatim goita goal

Noble indeed are all these; but the wise man, I deem, to be My very Self. For, steadfast in mind, he is established in Me alone, as the supreme goal. 18
The devotees are all favourites of the Lord. Among them again, he who practises the devotion of non-separation stands foremost. As the fuel consigned to fire becomes itself fire, the Jnani absorbed in Iswara who is a blaze of \textit{jnana}, becomes one with Him.

A master is naturally drawn to a servant who serves him whole-heartedly and to the best of his ability. When their mutual love and fidelity get firm-rooted the master may someday entrust the management of his entire property to the servant. Akin to this act of man, the Lord holds His devotee as His own Self.

— Sri Ramakrishna

\textbf{The Jnani is further extolled:—}

\begin{verse}
\textit{bahūnāṁ} \textit{janmanāṁ} \textit{ante} \textit{jñānavān} \textit{māṁ} \textit{prapadyate} \textit{vāsudevaḥ} \textit{svam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhah}
\end{verse}

\textit{bahūnāṁ} \textit{of many} \textit{janmanāṁ} \textit{of births} \textit{ante} \textit{in the end} \textit{jñānавān} \textit{the wise} \textit{māṁ} \textit{to me} \textit{prapadyate approaches} \textit{vāsudevaḥ} \textit{Vasudeva sarvam all iti iti thus sah he mahātmā sudurlabhah} \textit{(is) very hard to find}

At the end of many births, the man of wisdom takes refuge in Me, realizing that Vasudeva is all that is. Rare indeed is that great soul.

\textit{Vāsudeva} connotes the \textit{pratyagātman}—that which is immanent in everything sentient and insentient, movable and immovable, good and bad.
When a sadhaka begins to give a practical shape to his learning that it is God who has become everything, he is styled a Jnani even in that initial stage. But quite a number of sadhakas take innumerable births before they gain complete realization and get fixed in the truth that God alone puts on the appearance of the phenomenon. The man who has attained this acme of realization is indeed rare in the world. He is verily a god among men. The third stanza also of this chapter refers to this great soul.

The practice of this tenet of Vedanta contributes directly and indirectly to the welfare of the world. By viewing all beings as veritable divinities, the sadhaka elevates himself in spiritual stature. This is the benefit directly derived. The indirect benefit consists in the others being unconsciously divinized. The more one is divined, the more the devil in one is eradicated.

Beholding diversity is born of delusion, beholding unity is born of enlightenment. — Sri Ramakrishna

What do they do, who are devoid of devotion and wisdom? Their ways are dilated on —

The Votaries of Minor Gods — 20 23

कामास्तै-तैर हर्तायनाः प्रपद्याओऽन्यदेवताः ||
त त नियमास्याय प्रकृत्या नियताः खयो || 20
भक्तं है ते हुत ज्ञानं प्र पद्य-यन्ते भक्तं-देवता ।
तस्मृ तेसु नियमम् आ स्माय-प्रकृति नि यस्तु त प्याः ||
kāmais tais-tair hṛta-yānaḥ prapadyante 'nyadevataḥ ||
tam tam niyamaṁ āsthāya prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā ||
καमaiḥ by desires तaih-taiḥ by this or that ह्रtajñānāḥ those whose wisdom has been rent away प्रपायने approach अन्यदेवता: anya devatāḥ other gods समूः तम्म tam-tam this or that नियमम् niyamam rite आस्त्रया āsthāya having followed प्रकृत्या prakṛtyā by nature नियत्ता: niyatāḥ led स्वया svaya by one's own

But those whose discrimination has been led astray by this or that desire go to other gods, following this or that rite, constrained by their own nature.

When it is Vāsudeva who has become all that is, the question of other gods existing independent of Him does not arise. His limited aspects are, out of courtesy, called other gods. The minor officers of a government are necessarily under its sovereign. When the good will of the head of the regime is obtained, those of the petty officers are contained in it. But the courtier must be worthy of the sovereign. To get at the king is difficult; but the benefit that ensues from it is great. To get at the little office-holders is easy; and the returns thereof are correspondingly small. Analogous to this, getting the grace of God is difficult, but all conducive to jnana, bhakti and mukti. People given to worldly desires do not betake to the worship of Iswara. The devil of the low desire in them makes them mistake little ends for great ones. Accordingly they choose to propitiate minor deities with suitable rites. Their attainments and nature are so low as that.

Healing disease, winning litigation, walking on water—trifling psychic powers such as these, appeal most to men of base mental make. But the true devotees give no thought to those vulgar
things. They are solely intent on gaining the gracious vision of the Lord

— Sri Ramakrishna

What does the Lord do with these men of mean mentality and foolish endeavours? He delineates His dispensation —

यो यो यो तनु भक्तः अद्वयाचितुमिच्छति।
तस्य तस्याचलं अद्वा तामेव विदाहाम्। ॥ २१॥

य य यात याम तनु मभक्त अद्वया अर्चितमृ मिच्छति।
तस्य तस्य अ चलाम अद्वाम् ताम एव विदाहाम अहम्। ॥

yo yo yām-yām tanum bhaktah
sraddhayā 'rcitum icchatā
tasya-tasyā calām sraddhām
tāṁ eva vidadhāmy aham ॥

y yah who y yah who yām which yām which tanum tanum form bhaktah devotee advaya sraddhayā with faith achintum arcitum to worship ichchati desires tasya tasya of him acharām acharām unflinching advā sraddhām faith tām tām that eva surely vidadhāmi make aham aham I

Whatever form any devotee with faith wishes to worship, I make that faith of his steady.

Children are very particular to have sweetmeats shaped to their likings, such as a cow, a horse or an elephant. The confectioner supplies them sweets according to their tastes. The way of the Lord is more generous than that. His grace descends suited to the attainments of individuals. The worship of the little gods is not altogether erroneous or sinful as some theologians would have it. It is but a stepping
stone to the adoration of the Almighty. The Lord therefore provides the ways and means for the ordinary people to evolve stage by stage in their paths of devotion.

Chapter four, stanza eleven and chapter nine, stanza twenty-three may also be looked into for clarification.

स तथा श्रद्धया युक्तस्वाराधनमभिते
रम्भे त ततः कामान्यथेष्व विहितान्ति तान् ॥ २२
स: तथा श्रद्धया हुष्ट-त: तस्य का-राधनमू इष्ट-मे ततः
क्षु-मे च तत: कामान: मया एव वि-हितान्ति हि तान् ॥
sa tayā sraddhayā yuktas tasyā 'rādhanam ihate ।
labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayai 'va vihitān hi tān ॥

स: saḥ he tatha tayā with that shraddhayā with
faith yuktah ended tasya of it ārañānam
ārādhanaṃ worship īṣṭate thate engages in labhate
obtains ca and tāt: tataḥ from that kāmaṃ
desires maya by me eva surely vihitān
ordained hi hi verily tatha tān those

Endowed with that faith, he engages in the worship of that form, and from it he obtains his desires, which are being actually ordained by Me.

The river, the well, the lake, the spring—these are the sources from which water can be availed of; but the grand source for all of these is the rain, without which all these come to nought. Similar to this is the grace of the Lord which gives the start, sustenance and support to all beings. All the needs of all the beings come from the same Cosmic Source.
But the men of mediocre understanding take it that help comes to them from the gods they worship.

Water seems to be flowing out from the mouths of cows, tigers and lions attached to the drain pipes from the roof of the house. But all these waters have actually come from the heavens in the form of rain. Similarly the words uttered by the holy ones are very often the inspiration come from Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is it that the ignorant seek? The explanation comes —

अन्तवत् फलं तेषां वज्रवत्त्यपेधसाम् ।
देवान्द्रेवयजो वानित मद्दक्ता वानित मामापि ॥ २३

अन्तवत् तदु फलम् तेषाम् तद भवति मद्यपेधसाम् ।
देवान्द्र देव-यज या-अन्तित मद्य मन्त्र या जनित माम अष्टि ॥

antavat tu phalam tesam tad bharaty alpamedhasāni ।
devān devayajo yānti madbhaktā yānti mām api ॥

अन्तवत् antavat finite tu tu verily fruit phalam the fruit teṣām of them tat tat that bhavati is
alpa medhasām those of small intelligence
devaṁ to the gods devaṁ devayajaḥ the worshippers of the Devas vanit yānti go to maddaka
devān my devotees vanit yānti go to mām mām to me api api also

But the fruit that accrues to those men of small intellect is finite. The worshippers of the gods go to the gods; My devotees come to Me.

Endeavours are practically the same in all the mines. But there is a difference between the seekers of iron and the seekers of diamond. All men seek to enrich life and to add to happiness. Men of small intellect are they who are unable to distinguish
between the fleeting happiness and the lasting happiness. The earthly impermanent attainments and happinesses deified are called the little gods; whereas the permanent spiritual attainments and bliss ever belong to Iswara. The ignorant seek the former while the enlightened seek the latter.

Why is it that all do not seek Iswara? The position is explained:

The Characteristics of Iswara—24-26

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिसम्बन्धं सम्यन्ते भावमपूर्वः ।
परं भावजानन्ते मयावतन्तवत्ससः ॥ २४

avāyaktaṁ vyaktim āpannam manyante māṁ abuddhayaḥ
dhām ajāṅantaṁ mamaṁ vyayam anuttamam ॥

व्यक्तं avyaktam the unmanifested vyaktim to manifestation āpannam come to manyante think māṁ me bhāvam abuddhayaḥ the foolish param the highest bhāvam nature ajāṅantaḥ not knowing mama my unuttamam immutable anuttamam most excellent

Men of poor understanding think of Me, the unmanifest, as having manifestation, not knowing My supreme state—immutable and unsurpassed. 24

A benevolent and charitably-minded millionaire may be in rags occasionally just for the fun of it. If a beggar misunderstands him as one in rags and passes by without availing himself of the rich man’s charity, the poor man becomes poorer for his
ignorance Such verily is the lot of those ignorant of the glory of Iswara

An Incarnation of God, like Sri Krishna, assumes a human body, just as the bound souls do. But he is no more bound in the manifested body than the sky seen through a window is bound within the frame of that window. The manifested body of Sri Krishna is mutable, but in reality He is immutable and unsurpassed by the ordinary human beings. His supreme state remains unknown to the people of poor understanding. They do not therefore seek to worship Him.

How then can we account for the ignorance of the ordinary man? The explanation comes —

नाह णकाव: सर्वस्य योगमायासमाकृत: ।

मूहोःस्य नामिनानाति लोको मामतमन्यथम् ॥ २५

न अहम् प्रकाश सर्वस्य योग-माया-समुद्र आ बुत ॥

महत् त. अयम् न अम्बिता नाति लोक माय अ-जम् अ-मयम् ॥

nā 'ham prakāśah sarvasya yogamāyāsamāvṛtah ।
mudho 'yam nā 'bhijānāti loko mām ajam avyayam ॥

न na not अहम् aham I अकाव prakāśah manifest
csarvasya sarvasya of all योगमायासमातृत yoga māyā samāvṛtah
veiled by yoga Maya mūḍhah deluded अयम् ayan
this n na not अम्बिता नाति abhijānāti knows लोक lokah
world साम् mām me अजम् ajam unborn अवयम् avayam
imperishable

I am not revealed to all, as I am veiled by yoga Maya. This deluded world knows Me not, the Unborn, the Unchanging.

25
The magician throws a spell on his audience and keeps it in illusion in regard to his performance. But what seems a magic to the onlookers is not so to the kith and kin of the magician. The nature of his play is well known to himself and his own people. The Lord is the magician who has produced the magic of this world. Its nature is well known to Him only and His devotees.

The sun that cannot be hidden by anything seems to be covered by a patch of cloud; but that patch itself cannot be located except with the aid of sun light. The originator of this cloud is none other than the sun. The cloud is the yoga māyā concealing the sun. The Prakriti made up of the three Gunas is the yoga māyā of Iswara. As it has no existence apart from Iswara, it is held to be in yoga with Him; and because of its veiling capacity it is called māyā. Iswara the akhandā sat cit ānanda seems to be concealed by His yoga māyā while actually He remains unaffected by it. Further He is sarvajna—the all-knowing One. Therefore:

\[ \text{Vedāḥ samatītāni vartamānāni cha ājñān} \]
\[ \text{Abhiṣṭaḥ ca bhūtaḥ satam tu vedā n kṣiṃ} \]
\[ \text{vedā `ham samatītāni vartamānāni cā `ṛjuna \]
\[ \text{bhaviṣyāni ca bhūtāni mām tu veda na kāścana} \]
\[ \text{Vedā veda know āham I samatītāni}
\]
\[ \text{the past vartamānāni the present ca and}
\]
\[ \text{ājñān arjuna O Arjuna Abhiṣṭaḥ bhaviṣyāni the future} \]
I know, O Arjuna, the beings of the past, the present and the future, but no one knows Me.

Iswara is the Lord of māyā, having complete control over it. The appearance, stay and dissolution of the beings are all acts of māyā. Time also exists in māyā. The Lord being all-knowing, the destiny of all of these is within His ken. The beings that were in the past, that are in the present and that are to be in the future are all known to Him. But the individual souls do not know anything worth while about themselves, how then are they going to know about Iswara, the Cosmic Soul! The devotees, however, do not come within this limitation. They constantly adore the Lord and choose to be in His proximity. So they understand Him to some extent. The others neither adore nor understand Him.

It is possible for the swan to separate milk from water and partake of the former only. The other birds are unable to do this. Iswara is mingled with māyā, He is non-dual with it. The ordinary people cannot distinguish Him from māyā. But the Paramahamsas—the men of perfection—are able to cognize Iswara to the exclusion of māyā.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Why are people devoid of knowledge and devotion? Their case is analysed —

The Discerning and the Non discerning — 27-30

इण्डियसुर्यवेण दन्दमोहेन भारव ||
सर्वभूतानि समोहं सर्वं याति परतथ ॥ २७
icchā dveṣa samutthena dvandva mohena bhārata
sarva bhūtāni saṁmoham sarge yānti paramtapa

The delusion of the pairs of opposites arising from desire and aversion is mohena by the delusion of the pairs of opposites bhārata O Bharata sarva bhūtāni all beings saṁmoham to delusion sarve sarge at birth yānti are subject parantapa O Parantapa

By the delusion of the pairs of opposites arising from desire and aversion, all beings, O Bharata, are subject to illusion at birth, O harasser of foes. 27

Among the pairs of opposites the foremost and the most lasting is the one pertaining to life and death. Where life is its counterpart, death, should necessarily be. The existence of the one to the exclusion of the other is impossible. From birth onwards a being proceeds towards death. The interval between the two is what is called life, which is as impermanent as a bubble on water. Death may at any moment swoop and swallow up the embodied. Of the inseparable two, life and death, the desire for the former and aversion for the latter manifest themselves from birth onwards. But both of these attitudes are born of delusion.

The pair of opposites pertaining to pleasure and pain comes next. Sense-pleasures are always crowned with pain. From birth onwards beings hug the one and shun the other. But it is an illusion to seek sense-pleasure to the exclusion of pain.
Among the pairs of opposites, the desire for the one and aversion for the other are the foes of the seekers of knowledge and devotion. These foes have to be conquered.

What do they do, who have got over the pairs of opposites? Their path to perfection is portrayed:

\[\text{yeśāṁ tv antagatam pāpam janānām punyakarmanām} \]
\[\text{te dvandvamohanirnuktā bhajante mām dṛḍhavratāḥ} \]
\[\text{yeśām} \text{ of whom} \text{ tu} \text{ but} \text{ antagatam} \text{ is at an end} \text{ pāpam} \text{ sin} \text{ janānām} \text{ of men} \text{ punyakarmanām} \text{ of men of virtuous deeds} \text{ te} \text{ they} \text{ dvandva mohar muktāḥ freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites bhajante worship mām me dṛḍhā vratāḥ men steadfast in vows} \]

But those men of virtuous deeds whose sins have come to an end, who are freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites worship Me remaining steadfast in their vows.

Whatever action fosters the Jivahood in one, is condemned as sin by the wise. In contrast with it, whatever action contributes to self-abnegation is deemed as virtue. Selfless service has to be carried on incessantly lest the mind should lapse into lethargy and egotism. Purity of the mind ensues from constant self-denial. Unswerving adoration of
the Lord is possible to him only whose mind is free from taint.

They only who remain unruffled and unaffected by the pairs of opposites such as victory and defeat, gain and loss, praise and censure and life and death, become steadfast in their vows. Worship of the Lord is possible to such dedicated souls.

A rusty piece of iron is not actively susceptible to magnetization; but when cleansed of the rust, it readily responds. Similarly in that mind which has become rusty with attachment and aversion and likes and dislikes, devotion to the Lord does not dawn. Whereas in a pure mind bhakti rises readily.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the nature of the understanding of those who, while being devoted to the Lord, take a realistic view of life? The explanation ensues:

जरामरणमोक्षाय सामाशिर्य यतंति स ।
ते श्रद्धा तत्त्वदः कृतस्तयस्यात्से कर्म चाक्षिलम् ॥ २९

Jarā maraṇa mokṣāya mām āśrītya yatanti ye ।
tē brahma tad viduḥ kṛṣṇam adhyātman karma
ca 'khilam ॥

Jarā maraṇa mokṣāya for liberation from old age and death mām mām me āśrītya having taken refuge in yatanti ye who te te they brahma Brahman tat tat that vidoḥ know kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇam the whole adhyātman knowledge of the Self karma action ca and ākhilam whole
Those who take refuge in Me and strive for deliverance from decay and death, they realize in full that Brahman, the individual self and all karma.

The mind of man may take its own time to be delivered from the delusion of the pairs of opposites. But there are two other factors in life which are ever staring at man. Decay and death are the two factors unwanted by him; but he can never escape from their clutches. To lose one’s hard-earned vigour and to become a prey to death—are these the end of human life? To do deeds of rarity, to achieve the impossible and then to quit the world as if in banishment—is this the reward of life on earth? Death drives man to the necessity of raising questions of this type. Death does not allow him to be dormant. It gives him rude knocks and wakes him up to realities with which he is not acquainted. When the right enquiries are thereby made, the sadhaka comes to know of the truths about Brahman, about himself and about karma.

When a man wants to eat a fruit, he discards its shell and seeds and helps himself to the pulp. But when he wants to purchase that fruit or make a study of it, he has to take into account the shell, the seeds, the pulp and all the contents of the fruit. Very much like this, the seeker of God negates the world and goes to Him. But after God-realization he concludes that it is Brahman that puts on the appearance of the universe and the beings in it.

Sri Ramakrishna
sādhibhūtādhipāram mām sādhiyajñam ca ye viduḥ prayāṇakāle 'pi ca mām te vidur yukta cetasaḥ

Those who realize Me in the Adhibhūta, in the Adhipāra and in the Adhiyajna, they of steadfast mind realize Me even in the hour of death.

The details of the adhibhūta, adhipāra and adhiyajna come in the next chapter. The way of the world is to be scared, confused and frightened in the hour of death. But the yogi accepts death calmly and as a matter of course. It has its due place in Nature. A true study of Nature develops into devotion to the Lord. A yogi’s knowledge and devotion reveal themselves best in the hour of death. His God-realization is at its zenith when he drops the body in death.

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the seventh discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF KNOWLEDGE AND REALIZATION
AKSHARA BRAHMA YOGA
THE YOGA OF THE IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN
CHAPTER VIII

The Worship of Iswara — How the Yogi Relinquishes the Body —
The State of Non return — Brahma, the Creator’s Standard of
Time — Immortality — The Paths of Light and Darkness — Be
Ever a Yogi.

The Worship of Iswara — 1-8

अज्ञेन उवाच

कि तद्रक्ष किमध्यात्म कि कर्म पुस्लोचन ।
अधिभूतं च कि प्रोक्तमविदैव किमुचयते ॥ १ ॥

किम् तदं नश किम् अधि ब्रह्मस् किम् कर्म पुरुष-उत्तम ।
सवि भूतम् च किम् ग-उपकर्म किम् अधि-दैवत् किम् तदं ग-ते ॥

arjuna uvāca
kim tad brahma kim adhyātmam
kim karma purusottama
adhibhūtam ca kim proktam
adhidaivam kim ucyate ॥

अज्ञेन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said.

किम् kim what तत् tat that ब्रह्म brahma Brahman
किम् kim what अधिभूतं adhyātmam Adhyatma किम् kim
what कर्म karma action पुरुषोत्तम purusottama O best
among men अधिभूतं adhibhūtam Adhibhuta and
cिम् kim what प्रोक्तम proktam declared अधिदैवत् adhidaivam Adhidaiva kim kim what उच्यते ucyate is called

Arjuna said.

What is that Brahman? What is Adhyatma?
What is karma? O Best among men! What is said to
be Adhibhuta, and what is called Adhidaiva?
Who and how is Adhiyajna here in this body, O Madhusudana? And how, at the time of death, art Thou to be known by the self-controlled?

The concluding two stanzas of the previous discourse induce Arjuna to raise these seven questions which are sequel to the topics discussed. The Lord answers all of them:

अस्त्रं वह एव एव वाष्पायमेतमयायम् येति ॥
भूताभधवधावकरो विलोकनोऽर्जुनो विशेषास्याम भद्रम परम प्राणायमेतमयायम ॥ ॥

sīt bhagavān uvāca

aksaram brahma paramam svabhāvo 'dhyātman ucyate
bhūtabhāvodbhavakaro visargaḥ karmasamjñītaḥ
The Blessed Lord said

The Imperishable is Brahman, the Supreme. Its dwelling in the individual body is called Adhyatma. The offering which causes the origin of beings is called karma.

The Absolute Reality is Brahman. It is supremely above time, space and causation which are the characteristics of the universe. The senses and the intellect cannot gain access to It. For this reason It is called paramam—the Supreme. As the screen is the background for the moving pictures in a cinematograph, Brahman is the substratum, basis and background of the panorama of the universe. The changes that take place in the universe do not affect Brahman. It is ever ItsSelf, the Being behind the Becoming of the universe. It is therefore called aksaram—the Imperishable.

The intrinsic merit or property of a thing is called its svabhāva. The svabhāva of the sun is to put forth beams of light. Similarly, the svabhāva of Brahman is to appear as the multitudinous conscious beings called the Jīvatman. This assumption of the role of the Jīvatman is called Adhyatma.
The vibration or the act of becoming that is taking place in the universe is karma. But here this word is used in a particular sense. The action that is the immediate cause of man having come into existence and of his making progress in life, is here technically called karma. Whatever work promotes the welfare of man is karma. The Pūrvamīmāṃsa, one of the six systems of Hindu philosophy claims that Karma is the only all-powerful agency for man’s origin, growth and prosperity.

अविभूतं धर्मं भावं पुरुषार्थ देहाधिकृतं।
अविभूतं पुरुषं य अविभूतं देह सुभ्रतं।
adhibhūtam kṣaro bhāvaḥ puruṣaḥ ca 'dhyātātām
adhiyajñāḥ 'ham eva 'tra dehe dehabhṛtām vara

अविभूतम् adhibhūtām Adhībhuta भरं kṣaraḥ
perishable भावं bhāvaḥ nature पुरुषं puruṣaḥ the soul
ca and अविभूतम् adhītātām Adhīdaivata भावं:
adhiyajñāḥ Adhiyajna भास्म aham I एव eva alone धन
atra here देहे dehe in the body देहाधिकृतं dehabhṛtām
of the embodied भरं vara O best

Adhībhuta pertains to the perishable Nature and
Puruṣa is the Adhīdaivata; I alone am the Adhiyajna
here in this body, O best of the embodied.

The five elements—ether, air, fire, water and
earth—are designated as adhībhūta. In contrast
with Brahman which is akṣaraḥ the elements are
kṣaraḥ or perishable. The physical structure of
the Reality is made up of the elements. Though
insentient by themselves, they get their distinctiveness by their clinging to the sentient. This fact may be clarified through two examples. In articulation, the part that the consonant plays clinging to the vowel, is analogous to the function of the elements. Again the origin and function of the skin of a fruit are analogous to the part that the elements play in the phenomenon. It is with the aid of the elements the sentient is revealing itself. Beings require the elements for their embodiment.

Purusha is a word pregnant with etymological meaning. Literally it means ‘that by which everything is filled.’ It comes from the root pri, to fill. Again, Pura or Puri means a city or fortress. He who resides in a Puri is Purusha. He is designated as Adhudaivata. He is Hiranyakarbhha or the Cosmic Soul whose rays are the individual souls. All the beings in the universe are controlled by Hiranyakarbhha.

Vishnu is identified with Yajna. His designation as Adhiyajna is therefore appropriate. Divinity is present wherever an act of self-sacrifice takes place. A sacrifice is at its zenith when the Jivatman dissolves himself completely in the Paramatman. With the surrender of his individuality, his individual consciousness gives place to Cosmic Consciousness which is the Paramatman. Therefore, wherever Adhiyajna takes place, the presence of the Lord is patent there. Further, Divinity is also patent in perfected beings. This is due to their having made oblation of them-
selves in the sacrificial fire of Iswara. This is the sublimest act that a human being can ever do.

He is truly a holy man whose body and mind are entirely dedicated to the Lord. He has no occupation other than being absorbed all the while in God. Knowing that the Lord is residing in the hearts of all, he devotedly serves them to the best of his ability. And these are the sure indications of a true man of God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

अन्तकाले च मामेव सर्वत्रुक्तवा कलेवरम् ।
य: प्रयाति स सद्दाय याति नारस्त्रस्य संहः ॥ ५ ॥

antakāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram ।
yah prayāti sa madbhāvarāṁ yāti nā'sty atra samśayaḥ ॥

अन्तकाले antakāle at the time of death च ca and माम् mām me एव eva only सारं smaran remembering मुक्तवा muktvā leaving कलेवरम् kalevaram body व: yah who प्रयाति prayāti goes forth स: saḥ he मद्भावा- rave my being याति yāti attains न असि na asti is not अत्र atra here संहः samśayaḥ doubt

And whoever, at the time of death, leaving the body, goes forth remembering Me alone, he attains My being; there is no doubt about this. 5

‘My being’, mentioned here comprises Iswara in His supreme state.

The essence of the sum total of the entire thoughts and feelings that have been taking place in the mind of man during the span of his life, stands condensed into a single state of mind at the time of his departure from the body. To effect the
thought of the Lord at the last moment is therefore well nigh impossible. Preparation for it has to go on all through the life. He who is absorbed in the thought of God while departing from the body gets merged in Cosmic Consciousness. And this is, mukti getting which there is no more return to mundane life. This is the universal law, there need be no doubt about it.

What becomes of those who do not think of the Lord, but get fixed in other thoughts at the time of death? The answer comes —

य यापि सार्वभावेय त्यजतत्वं कलेवरस्य।
त तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः।

यम् यम् वा अष्ट भावम् लघु-अनि अन्ते कलेवरस्य।
तम् तम् एव ए ति कौन्तेय सदा तद्-भाव-भावित।

यम्य-यम्य वा पि शमरन भावम् त्यजत्य अते कालेवरम्।
तम्य-तम्य वै ति कौंतेया सदा तद भावभाविताः।

यम् यम् which यम् यम् which वा वा or अष्टि even स्मरन remembering भावम् भावम् nature त्यजति leaves अन्ते ante in the end कलेवरस्य कालेवरम् the body तम् तम् to that तम् तम् to that एव एव only एति goes कौंतेय kaunteya O Kaunteya सदा sadā constantly तद्भावभावित tad bhāva bhāvitaḥ thinking of that object.

Whatever being a man thinks of at the last moment when he leaves his body, that alone does he attain, O Kaunteya, being ever absorbed in the thought thereof.

Dream is only a projection of the mind and it has no corresponding external reality. But dream
is the indicator of the trend of the mind of an individual; it cannot be recast or pre-arranged according to one’s will and pleasure. Just as the dreamer is, while in a dream, the creature of his own mental make up, so does the dying man assume at the time of death, a mental make up based on his bent in the course of that career. The gross manifestation, at a suitable time and environment, of that mental structure is what is called the next birth. Man is therefore always the architect of his destiny.

What then is it that man ought to do for his welfare both here and in the hereafter? The way is shown this wise:—

\[
\text{tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca |}
\text{mayy arpitamanobuddhir mām evai śyasy asamsayah} ||
\]


\[
\text{tasmāt therefore sarveṣu in all kāleṣu times mām mām me anusmara remember yudhya fight ca and mām anusmara} ||
\text{mayi arpitamanā Abdullah with mind and intellect fixed in me mām to me eva alone esyasi thou shalt come asamsayah doubtless}.
\]

Therefore at all times think upon Me only and fight. With mind and understanding set on Me, you will surely come to Me.

The immediate duty of Arjuna is to wage the righteous war, as it is his svadharma. The Lord
therefore commands him to fight. Every individual has to discharge faithfully the duty that is his.

There are people who neglect or give up their earthly duties on the plea that they have taken to spiritual life. And there are the others who excuse themselves from spiritual practices on the plea that in the midst of their worldly engagements they have neither the time nor the inclination for anything else. The sacred and the secular are incompatible, is their view. But the Lord's message is to sanctify the entire life. The so-called secular duty may be converted into the service of the Lord. Whatever man does or thinks ought to be for the glory of the Maker. By this way man's life gets perfectly enriched.

The singing mendicant on the street artfully plays on the stringed instrument with one hand and with the other gracefully beats the drum fastened round his neck. These two items of music serve as accompaniments to his songs. In this manner, man ought to discharge his worldly duties carefully and at the same time be inclined Godward. He should imbibe godly tendencies more and more.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The way of leaning towards divinity is as follows:

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।
परम पुरुष दिन्ध याति पार्थाचिन्तयन ॥ ८

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।
परम पुरुष दिन्ध याति पार्थाचिन्तयन ॥

abhyāsavyayuktena cetasā nā 'nyagāmina

paramam purusam divyam yāti pārthā 'nucintayan

अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन abhyāsa yoga yuktena with the mind made steadfast by the method of habitual meditation
With the mind not wandering after anything else, made steadfast in the yoga of constant practice, he who meditates on the Supreme, Resplendent Purusha, reaches Him, O Partha.

Each *sadhaka* has his own concept of Iswara, known as his *Iṣṭa-mūrti* or chosen Deity. Life-long meditation on that phase of Iswara is *abhyāsa-yoga*. Because of his residing in the *Puri* of the body, He is known as *Purusha*. As the sun is resplendent in the physical plane, He is Resplendent in the spiritual plane. Constant thought of Him rids the *sadhaka* of body-consciousness, after the way of the ripening fruit getting itself separated from its skin. The yogi’s spiritual attainment becomes evident at the time of death. It is described as follows:

How the Yogi Relinquishes the Body — 9-13
kāvīṁ purāṇam anusūṣītāram
anor anuyāmsam anusmaresam yah
sarvasya dhātāram acintya rūpam
ādityavarnam tinasah parastāt
dhyāntaṁ
prayānakāle manasā 'calena
bhaktyā yukto yogabalena ca 'va
bhruvoc madhye prāṇam āvesya samyak
sa tam param purusam upatti divyam
dhyāntaṁ

The Omniscient, the Ancient, the Ruler, Minuter than an atom, the Supporter of all, of Form inconceivable, Effulgent like the sun, and Beyond all darkness; he who meditates on this Resplendent, Supreme Purusha, at the time of death, with a steady mind,
devotion and strength of yoga, well fixing the entire Prana in the middle of the eye-brows, he reaches Him.

These are the fit states of the mind and prāṇa or life energy, when the yogi finally renounces the body and re-enters Brahma-nirvānam or the Cosmic Consciousness. Constant practice or abhyāsa-yoga is the sure means to achieve this sublime end. The eight-fold glory of the Lord has to be deeply meditated on daily so that the mind and intellect be cast permanently in that divine mould. The eight supermundane distinctions of Iswara are:—

Kavi — the Omniscient. One can discern the presence of intelligence as the background of the functioning of the entire cosmos. The personal intelligence of all beings is derived from this Cosmic Intelligence. Attuning one’s personal understanding to this Pure Consciousness is meditation.

Purāṇa is the Ancient One. Prior to Him there is nothing. The Original Stuff of everything sentient and insentient is He.

Anuśāśita is the Ruler. He designs the structure and carries out the working of the entire cosmos. Everything is included in His regime.

Aparantyān is the Subtlest of the subtle. There is naught finer than Pure Consciousness. It persists because of Its subtlety.

Sarvasya Dhātā is He who is the Support of all. As the ocean is the support of the waves that
have come out of it, so is Brahman the Support of the universe that has come out of It.

_Acintyarūpa_ is what is Incomprehensible to the unrefined mind. It can be grasped only to the extent the mind gets purified.

_ādityavarna_ is the Effulgence of the sun which is ever the same. The sun never rises nor sets though it seems so to us, in relation with the revolving earth. Paramatman undergoes no modification even as the sun does not.

_Tamasāḥ parastāt_ is the state of the Paramatman being supremely Above the darkness of ignorance exactly as the sun is not affected by a patch of cloud seeming to hide it. The Effulgence of Iswara is ever itself, untouched by the modifications of Prakriti.

_Acala-manas, bhakti, yoga-balam_—these three divine gifts are interrelated. That mind which does not waver for any reason whatsoever, but is ever steady in its godly pursuit is endowed with the first gift. As it grows in purity, devotion which is the second gift spontaneously manifests itself in the _sadhaka_. The practice of yoga being a part and parcel of his life, he steadily rises in spiritual stature. The physical, mental and moral strength accruing from it stands him in good stead. He evolves into a sterling personality.

A man endowed with spiritual strength is fully equipped for the battle of life. Knotty problems of
life are all solved by him as a matter of course. Death is no terror to him. He puts it on a par with life and faces both with the same equanimity. The yogi is ever himself, both in life and death.

Prāṇa or life-energy of the ordinary man leaves the body at death through the apertures. But it goes out differently when the yogi departs from the body. It gets concentrated between the eye-brows and exits through the skull. This last event is also the outcome of the strength of yoga

यद्यकर्ष्णं वेदविदं वदन्ति विभक्ति यथतथो वीतरागाः।
यदिद्वा भ्राचये चरान्ति ततो पदं संग्रह्यं प्रवक्ष्ये॥ ११

yat yat which अक्षरः aksaram Imperishable वेदविदं vedavidah the Veda-knowers वदन्ति vadanti declare विभक्ति visanti enter यत् yat which यतयः yatayaḥ the self-controlled (ascetics or Sanyasins) वितरागाः vitarāgāḥ freed from attachment यत् yat which इच्छान्ति icchantaḥ desiring ब्रह्मचार्यं brahmaṇcaryam celibacy चरान्ति caranti practise यत् yat which तत् tat that ते te to thee पदं padam goal संग्रह्यं sangrahena in brief प्रवक्ष्ये pravakṣye (I) will declare

That which the knowers of Veda call the Imperishable, and into, which enter the Sanyasins, self-controlled and freed from attachment, and desiring
which they lead a life of continence, that I shall declare to you with brevity.

Nature is the Veda come from God; Scripture is the Veda come from the Enlightened Ones. Both of these forms of the Veda complement each other. The knowers of the Veda by either way, state that the Imperishable Brahman is the substratum of the perishing universe.

Sanyasins are they who are not tainted by worldly desires and who live the rigid life of continence.

Through Brahmacharya or continence the physical energy in man gets converted into spiritual energy. The faculty of understanding gets keen thereby. Intuition is the outcome of that exalted discipline.

He who wants to become spiritual should not lustfully look at even the picture of a woman. Spirituality is not where lust is. The sadhaka established in Brahmacharya develops a faculty known as medha which promotes his spiritual knowledge.

— Sri Ramakrishna
sarvadvārāṇī samyamya mano-hṛdi nirudhyā ca
mūrdhny ādhāyā ‘tmanāḥ prāṇam āsthitō yogadhitā
raṇām

aum ity ekāksaram brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran
yaḥ prayāti tyajan deham sa yāti paramān gatim

sarva dvārāni all gates संवर्ण सामयमья having controlled मनः च mind ह्रदि in the heart निरुद्ध्या having confined च ca and मूर्ति mūrdhni in the head अधाय ādhāya having placed आत्मनः ātmanāḥ of the self प्राणम् prāṇam breath आस्थिति āsthitāḥ established (in) योगधारणाम् yoga dhāranām practice of concentration

Æ Om Om iti thus एकक्रस्मृ ekāksaram one-syllabled ब्रह्म brahma Brahman व्याहरस्व vyāharan uttering मां māṁ me अनुस्मरस्व anusmaran remembering यः yah who प्रयाति prayāti departs त्यजन्ति tyajan leaving देहम् deham the body सः saḥ he याति yāti attains परमान् paramān supreme गतिः gatim goal

All the gates of the body closed, the mind confined within the heart, having fixed his life-energy in the head, engaged in firm yoga; uttering the one-syllabled ‘Om’, Brahman, thinking of Me, he who departs, leaving the body, attains the Supreme Goal. 12-13

This is how the yogi brings his embodied existence to an end. As the river enters the ocean, the individual consciousness of the yogi merges in the Cosmic Consciousness, which is Brahman. The activities of the body and the senses all cease, as when going to sleep. As a bird returns to a tree to roost, the mind of the yogi gets settled in his heart.
at the time of death. Contrary to this, the mind of the worldly wanders woefully on mundane things. Cold spreads all over the body as prāna leaves it. As a traveller goes to a vehicle station, the prāna of the yogi finally comes to the head. For this reason the yogi's head is the last region from which warmth vanishes. It is Yogadhārana for the mind to be fixed in Iswara at the time of departure. The sound vibration 'Om' persists then. The spiritual content of this vibration is experienced as Infinite Bliss and Brilliance of the Pure Consciousness. This Brahma-nirvānam is the Supreme Goal attained by the yogi.

The formative thought that dominates the mind of the one who leaves the body, is the factor that governs and contributes to the next birth of that individual. Spiritual discipline is therefore imperative to one and all. The devotee of the Lord is ever immersed in the thought of God. Being firmly fixed in it, he reaches the Lord on giving up the body.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The way of getting fixed in the thought of God is as follows —

The State of Non return — 14-16

अनन्यचेता: सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः।
तस्याः सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः।। १४

अनन्य-अन्य-चेता तत्तमुः य मां श्रमु-अति निलसः।
तस्य श्रव्यम् गु-भम् पार्थ निल गुन-तस्य योगिनः।।

ananyacetāḥ satatam yo māṁ smarati nityasah |
tasyāḥ 'ham sulabhah pārtha nityayuktasya yoginah |

अनन्यचेता ananya cetāḥ with the mind not thinking of any other object सततस् satatam constantly य yah who मां māṁ me स्मरति smarati remembers निलसः
nityasah (for a long time) daily tasya of him abhasah
ahum I suñgam sulabhañ easily attainable partha O Partha nilapuyukṣam nitya yuktasya ever-steadfast
yoginah of yogi

I am easily attainable, O Partha, by that ever-steadfast yogi, who constantly remembers Me daily
and thinks of none else.

Just as material wealth gets added only to those
who already own it, so the grace of the Lord is ever
on the increase to those yogis who have made them-
selves worthy of it. The Lord is ever available to
those who seek Him. It is the ignorant man that
alienates himself from the Lord.

When we take one stride towards the Lord, He takes ten
strides towards us.

— Sri Ramakrishna

mām upetya punarjanna duṣkhālayam asāsvatam
napnuvanti mahātmānah samśiddhim paramāṁ gatāḥ

mām māṁ to me jñeyam upetya having attained pun: punah again jām jānman birth duṣkhālayam the place of pain asāsvatam non-eternal
na not vārthañ napnuvanti get mahātmān Mahatmas or the great souls samśiddhim to perfection paramāṁ highest gatāḥ having
reached
Having come to Me, the great souls are no more subject to rebirth, which is transitory and the abode of pain; for they have reached the highest perfection.

Man gets whatever he has made himself worthy of. The Lord gives Himself over to the devotee worthy of Him; and there is no gain greater than this. Having gained God, the devotee is in Eternal Beatitude. The wheel of birth and death does not touch him any more.

The difference between the wheel of birth and death and the Eternal Beatitude is explained as follows:

आत्मास्मुवननाढोका: पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुनः
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनजेन्म न विचारते

II 16

आत्मास्मुवननाढः लोकान् पुनरावर्तिनाः
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनमास्मि 

ाब्राह्मभुवनाः लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनः अर्जुनः
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय 

All worlds including that of Brahma are subject to return, O Arjuna; but on reaching me, O son of Kunti, there is no rebirth.

Different planes of existence are known as the various worlds, the highest among them being the
Brahma-loka. But all these worlds are subject to mutation and repetition, because of their being under the sway of time, space and causation. While the beings in all these worlds are compelled by their karma to be reborn, only those who go to Brahmaloka have two alternatives. The liberation-seekers among them work for it in that highest region and gain krama-mukti or progressive liberation when the entire universe dissolves in pralaya. But the enjoyment-seekers among them are forced by their karma to take new births.

When the boiled paddy is sown in the field it sprouts not. Even so, when a perfected person puts away the body, he is not born again.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Brahma, the Creator’s Standard of Time — 17-19

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहेष्ठःङ्गो चिदुः ||
रात्रिः युगसहस्राणां तेषस्यरात्रबिद्रो जनाः || १७

सहस्र-युग-पर्यन्तम् शह: वत् महान: भिदुः ||
रात्रिः युग-यहस्र-धन्ताम् ते शह: -रात्र-विद्रो जनाः ||

sahasrayugaparyantam ahar yad brahmaño viduḥ ||
rātrim yugasahasrāntām te 'horātravido janāḥ ||

सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तम् sahasra yuga paryantam ending in a thousand Yugas (ages) शह: ahaḥ दिन यत् yat which भिदुः brahmaṇaḥ of Brahma भिदुः know रात्रिः rātrim the night yugasaḥsṛāntām yuga sahasrāntām ending in a thousand Yugas (ages) te they शहोरात्रबिद्रो aho rātra vidadh knowers of day and night जनाः janāḥ people
Those who know that the day of Brahma lasts a thousand Yugas and that his night lasts a thousand Yugas, they are the knowers of day and night.

The part that time plays in the lives of beings is a factor worth studying. There are creatures within our ken, that complete their career and fulfil themselves in the course of a few days or weeks. The question of want of time does not arise in their cases.

Brahma, the Creator is also a Jivatman having cosmic function to fulfil and wending his way towards mukti. That Purusha who attains Prakriti-laya or the universal power and efficiency in a previous kalpa or cycle, becomes Brahma in a succeeding cycle. Countless eons of ours put together form a day to Brahma and a similar expanse of time, his night. That way Brahma has his day and night, his own months and years and his own full span of life. Our understanding staggers in conceiving his life time. It expands into infinity, so to say. Still Brahma, the Creator also has his wheel of birth and death and emancipation too from that wheel. He gets into krama mukti after his span of life, vacating his place for the succeeding Brahma. Those of us who understand this cosmic design, understand what is meant by the wheel of time, the wheel of birth and death and emancipation from this relativity. This intellectual grasp is an aid for our seeking mukti from the wheel of birth and death.
At the coming of day all manifest beings proceed from the unmanifested, and at the coming of night they merge again in the same which is called the unmanifested.

The plan of Nature is the same both in the macrocosm and the microcosm. In accordance with it, when a Jivatman goes to sleep the world projected from his mind gets withdrawn into it. The manifest and the unmanifest states of his world are all related to the wakefulness or otherwise of his mind. Similarly the macrocosmos comes into being when Brahma wakes up and it helplessly vanishes into the unmanifested state when he goes to sleep. His day and night function on a universal basis. Creation, preservation and destruction of the universe are all contained in the states of the mind of Brahma. And this is an eternal cosmic play.
bhūtagrāmāḥ sa eva 'yam bhūtvā-bhūtvā pralīyate
rātry āgame 'vasāh pārtha prabhavaty aharāgame

bhūtvā grāmāḥ multitude of beings sa that eva verily ayam this bhūtvā bhūtvā being born again and again pralīyate dissolves rātri āgame at the coming of night āvasāh helpless pārtha O Partha prabhavati prabhavati comes forth aharāgame aharāgame at the coming of day.

This multitude of beings, coming forth again and again, merge, O Partha, in spite of themselves, at the approach of night, and remanifest themselves at the approach of day.

Man’s free-will is a misnomer Beyond a certain limit man has not got the freedom to keep awake or to go to sleep. He is a helpless creature of his own mind given to the modifications of wakefulness and sleep. Much more helplessly than this, the multitude of beings are dragged into creation or the manifest state when Brahma wakes up and they go into the unmanifested when he retires to sleep. The process of being revolved in this wheel of birth and death has to go on indefinitely, sometimes even through the life periods of a few Brahmās, until perfection is reached and mukti obtained.

Immortality — 20 22

परस्तस्मात्मात्‌मावोपदेशत्‌वक्षमत्‌त्ततसंतानं: 1
य: स सर्वेऽ स्वतेऽनुयति न विनियति 20
paras tasmāt tu bhāvo ’nyo ’vyaktō ’vyaktāt sanātanaḥ
yah sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu nasyatsu na vinasīyaṭī
dur: paraḥ higher tasmāt than that tu but bhāvaḥ existence annaḥ another annakārāḥ unmanifested annākārtāt than the unmanifested sannātanaḥ eternal yah who saḥ that saṁceṣu sarveṣu in all bhūteṣu in beings nasyatsu in being destroyed na not vināsyati is destroyed

But beyond this unmanifested, there is yet another Unmanifested Eternal Existence which does not perish even when all existences perish.

In the existence of things there are two phases—the relative and the absolute. Water exists as vapour, steam, mist, fog, snow and in several other states which are all perishable and perishable. These varying states, therefore, of water are all relative existences. But this substance as such persists in the midst of its modifications. Its persistence is its absolute existence and its perishings forms and modifications, its relative existence. Similar to this, Brahma, the Creator and his Creation have their relative existence and absolute existence too. Their perishing nature is their relative existence. To enter into the unmanifested state even as the vapour does, is one phase of the phenomenal universe; to become manifest to the senses and intellect is its other phase. The manifest state and the unmanifest state of the universe and its beings come within relative exist-
ence But there is an Absolute Existence which is Eternal and ever Unmanifest. It never becomes the object of perception. It is ever the Thing in Itself.

But what have we, as perishable beings, to do with It the Imperishable? The answer comes —

अन्यक्त्रोद्धर इत्युक्तत्तमाहुः परमां गतिस्वं।
यं गाप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्भाम परसं मम॥ २१॥

ayaktō 'ksara ity uktas tam āhūḥ paramāṁ gatim ।
yam prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama ॥

This Unmanifested is called the Imperishable; It is said to be the Ultimate Goal. Those who attain to It return not. That is My Supreme Abode.

Brahman is this Unmanifested Reality. It is designated in this way because It is incomprehensible and inaccessible to the mind, intellect and the senses. It is further designated as the Imperishable because of Its being ever constant undergoing no modification whatsoever.

Prakṛiti also is called the unmanifested when it is in pralaya or dissolution. It is then inaccessible to the mind, intellect and the senses. But the
difference between the two has to be borne in mind. Prakriti is ksharam, perishable while Brahman is Aksharam, Imperishable. Beings involved in Prakriti continue to appear and disappear; beings that attain Brahman do not undergo these changes. They do not return. Brahman being the highest and constant abode for beings, It is called the Lord's Supreme Abode.

The way to attain It is:—

puruṣaḥ sa pariḥ pārtha bhaktyaḥ labhyas tv ānanyayāḥ yasyaṁ 'ntahsthāni bhūtāni yena sarvam idam tataṁ tataṁ

That Supreme Purusha, O Partha, is attainable by unswerving devotion to Him alone within whom all beings dwell, by whom all this is pervaded.

Ananya bhakti is the devotion of non-separation. It is the outcome of the right understanding of the relationship between the Jivatman and the Paramatman. They are interrelated in the way in which the sea and the waves are interrelated. The waves do
not have any existence independent of the sea. Similarly Jivatman is no entity apart from Paramatman. He who understands this fact cannot help having unswerving devotion to the Lord. When the individuality of the Jivatman is forgotten in the absorption in the Lord, it is then the devotion of non-separation.

God is in all beings, but all beings are not in God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The Paths of Light and Darkness — 23-26

yatra काले त्वनावृत्तिमार्गित ैव योगिनः ।
प्रयाता यान्ति तैं कालं वस्यामि भरतपं ॥ २३॥

yatara kāle tv anāvṛttim āvṛttim cai 'va yogināḥ ।
prayātā yānti tāṁ kālam vāksyāmi bhārata rṣabha ॥

yatara where काले kāle in time तु tu verily अनावृत्तिम् anāvṛttim non-return अवृत्तिम् āvṛttim return च ca and एव even योगिनः yoginaḥ yogis प्रयाता prayātāḥ departing यान्ति yānti go to तम् tāṁ that कालम् kālam time वस्यामि vāksyāmi (I) will tell भरत अश्वम bharata rṣabha O chief of Bharatas

Now I shall tell you, O the best of the Bharatas, the time in which the yogis depart never to return and also the time in which they depart to return. 23
agnir jyotir aha suklaḥ śaṇmāsā uttarāyanaṁ
tatra prayātā gacchanti brahma brahma-vido janāḥ

Fire, light, day-time, the bright half of the moon, and the six months of the northern path of the sun there departed Brahma-knowing, Brahma to Brahma.

bhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇah śaṇmāsā dakṣiṇāyanaṁ
tatra cāndramasāṁ jyotir yogi prāpya nivartate

Smoke, night, the dark half of the moon, and the six months of the southern passage of the sun, then going forth, the yogi obtains the lunar light and returns.
The bright and the dark, these paths are deemed to be the world's eternal paths; by the one a man goes, not to return, by the other he returns again.

What is contained in these three stanzas is a matter for thought. The Jivatmas transmigrating through death pass along two paths known as devayana and pitryana. They are described as the path of light and the path of smoke respectively. The former is bright and the latter dark. The one leads the soul to regions higher and the other keeps him lingering and lagging long behind. A literal meaning of these stanzas leads us into a ludicrous impossibility. Fire and light are held to take the departing soul upward. There is no difficulty whatsoever in creating this favourable environment to a dying soul. If this situation ensures an upward progress, ethical and spiritual endeavours become superfluous, which is absurd. It is further stated that he who
dies in the day-time progresses and he who dies at night lags behind. But day-time can easily be created to a dying soul in these days with the help of an aeroplane. This means that man's spiritual progress depends on the physical amenities he is able to command, which is also absurd. The northern path of the sun is held auspicious because of its warmth and brightness to those living in countries to the north of the equator. But by air transport to Australia and South America during the southern path of the sun, a dying man on the northern hemisphere can be placed in a favourable situation for his taking to the path of light. The dark half of the moon is the only natural event which man cannot counteract. But reason revolts against the belief that the exit of man from the earth during one fortnight aids his upward march and that the other hinders it. The attainments of the departing souls also do not warrant this position. Man having conquered time, space and causation to a great extent, these factors in nature cannot in any way contribute to his taking to the path of light or that of smoke.

The two paths mentioned here are the allegorical expressions of the paths of knowledge and ignorance. The soul pursuing the path of knowledge gets progressively into the brilliance of Atman. That other soul which is steeped in ignorance stagnates and deteriorates. Death is the indicator of the attainments of a soul in the span of a life. As a lamp brightens up just at the last moment of its becoming extinguished, a man pursuing the path of
knowledge gets into the clarity of awareness while leaving the body. The intensity of the awareness is compared with fire, light, day-time, the bright half of the moon and the six months of the northern path of the sun or more accurately the brighter path of the sun. Contrary to it, the darkness of the ignorance in the other man becomes increasingly enshrouded as is mentioned herein. Blessed are they who pursue the path of light in their succeeding births, till the goal is reached.

Be Ever a Yogi—27-28

नैते सृति पार्थे जानन् योगी शुद्धिति कथन् ।
तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगमुक्तो मयाज्ज्ञे ॥ २७

न एते सृति पार्थे जानन् योगी शुद्धिति कथन ।
तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु योग-मुक्ता भव बहुज्ज्ञे ॥

nai ’te srti pārtha jānan yogī, muhyati kascana ।
tasmāt sarvesu kālesu yogayuktō bhavā ’ṛjuna ॥

n na not ete these सृति srti two paths पार्थे pārtha O Partha जानन jānan knowing yogī the yogi शुद्धिति muhyati is deluded कथन kascana anyone तस्मात tasmāt therefore sarvē sārvesu in all kalēṣu kālesu times yogamuktā yoga yuktah steadfast in yoga सव bhava be (thou) ज्ञेज्ञ arjuna O Arjuna

Knowing these two paths, O Partha, no yogi is deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, be steadfast in yoga, at all times.

As living the embodied life is a constant process, the practice of yoga also should be an interminable effort. All the activities in life may be transformed 27
into the several aspects of yoga. In doing so the yogi pursues the path of light.

In whatever direction the ship may sail, the needle of the compass in it ever points to the north. Similar to it, let the mind of the devotee be ever fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord, irrespective of his occupation.

— Sri Ramakrishna

vedēṣu yajñēṣu tapahṣu cai’va
dāneṣu yat punyaphalam pradīṣṭam
yogi param sthānam upaiti cā ’dyam

vedēṣu in the Vedas yajñēṣu in sacrifices
tapahṣu in austerities ca and eva also dāneṣu
dāneṣu in gifts yat whatever punya phalam
fruit of merit pradīṣṭam is declared atyeti
goes beyond yat tat that sarvam all idam
this viditvā having known yogi the yogi
param supreme sthānam abode upaiti
attains ca and ādyam primeval

The yogi who knows this transcends the fruits of
meritorious deeds attached to the study of the Vedas,
sacrifices, austerities and gifts, and attains to the
supreme primeval Abode.

This chapter commenced with seven questions
raised by Arjuna. And the Lord has answered all
of them in order. He who understands the explana-
tion understands Akshara Brahman. The regular chanting of the Vedas, the correct performance of the ritualistic Yajnas, the ardent doing of the austerities and the reverent payment of gifts are all meritorious acts conducive to the attainment of Svarga or heaven. But this high state also comes within the wheel of birth and death. On the other hand, an intellectual grasp of Akshara Brahman and attuning oneself to the attainment of Him steadily lead one towards that Supreme Goal. Blessed is the yogi that wends his way towards this primeval Abode.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वपनिकल्या नहविधायां चेन्द्रशास्त्रे
श्रीक्रष्णाजुनसंवादे अवसराब्रह्मणो नाम
आयमोत्त्यायाः ॥

iti srimad bhagavadgītāsūpanisatsu brahmavidayaham
yogasāstre sri kṛṣṇārjuna samāde aksarabrāhma
yogo nāma astamo ’dhyāyāḥ ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eighth discourse designated

THE YOGA OF THE IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN
The Relationship between Saguna Brahman and Prakriti — The
Ways of the Ignorant — The Ways of the Devoted — Iswara is Every-
thing — The Way of the Enjoyment-seekers — Man Gets What He
Seeks — Worship of Iswara is the Easiest — The Neutral Iswara is
the Votary’s Own.

The Relationship between Saguna Brahman and Prakriti — 1-10

श्री भगवानुवाच
हद ्तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवाक्ष्याम्यनसुयवे ।
ञानं विज्ञानसहितं भज्ज्यता मोक्षसेवेक्ष्भावत ॥ १

इदं तु ते गुह्य-तमम् प्र-व-सांमि अनू-सूयवे ।
ञानम् वि-ञान-सहितम् यतं हा-त्ता मोक्ष-कसे अ-ह्मात् ॥

sri bhagavān uvāca

idam tu te guhyatamam pravakṣyāmy anasūyave ।
jñānam vijnānasahitam yaj jñātvā mokṣyase ’subhāt ॥

श्री भगवानुवाच sri bhagavān uvāca Sri Bhagavan said:

इदं idam this तु tu indeed ते te to thee गुह्यतमम्
guhyatamam greatest secret pravakṣyāmi (I)
shall declare अनसूयवे anasūyave to one who does not
cavil ञानम् jñānam knowledge विज्ञानसहितम् vijnāna sahi-
tam combined with realization यत् yat which ज्ञात्वा
jñātvā having known मोक्षसे mokṣyase thou shalt be
free अ-ह्मात् ’subhāt from evil

The Blessed Lord said:

To you who do not cavil, I shall surely declare
this, the most profound knowledge combined with
realization by knowing which you will be released
from evil.
Mundane life itself is an evil, and ignorance is the basis of this transitory life. It is because of ignorance that man embraces evil and suffers from its consequences. Mere intellectual knowledge of Atman would not free man from misery. It requires to be combined with realization which is the real Brahman-jnana. The man of Self-knowledge alone is free from evil and its outcome, misery.

Cavil which is born of conceit and jealousy is a rotten disease of the mind that prevents man from rising in knowledge and wisdom. It robs him of divine disposition. Arjuna is no victim to this canker; he is all magnanimity and broad-mindedness. He is therefore eminently fit for the most profound knowledge combined with realization.

The merits of Brahman-jnana are as follows:—

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्सवपम् ।
प्रत्यक्षावगम्यं धम्मं सुसुखं कल्यंगपम् ॥ र
राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रम् इदम् उद्धर्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्ष-विवेकं धम्मं सुनुभम् (ह) कर्म-हृष्टं विनिमन्त्रम् ॥

राजविद्या राजगुह्यार्य पवित्रम् इदम् उत्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्ष-सावगाः धर्मं सुसुखं कर्तम् अवययम् ॥

राजविद्या the king of sciences राजगुह्यम्
rाजगुह्याम kingly secret पवित्रम् पवित्रम् purifier इदम् idam this उत्तमम् uttama highest प्रत्यक्ष विवेकं pratyakṣa avagamaṁ realizable by direct intuition धर्मं dharmam according to righteousness सुसुखं susukham very easy कर्तम् kartum to perform अवययं avayaṁ imperishable
The sovereign science, the sovereign secret, the supreme purifier is this; directly realizable, in accord with dharma, very easy to practise and imperishable.

The public road is called rāja-pātha. The yoga common to all religions is called rāja-yoga. Similarly Brahma-jnana which is the birthright of all is called rāja-vidyā. All are entitled to it and they are wending their way to it knowingly or unknowingly. If so, can all get at Brahma-jnana as unfailingly as all are able to procure food for the body? No, the impure in heart cannot have access to it. The purity of the mind is the criterion for it. They alone shall inherit this Divine Treasure who are perfectly pure at heart. But those that have not yet refined the mind, those that are given to cavil and such like defects will not be able to grasp it even. To them it is the sovereign secret. This science is a sealed book to them. As water cleanses the body, Brahma-jnana cleanses the Jivatman of his fallen state and reinstates him in Brahmanhood. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. Brahma-vidyā is therefore the supreme purifier.

A man who wakes up from a dreadful dream brushes aside his agony as a mere fiction of his mind. The mundane life itself is a misery-laden prolonged dream from which the Brahma-jnani wakes up into the bliss of Reality. Thenceforth his life gets fixed in Truth. Therefore it is bound to be in accord with dharma. Self-knowledge is the homecoming of the Jivatman, and so it is very easy to practise. There is a possibility of a thing easily
obtained being easily lost also. But Brahma Jnana being one's Original State, is never lost any more than the man losing himself. It is imperishable.

For whom is this plenitude impossible? The answer comes —

अधिधानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परतप ।
अणाय मां निवर्तते मुत्युसङ्कार्वतमनि || 3

अ-भृगु गण युर्वदाच भवत सङ्का-लय ।
अ भ आय-य मामू नि बत-दे मुत्यु-सङ्का-वत-मनि ||

aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā dharmasyā 'syā paramatapa ।
aprapya māṁ nivartante mṛtyu samsāra vartmani ||

अधिधाना aśraddadhānāḥ without faith पुरु-साह men धर्मस्य dharmasya of duty अस्य asya of this परतप paramatapa O scorcher of foes अणाय aprāpya without attaining मामू māṁ me निवर्तते nivartante return मुत्युसङ्कार्वतमनि mṛtyu samsāra vartmani in the path of this world of death.

Men devoid of Sraddha for this dharma do not attain Me, O oppressor of the foes, but return to the path of the mortal world.

A fish on land, that does not know that there is water within its reach has to suffer necessarily. Men who do not know and who do not care to know of moksha dharma or the path of deliverance have no alternative to being repeatedly born in this world of transmigration and transitory pleasure. For want of sraddha they suffer as destitutes.

मन्य तत्तत्त्विं सर्व जगद्वचन्तिताः ।
मस्त्यानि सर्वभुतानि न चाह वेश्याधिस्थितः || 4
mayā tātām idaṁ sarvam jagad avyakta mārtinā
matstānī sarva bhūtānī na cā 'ham teṣaṁ avasthiṭaḥ
dham mayā by me tātām pervaded īdām idaṁ
this sarvam all jagat world avyakta mārtinā of the unmanifested form matstānī exist in me sarvam bhūtānī all beings na not ca and ahaṁ aham I teṣaṁ teṣu in them avasthiṭaṁ placed.

All this universe is pervaded by Me in My unmanifested form; all beings exist in Me, but I do not abide in them.

As waves take their origin from the sea and sport on it, all beings from Brahma down to a blade of grass take their origin in Brahma and rest on Him. As the sea is not contained in the waves, the unmanifest Brahma is not contained in the manifest beings. He is infinite while these are all finite.

na ca matstānī bhūtānī pasya me yogam aśvaram ī bhūtabhīṛn na ca bhūtastho mamā 'tmā bhūtabhāvanaṁ

na ca not ca and matstānī dwelling in me bhūtānī beings pasya behold me my yogam yoga ēśvaram aśvaram divine bhūtabhīṛt supporting the beings na not ca and bhūtānī
bhūtasthaḥ dwelling in the beings सम mama my आत्मा ātma self सूतभावनाः bhūta bhāvanāḥ bringing forth beings

Nor do the beings dwell in Me, behold My divine yoga! Bringing forth and supporting the beings, My Self does not dwell in them.

While truly reflecting the objects placed before it, a mirror ever remains unaffected by its function. Similar to this, Brahma has the divine yoga power to bring forth the universe and the beings out of Himself. There is a grandeur, uniformity, precision, plan and purpose in projecting, preserving and withholding the universe. But Brahma is ever Himself, in the midst of this sport. He is unattached and unaffected by the phenomenon. Compare chapter seven, stanza twelve.

yathā kāśasthito nityam vāyuḥ sarvatrago mahān ||
yathā sarvāṇi bhumāṇi matsthāni ty upadhāraya ||

yathā as ākāśasthitaḥ rests in the Akasa नित्यम् nityam always वायुः vāyuḥ the air सर्वत्र sarvatragaḥ moving everywhere महान् mahān great तथा so sarvāṇi sarvāṇi all भूतानि bhūtāni beings मत्स्थानि matsthāni rest in me इति iti thus उपधारय upadhāraya know
As the mighty wind moving everywhere ever rests in the Akasa, know you that so do all beings rest in Me.

Akasa is the origin and background of the other four elements. At the same time it remains unattached to the other elements. Even so the manifested universe that has come forth from Brahman causes no modification or mutation in Him. An understanding of the way of Akasa aids the comprehension of Brahman.

Though the wind carries the good and bad odour alike it remains unaffected by both. Para-Brahman is in this wise unaffected by the phenomenal universe.

— Sri Ramakrishna

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृति यान्ति मामिकाम्।
कल्पक्षे पुनस्तानि कल्पादि विस्तुजाम्यहम्॥ ७
सर्वभूतानि सर्वभूतानि प्रकृतिम् यान्ति मामिकाम्।
कल्प-क्षे पुनः तानि - कल्प-क्षे पुनः तानि कमालम् आहम्॥
sarva bhūtāni kaunteya prakṛtim yānti māmikām।
kalpakṣaye punas tāni kalpādau visṛjāmy aham।

सर्वभूतानि sarva bhūtāni all beings कौन्तेय kaunteya
O Kaunteya prakṛtim prakṛtim to Prakriti यान्ति यांति go
मामिकाम् māmikām my कल्पक्षे kalpakṣaye at the end of
the Kalpa पुनः punah again तानि tāni them कल्पादि kalpā-
dau at the beginning of a Kalpa विस्त्रजामि visṛjāmi send
forth आहम् aham।

All beings O Kaunteya, go into My Prakriti at
the end of a Kalpa. I generate them again at the
beginning of the next Kalpa.
When Brahma the Creator goes to sleep it is the end of a kalpa, extending into a thousand jāgās. It works into an incalculable crores of years of the human standard. Then the entire manifestation goes into the unmanifest state and remains dormant for an equally long period which is Brahma’s night. When he wakes up again, the universe with the multitudinous beings comes into manifestation. This is an eternal process.

Prakṛti sāmavastabhya vīṣṇujāmi punaḥ punaḥ | 
 Bhūtānāmībhya kṛtam kṛtaṁ kṛtaṁ vīṣṇuṁ | 
 Bhūtānāṁ bhūtasām kṛtam kṛtaṁ kṛtaṁ | 
 Prakṛtim svāṁ avastabhya visṛjami punah-punaḥ |
bhūta grānam imāṁ kṛtām avasāṁ prakṛter vasāt īḥ

Prakṛtim Prakṛti sām my own avastabhya having animated vīṣṇujāmi I send forth punaḥ again punaḥ again Bhūtānāmī bhūta grānam multitude of beings īṁ imāṁ this kṛtam all kṛtām avasāṁ helpless pṛkṛteḥ of Prakṛti vasāt by force

Animating My Prakṛti, I send forth again and again all this multitude of beings helpless under the regime of Prakṛti.

The act of animating the Prakṛti takes place on a miniature scale at all levels of our existence. Waking up in the morning all beings writhe, wriggle and twist their limbs in order to animate them. We animate the field by ploughing it. The beast is animated with a whip. The pupil is animated with
a shake up. In all these acts spirit is infused into matter. At the beginning of a kalpa, Prakriti comes from the unmanifest to the manifest state, being animated by the Purusha. Beings then helplessly and spontaneously come into existence even as we helplessly wake up from sleep.

Does this mean that the actionless Atman also is occasionally active? No. The clarification comes:-

न च मां तानि कर्मणि निवच्छन्ति धनान्धयः।
उदासीनवदासीनमसत्तरं तेषु कर्मेऽङ्गः ॥ ९ ॥

न च मां तानि कर्मणि निः-शृङ्ख-चतुर्थि धनान्धयः।
उद-आसीनवतः आसीनस्तवः अ-सक्त्रमेऽङ्गः ॥

na ca māṁ tāni karmāṇi nibadhṛnanti dhananājaya ।
udāsinavat āsinam asaktam tēṣu karmasu ॥

न na not च ca and मां māṁ me तानि tāni these कर्मणि karmāṇi acts निवच्छन्ति nibadhṛnanti bind धनान्धयः dhananājaya O Dhananjaya उदासीनवतः udāsinavat like one indifferent आसीनस्तवः āsinam sitting असक्त्रमेऽङ्गः asaktam unattached तेषु tēṣu in those कर्मेऽङ्गः karmasu acts

Nor do these acts, O Dhananjaya, bind Me who remain like one unconcerned, unattached to these acts.

The very presence of the school master induces the student to his studies. Likewise the very proximity of Iswara prevails on Prakriti to carry on her activities of creation, preservation and destruction. Theology designates Iswara as the male principle and Prakriti as the female principle, spoused to Him. Karma pertains to Prakriti and not to Iswara. The power of execution comes to her from her Lord who
is unconcerned and unattached to her activities. The sadhaka in his turn has to practise unconcern and non-attachment to the duty that he discharges. And this is the means for his self-emancipation.

When egoism goes all miseries vanish along with it. When the devotee gets fixed in the conviction that whatever happens is by the will of the Lord and that he is merely an instrument in His hand, mukti is ensured for him in this very birth.

— Sri Ramakrishna

सत्यायत्नोऽसृष्टि: युग्मे सचचरचरमः ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगदिपिरिनते ॥ १०

यया अध्येये प्रकृति: सू-पते स-चर-चरचरमः ।
हेतुना अनेन कौन्तेय जगते विपरि-वर्तते ॥

Mayā 'adhyaṣṭena prakṛtiḥ sāyate saccārācaram ।
hetunā 'nena kaunteya jagad viparivartate ॥

Maya maya by me as supervisor produces saccārācaram (s c a caram) the moving and the unmoving by cause by this kaunteya O Kaunteya jagat the world revolves

Because of My proximity, Prakriti produces all this, the moving and the unmoving; the world, therefore, revolves, O son of Kuntī.

The relationship between the active Prakriti and Iswara, the actionless stimulator thereof is rather difficult to understand. The Lord therefore takes us along with Him by the method called Arundhati nyāya. A subtle point is arrived at, by proceeding from the known to the less known. In the stanza seven the
Lord states "I generate them again at the beginning of the next Kalpa." Prakriti is here only an instrument in His hands. He next says that he animates His Prakriti to do that work thereby making her semi-responsible for her work. Thirdly all responsibility is placed on Prakriti and the Lord is just a Witness, unconcerned and unattached. Finally, Prakriti derives her power of action because of the proximity of Iswara. It is like the creative forces of the sunbeams owing their potentiality to the sun himself.

Adhyaksha is he who presides over a proceeding and keeps an alert eye on it. Iswara is in that position. In His August Presence everything in the regime of Prakriti goes on well. He is therefore the actionless Almighty.

The Ways of the Ignorant — 11-12

अज्ञानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तदुपातिपत्ते ।
परं भावमज्ञानन्ति मम भूतसहेश्वरसम् ॥ ११

वयः-ज्ञानन्ति मां मूढा: मानुषीः मनुष्य-तथाभित्तसम् ।
परस्म भावः अ-ज्ञानन्ति: मम भूत-भाव-हेश्वरसम् ॥

avajāṇanti māṁ mūḍhā mānuṣīṁ tanum āṣritam ।
parmāḥ bhāvam ajāṇanto mama bhūta mahēśvaram ॥

अज्ञानन्ति avajāṇanti disregard साधः māṁ me मूढः: mūḍhāḥ fools मानुषीम् mānuṣīṁ human तनुम् tanum form आश्चर्यम् āṣritam refused (in) परस्म परम higher भावम् bhāvam state or nature अज्ञानन्ति: ajāṇantaḥ not knowing सम mama my भूतसहेश्वरसम् bhūta mahēśvaram the Great Lord of beings
Fools disregard Me as one clad in human form, not knowing My higher nature as the Great Lord of beings.

The Lord who is not bound by karma is not bound by the human form also Akasa is not limited by the forms taken by the other four elements. While containing all of them in itself it expands undivided into infinity. The same is the case with the Cid ākāsa as well. It is eternally pure, wakeful and free. Though this Paramatman is the common background to the entire creation, He assumes occasionally a perfect human form and seems to be enshrined in it, solely with the object of teaching humanity that it is possible for them also not to be bound by the body while residing in it. Not knowing this divine play of the Lord, they treat the Incarnation also as an earth-bound one and slight Him.

The elephant has the visible tusks and the invisible set of teeth. Similarly the Incarnations like Sri Krishna have the human and the Divine combined in them. While appearing as the human they are the transcendental Divine, unaffected by karma and things mundane.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Who are they that are not able to understand the Divinity in the Incarnation of the Lord? They are —

मोहाशा मोहकर्मणो मोहज्ञाना विचेतसः \ ।
राजसीमासुरी चेव प्रकृति मोहिनी धिताः \ ।

माय आशा मोह-धर्मण मोह-ज्ञान विचेतस।
राजसीम आहुरिम् च एव प्र इतिम् मोहिनाम् धिता \ ॥
moghaśā moghakarmāno moghajnānā vicetasaḥ
rākṣasim āsūrim cai 'va prakṛtim mohinim sritāṁ

Mohāsāḥ of vain hopes, Mogha karmānaṁ of vain actions, Mogha jñānāṁ of vain knowledge. Vicetasaḥ senseless, Rākṣasim devilish, Āsūrim undivine, ēva and ēva verily praṇātām, Prakṛtim nature. Sādhuṇāṁ mohinim deceitful. Sritāṁ (are) possessed of.

Of vain hopes, of vain actions, of vain knowledge, devoid of discrimination, partaking verily of the delusive nature of Rakshasas and Asuras.

Mohini prakṛiti is the delusive nature which makes men believe that bodily existence is the be-all and end-all of life. The transitoriness of the mundane existence does not occur to them. Sense-indulgence is the one thing that appeals to them. Their hopes, activities and understanding are all directed to this one end. It is impossible for them to discern between the real and the unreal, between the permanent and the impermanent. Among the men of this base make up, Rākṣasas are they in whom rājasic nature predominates and those others are Asuras in whom tāmasic element predominates.

The Ways of the Devoted — 13-15

mahātmānaṁ tu māṁ pārtha daivīṁ prakṛtim āśritāṁ
bhajanty ananya manaso jñātvā bhūtādīn ayyayah
mahātmānāḥ great souls tu but mām me ārtha O Partha ātmān divine prakṛtim nature āsritaḥ refused (in) bhajanī worship ananyā manasāh with a mind devoted to nothing else āsita jñātā having known bhūtādim the source of beings avyayam imperishable

But the Mahatmans, O Partha, partaking of the divine nature, worship Me with a single mind, knowing Me as the immutable and the source of all beings. 13

Davi prakṛti is the divine nature which runs counter to the delusive nature mentioned in the previous stanza. This is born of sattva guna. Beings have all come from Paramatman. Those who know this fact and strive to go back to Paramatman are the Mahātmans, the great-souled ones. Self-control, love of beings, commending themselves to God—noble traits like these are evident in them.

How do these great souls occupy themselves? The elucidation comes —

sātāṃ kīrtayanto mām yatantāḥ ca drḍhā vratāḥ
namasyantās ca mām bhaktyā nityayuktā upāsate

sātāṃ satatam always kīrtayantah glorifying mām me yatantāḥ striving ca and drḍhā vratāḥ firm in vows namasyantāḥ

80—32
prostrating \( \text{ca} \) and \( \text{maam} \) me \( \text{bhaktya} \) with devotion \( \text{nitya yuktah} \) always steadfast \( \text{upasate} \) worship

Glorifying Me always, striving, firm in vows, prostrating before Me, they worship Me with devotion, ever steadfast.

Mind takes the colouring of what it glorifies; by glorifying God, godly qualities come to it. Further, mind gets to know more of the field in which it strives. Venturing in divine pursuit, it imbibes the divine increasingly. Rigid vows add to self-culture. By prostrating before God, one gives oneself over to Him; and by worshipping Him with devotion one’s individuality gets merged in God. Because of these varieties of ways of creating link with the Lord, the devotees thus engaged are said to be ever steadfast.

\[ \text{prthaktvena bahu} \text{dha visvatomukham} \]

\( jnana \text{yajjena} \) with the wisdom-sacrifice \( \text{ca} \) and \( \text{api} \) also \( \text{anye} \) others \( \text{yajantah} \) sacrificing \( \text{maam} \) me \( \text{upasate} \) worship \( \text{ekatvena} \) as one \( \text{prthaktvena} \) as different \( \text{bahu} \text{dha} \) in various ways \( \text{visvato mukham} \) the all-faced
Yet others sacrifice with the Yajna of knowledge and worship Me in various ways as the one, as the distinct and as the all-faced.

Worshipping the Lord as the one, undivided Pure Consciousness is the way of Advaita or non-dualism.

Adoring the Almighty as the distinct is the way of Dvaita or dualism. He is held as distinct from the Jagat and the Jivatman — the universe and the beings, both of these categories being dependent on Him.

Invoking Iswara as the all-faced is the way of Visishtadvaita or the qualified non-dualism. The universe and the beings in it are all the insentient and sentient aspects of the body of the Lord. It is for this reason He is called the all-faced.

In whatever way the Lord is worshipped, it is acceptable to Him. These several ways of understanding the Lord by the devotees are all their respective Jnana-yajnas or sacrifices of knowledge.

Whatever be your concept of God, be it with form or formless, hold fast to it and ardently worship Him. But be not conceited that your concept alone of Him is the finale. In the course of your sadhana you will come to know by His grace that His attributes and forms are inexhaustible.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How can the divergent and conflicting forms of worship reach the same Lord, who is one without a second? The Lord Himself gives the answer:—
Iswara is Everything — 16-19

अहं करुणेऽम् यथः स्वधान्याशमपप्पमृ।
मन्त्रोऽभमेवरूपम्याशमग्निर्म्यहमस्वतः॥ १६

बहुम् अतुः बहुम् यथः स्वधा बहुम् बहुम् आयुर्वधम्।
मन्त्रः बहुम् बहुम् एव याज्यम् बहुम् अष्टि: बहुम् हुःस्वम्॥

aham kratur aham yajñah svadhā 'ham aham aushadham
mantra 'ham aham eva 'jyam aham agnir aham hutam

aham aham I अतुः: kratuḥ sacrifice अहस्व aham I यथः:
yajñah the sacrifice खधा svadhā: the offering to Pitrus
or ancestors अहस्व aham I अहस्व aham I आयुर्वधम् aushadham
the medicinal herbs and all plants मन्त्रः: mantraḥ sacred
syllable अहस्व aham I अहस्व aham I एव eva also याज्यम्
ājyam ghee or clarified butter अहस्व aham I अष्टि: agnih
the fire अहस्व aham I हुःस्वम् the offering

I am Kratu, I am Yajna, I am Svadha, I am the
medicinal herb, I am Mantra, I am also the clarified
butter, I am fire, I am oblation. 16

Kratu is a Vedic ritual while Yajna denotes Vedic
and Post-Vedic forms of sacrificial worship. The
offerings made to the manes is svadhā. The food
that is medicinal and at the same time nourishing is
called aushadha. The formative thought behind the
chanted hymn is mantra. This stanza supplements
the ideas contained in the twenty-fourth stanza of
the fourth chapter. Apart from God there is no
object, no thought and no act. Holding everything
as He is the way to reach Him.
पिता श्रद्धा अस्य जगतः साता धाता पितमहःि
वेदयं पवित्रम् अमकारे रक साम सुम यजुर् एव व

pitā 'ham asya jagato mātā dhātā pitāmahaḥ
vedayam pavitram aumkāra ṛk sāma yajur eva ca

पिता pitā father श्रद्धा aham I अस्य asya of this
जगतः jagataḥ world साता mātā mother धाता dhātā the
dispenser of the fruits of actions पितमहः pitāmahaḥ
grandfather वेदयम् vedyam the (one) thing to be known
पवित्रम् pavitram the purifier अमकारे omkāraḥ the Omkara
ऋक् ṛk Rik साम sāma Sama यजुः yajuḥ Yajus एव eva
also च ca and

I am the Father of this world, the Mother, the
Dispenser and the Grandfather; I am the knowable,
the Purifier, the syllable Om and also the Rik, the
Saman and the Yajus.

God being the source of the universe and the
beings in it, He is held as the Father, the Mother
and the Grandfather. Each individual is rewarded by
the Lord according to his efforts and therefore He is
the Dispenser. Knowing Iswara, everything comes
to be known in its perspective; the Lord is therefore
the knowable.

The elements earth, water, fire and air have the
power to purify the things brought in contact with
them. Man gets purified as he contacts God; God
is therefore the most efficacious Purifier.

The Rik, the Saman and the Yajus deal with
the origin, sustenance and end of the Prakriti. No
mention is made here of the Atharva, the fourth
Veda, as it does not come up to the level of the other
three in orthodoxy.
Languages are all based on the science of sound. In this respect the Vedas may be said to have reached perfection. They are the sacred books which proclaim that sound is the seed from which the universe has come into being. Sound is God, Nāda Brahman. He persists eternally as the syllable Om, which is a blending of a+u+m. Sound originates as a, sustains as u and terminates as m. By the Creator uttering Om once, the universe is projected, maintained and withheld. The sadhaka who gets fixed in the chanting of Om evolves in Godhood.

Bhagavan, Bhagavatam and the Bhaktas — these three are identical.

— Sri Ramakrishna

गतिजभर्ती प्रस्तु: साद्गी निधास: शरणं सहत ।
प्रभव: प्रलयं: स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ २८ ॥

गति-ति: भूर-ता प्रस्तु: साद्गी निधास: शरणमु सहत ।
प्र-भवं: प्र-लयं: स्थानमु नि-धानमु बीजम-विभवम् ॥

gatir bhartā prabhuh sākṣi nivāsaṁ saraṇaṁ suhṛt
prabhavaḥ pralayāḥ sthānaṁ nidhānaṁ bijam avyayam

गति: gatiḥ the goal भरत the supporter प्रस्तु: prabhuh the Lord साद्गी sākṣi the witness निधास: nivāsaḥ the abode शरणमु saraṇaṁ the shelter सहत suhṛt the friend प्रभव the origin प्रलय pralayaḥ the dissolution स्थानमु sthānaṁ the foundation निधानमु nidhānaṁ the treasure-house बीजमु bijam the seed विभवमु avyayam imperishable

I am the Goal, the Supporter, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Shelter, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Foundation, the Treasure-house and the Seed Imperishable.
The goal of life varies with people. But all the divergent goals of all the people can be sorted and brought unmistakably under three classes—striving for long efficient life, seeking after wider knowledge and searching for more happiness. And these three groups are nothing but the modifications of *Sat-cit-ānanda*—Life, Light, Love. This is a comprehensive definition of God. He is therefore the direct or indirect Goal of all beings.

Because all sustenance comes from God, He is the Supporter of beings.

As the sea is the owner of the waves, Cosmic Life is the owner of the individual lives. He is therefore the Lord.

The universe and the beings appear from and disappear into Iswara; He is therefore the Witness.

Beings rest and reside in the Cosmic Consciousness even as the cinema pictures get themselves expressed on a screen. The Lord is therefore the Abode.

He is the only lasting Shelter to those who want to be freed from the clutches of the cold hand of death.

The Lord is the one fast Friend residing in the hearts of the good and the bad in the form of Conscience and directing them on the right way.

What the ocean is to the wave, the Lord is to the entire Creation. He is therefore the Origin, the Dissolution, the Foundation, the Treasure-house and the Seed Imperishable.
tapāmy aham aham varṣam nigṛḥnāmy utsṛjāmi ca
amṛtam cai 'va mṛtyuṣ ca sad asac cā 'ham arjuna

tapāmi give heat aham I aham I
varṣam rain nigrāhi withold uṣṭasya send forth ca and amṛtam immortality ca and eva also mṛtyuḥ death ca and sat sat existence asat non-existence ca and aham I arjun O Arjuna

I give heat, I withhold and send forth the rain; I am immortality and death; I am being as well as non-being, O Arjuna.

As the Immanent Reality, the working of Iswara in and through the Cosmos has its glory. As the sun, the Lord gives heat and as sun-rays He is the cause of the rain commencing and ceasing. Based on the fruits of karma, the Lord is the seeming immortality of the Devas and the death of the human beings; the former is in fact, as evanescent as the latter. Both of these transitory states are helpful to train the Jivatman and make him fit for enlightenment. In His manifested state the Lord is the being of the Cosmos and in His unmanifested state He is the non-being. The non-being should not be construed as nihility.

The effect of the fruit-motivated action is depicted now.
The Way of the Enjoyment seekers—20 21

The knowers of the three Vedas

The knowers of the three Vedas, the drinkers of Soma, purified from sin, worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the way to heaven. They reach the holy world of the Lord of the Devas and enjoy in heaven the celestial pleasures of Devas.

What is mentioned here is the foremost among the heavenly enjoyments to which the three Vedas—the Rik, the Saman and the Yajus—show the path. Indra is the title of the Lord of the Devas. This status comes to the one who successfully performs a hundred fruit-motivated yajñaś.
te tam bhuktva svargalokam visalam
kste punye martyalokam visanti

evam trayidharmam anuprapannah
gatagataṁ kāmakāmā labhante

Having enjoyed the vast world of heaven, they return to the world of mortals on the exhaustion of their merits; thus abiding by the injunctions of the three Vedas, desiring objects of desires they go and come.

Just as the men of means are respected in the mortal world, the men of merits are assigned status in the celestial world. But they are not permitted to continue there after their merits run out. They are obliged to return to this world of karma again for a further acquisition of merits. As slaves to enjoyment they are forced to knock to and fro in this manner.
But what about those who have outgrown all desires and have completely made themselves over to the Maker? Their position is explained:—

Man Gets What He Seeks—22-25

अनन्याधिकृतमयं मां ये जना: पूज्यपात्ते ।
तेपां नित्याभिहृद्यक्षां योगक्षेमम् वहाम्यहम् ॥ २२

Janāḥ-ananyāḥ: भिन्न-अय-अन्त: नामः ये जनाः पूजः-उपः-आत्म:-अते ।
तेपाः नित्य-भिष-पूज-तामः योग-स्व्यम्भर-हाम् ॥

ananyās cintayanto māṁ ye janāḥ paryupāsate ।
tesāṁ nityābhīhiyuktānāṁ yogakṣēmāṁ vahāmy aham ॥

ananyāḥ without others भिन्न: cintayan-
taḥ: thinking नामः māṁ mc: ye who जनाः: janāḥ men
पूजः: paryupāsate (परि: उपासते) paryupāsate (pari upāsate) worship
tesāṁ of them नित्याभिहृद्यक्षां (नित्य भिष-पूज-तामः)
nityābhīhiyuktānāṁ (nitya abhihīyuktānāṁ) of the ever-
united yogakṣēmāṁ the supply of what is not
already possessed, and the preservation of what is
already possessed वहामि vahāmi carry भाम् aham ॥

To those men who worship Me alone, thinking of
no other, who are ever devout, I provide gain and
security.

This is a sublime statement revealing the law of
life at the spiritual level. In the economy of nature
the distribution of labour is benignly meted out. It is
all right for the body-bound man to toil for food and
clothing. But he who has completely attuned him-
self to the Divine loses in calibre when he brings
his mind down to the mundane level. The grace of
the Lord works in such a way that this downfall
does not take place. In every respect the spirituality of the spiritual man is promoted.

It is ananyabhakti when the love of the Jivatman for the Paramatman takes away all distinctions between the two.

Yoga in the context of this stanza means the provision of the means required for the devotees' bodily maintenance; and kshema means the protection of what has been provided.

The baby in the womb gets its nourishment from the mother because of the state of non-separation between the two. The boon of ananyabhakti is even greater and more consequential than this. While the mother and the baby will be separated by time, this Jivatman and Paramatman will become united for eternity. The grace of the Lord unfailingly facilitates this union. While the seekers of heaven chase the phantom, the genuine devotee of the Lord gains Him, the Incomparable.

When the devotee takes one stride towards the Lord, He takes ten strides towards that devotee. Such is His grace.

—Sri Ramakrishna

But will not the homage paid to the minor deities become the worship of the Lord? The clarification comes:

केदारनथदेवरा भक्ता यज्ञी अद्वयात्मिकोऽधि
तेजस्व नामेव कौन्तेयोऽपिकृतिविष्णुकुमः || २३

वे यश्विनिनः देवताः स्थतः। यज्ञवाद्य स्वयंमुस्तः।
से श्रापि मागु प्रकृतिविष्णु वस्तितं व-विवि-प्रवेक्षम् ||
ye 'py anyadevatā bhaktā yajante sraddhayā anvitaḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya yajanty avidhipūrvakam

ye ye who api even anusyānta anya devatāḥ other
gods brahma bhaktāḥ devotees gajante yajante worship
adya sraddhayā with faith anuvisya anvitaḥ endowed
te te they api also samā mām me eva eva alone kośāy
kaunteya O Kaunteya yajanti worship anuvisya
pūrvekṣu avidhi pūrvakam by the wrong method.

Even those devotees who, endowed with Sraddha,
worship other gods, worship Me alone, O son of
Kunti, by the wrong method.

Because these are devotees endowed with
sraddha, they are necessarily believers in God and in
His grace. It is not wantonly, but only for want of
right understanding that they adopt the wrong
method.

A good government has its sound administra-
tive system from which its loyal officers do not
deviate. Be it supposed that a citizen has applied
to an officer for a favour and he has sanctioned it,
coming as it does within the purview of the system.
It is a mistake if the applicant fancies that the
officer has shown him a concession. The actual
position of the minor gods is equal to that of the
government officers. As all powers come to them
from the government, even so whatever power the
other gods have, it has come to them from Iswara.
Apart from and independent of Him no deity has
any power to bestow any boon. The wrong method
consists in getting the things done counter to this
truth.
But why should this method be held wrong at all? The explanation comes:

अहि हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च।
न तु माममिज्जानिन्ति तत्त्वेनात्मक्यवनिति ते॥ २४

Ahau hi sarvayajñaṁ bhokta ca prabhuḥ eva ca।
na tu māṁ abhijānanti tattvena 'tas cyavanti te॥

In all sacrifices bhokta enjoyer ca and prahuḥ lord eva alone ca and na not tu but māṁ me abhijānanti know tattva in reality atah hence cyavanti fall te they

I am verily the Enjoyer and the Lord of all Yajnas. But these men do not know Me in reality; hence they fall.

The same food when fed by the nurse has one effect on the body and mind of the baby and quite another effect when fed by the mother. There is no substitute in the world for mother’s love; and this makes a world of difference in the build of the baby. The love of Iswara is the love of the mother and much more too.

The minor gods give their votaries things impermanent and entangle them more in the wheel of birth and death; hence they fall. The effect of the worship of Iswara is different. While granting the devotees the things of the world they pray for, He
inculcates in them increased Bhakti and Jnana which prepare them for Mukti. This power is exclusively with Iswara. He is therefore the Enjoyer and the Lord of all Yajnas. It is incumbent on the sadhaka to understand this truth and devote himself exclusively to the worship of Iswara.

The Lord’s statement “I alone am the Adhiyajna here in this body”, in Chapter eight stanza four requires to be taken note of.

The relative destinies of the varying votaries are

as follows:

यान्ति देववता देवानिषतृन्यान्ति पितृवत्तता: ।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोपि माम् ॥ २५

यान्ति देववरतां देवान वित्रं यांति पित्रवरतां ।
भूतानि यान्ति भूत-अंश्या: यान्ति सद्याजिनः बापि माम् ॥

यान्ति देववरतां देवान वित्रं यांति पित्रवरतां

bhūtānि yānti bhūtejyā yānti madyājino ’pi mām ॥

यान्ति yānti go देवबन: deva vratāḥ worshippers of
the Devas देवन to the Devas पित्रं to the
Pitrus or ancestors यान्ति yānti go पित्रवत्तता: pitṛ vratāḥ
worshippers of the Pitrus भूतानि bhūtāni to the Bhutas
यान्ति yānti go भूतेज्या bhūtejyāḥ the worshippers of the
Bhutas यान्ति yānti go मद्याजिनः madyājīnāḥ my worship-
pers बापि api also माम् माम to me

Votaries of the Devas go to the Devas; the votaries of the Pitrus go to the Pitrus; to the Bhutas go the Bhuta worshippers; My votaries come to Me.

The water in the pipe can rise to the level in the reservoir to which it is connected. Likewise the
mind of man rises to the level of the deity whom he adores. The sadhaka should therefore be able to distinguish between the minor deities at various cosmic levels and Iswara, the Ultimate Reality.

The Devas are more evolved than men. Their span of embodied life being great, they are called the immortals; but they are also subject to birth and death. By worshipping them men may gain longevity and supernatural powers which are all hindrances to bhakti, jnana and mukti.

The Pitrus are the manes who form a region of their own. Sending holy thoughts for the welfare of the departed ancestors is good; but drifting into ancestor-worship is not desirable. Priestcraft usually encourages this weakness and credulity in man. The ancestors necessarily get changed with every new birth that man takes. Undue concern therefore for Pitrus is purposeless and detrimental to spiritual growth; it only adds to earthly attachment and bondage.

The Bhutas are, in the scale of evolution, intermediate between men and Devas. By worshipping them the votaries may at best get some psychic power, leading to vanity and greater bondage to mundane life.

It is the worship of Iswara, the Supreme Reality, that is beneficial. It leads to prosperity, perfection and emancipation.

A dyer once had a unique method of colouring clothes. He had a solitary dye tub into which he would dip the cloths brought in by the customers and give whatever colour they wanted. Red, yellow, blue, green, purple — all these and more colours were produced from the same tub. An intelligent
customer who watched these miracles entrusted his cloth to the
dyer and requested him to dye it as he liked.

Our mind is the cloth. Iswara is the dyer and dyeing tub.
He gives us what we pray for. The best that we can do is not
to ask Him for anything but give ourselves over to Him. He
in His turn gives Himself to us.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Access to the minor gods is rather easy; but
access to Iswara is not so easy. An idea to this
effect may rise in the minds of people. But the
Lord clarifies this position:—

Worship of Iswara is the Easiest—26-28

पत्रं पुष्पं पुलं तोयं यों मे सक्त्या प्रयज्जिति ।
तदहूँ भक्त्युपहत्मश्चाभीमि प्रयजतात्मनः। ॥ २६ ॥

पत्रं पुष्पं पुलं तोयं यों मे सक्त्या प्रयज्जिति ।
तदहूँ भक्त्युपहत्मश्चाभीमि प्रयजतात्मनः। ॥

patram puspam phalam toyam
yo me bhaktya prayacchati ।
tad aham bhakty upahrtam
asnami prayatatmanah ॥

पत्रम् भक्त्युपहतमश्चाभीमि प्रयजतात्मनः।

Whoever offers Me with devotion, a leaf, a flower,
a fruit or water, I accept that, the pious offering of
the pure in heart.
Metaphysical understanding and material abundance are of no avail to gain access to the Lord. It is pure devotion to which the Lord submits Himself. He who has Bhakti gains Bhagavan easily. A leaf and such like things are mere tokens of love.

The gruel offered by Vidura was accepted with pleasure by Sri Krishna. The flattened dry rice hesitatingly brought by Sudama was pulled out from him and partaken of with relish by Krishna. The dried fruits offered by Sabari were graciously accepted and eaten by Sri Rama. Lord Siva accepted the tongue-tainted venison and mouthful of water offered by the hunter Kannappa. Bhakti is all-in-all to the Lord.

What should the devotee do then? The Lord tells:

yat karośī yad āsnāsī yaj juhośī dadāsī yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣvya mad arpanam

yat, yat whatever karośī thou doest yat, yat whatever āsnāsī thou eatest yat, yat whatever juhośī thou offerest in sacrifice dadāsī thou givest yat, yat whatever tapasyasi thou practiseth as austerity kaunteya O Kaunteya tat tat that kuruṣvya do mad arpanam offering unto me
Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you gift away, whatever austerity you practise, O Kaunteya, do it as an offering to Me.

The panacea for all the evils of earthly life is presented here. To change the secular into the sacred is the only way to metamorphose the human into the divine. Self-seeking ought to give place to self-denial. Making gift is often for self-advertisement. Practising austerity with self-interest may bring in spiritual vanity. But when all these good deeds are done for the glory of the Lord, the doer emerges as the divine. The turning point in life comes in dedicating man’s everything to God, instead of petitioning to Him for things here and hereafter.

"O Mother, I am an instrument, You are its manipulator. I am the house; You are the resident. I am the chariot and You the charioteer. I move as You make me move. I speak as You direct. My doings are all Your doings. Not I; not I; but You."

—Sri Ramakrishna

The good that accrues from surrendering everything to God is reckoned thus:—

श्रमाध्यमसंवधैरं मोक्षस्य कर्मवर्जनः |
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विपुलोऽसामुपेयसि || २८ ||
श्रम-व-श्रम-पदे: एवम् मीच-खंडे कर्मं-मन्त्रे ||
समू-नि-मान-शीर्ष-युजः-आत्मा वि-मुखः: सामू उप-सृजः ||
subhaśubhaphalair evam mokṣyase karmabandhanaiḥ ||
samnyāsa yoga yuktātmā vimukto mām upaiṣyasi ||

श्रम वशम फले: subha asubha phalaiḥ from good and evil fruits evam evam thus mokṣaye (thou) shalt
be freed \textit{karma bandhanaih} from the bonds of actions \textit{sannyasa yoga yuktatma} with the mind steadfast in the yoga of renunciation \textit{vimukta}\textit{h} liberated \textit{mam} to me \textit{upaisya}\textit{si} (thou) shalt come

Thus shall you be free from the bondage of actions yielding good and bad results. With the mind firmly set in the yoga of renunciation and liberated, you shall come to Me. 28

The good and bad results of karma contribute for the continuity of the cycle of births. But when they are all offered to the Lord, they become as ineffectual as the burnt up seeds, unable to sprout any further. The yogi is in this way freed from bondage.

The conflict between engaging oneself in action and emerging from it gets reconciled in \textit{sanyasa yoga}. All selfishness is renounced; that way it is \textit{sanyasa}. Work is vigorously done for the sake of the Lord; that way it is yoga. Such a yogi is a \textit{Jivan-mukta} while yet in body; he becomes a \textit{videha mukta} when he drops his body.

What should you do when you are in this world? You should dedicate your everything to Iswara. You take refuge in Him. Then you will have no misery whatsoever. You will forthwith get to the Lord.

\textit{Sri Ramakrishna}

The way of the world is to commingle with those drawn together and to be indifferent to the others. Is not Iswara also behaving like the worldly? His real position is herein explained:
The Neutral Iswara is the Votary's Own — 29 34

समोहोऽव्रत्मुद्द्रु न मे देव्येष्या: सति न प्रियः।
ये भजन्ति 'तु मां मक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्।॥ २९॥

samo 'ham sarvabhūtēsu na me dvesyo 'sti na priyah
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cā 'py aham

सत समाः the same अहम I द्विते विश्व sarva
bhūtesu in all beings न na not मे me to me dveṣyaḥ
hateful जाति asti is न na not प्रियः priyah dear चे ye who
भजन्ति bhajanti worship तु tu but mām me mām मक्त्या
bhaktyā with devotion मयि mayi in me ते te they teṣu
teṣu in them च ca and धार्मिक atri also अहम aham I

I am the same to all beings; to Me there is none
hateful, none dear. But those who worship Me with
devotion, they are in Me and I also am in them. 29

The sunlight falls equally on all things,
good and bad, but its effect and utilization vary
according to the nature of those things. The very
presence of the sun is seen in a mirror because
of its fitness. Though the all-pervading Lord is in
the hearts of all, His presence is patent only in
the pure heart of the devotee. As one gives oneself to
God, one gets purified and God's presence in that
one becomes evident.

God is in all beings but all beings are not in God. And
that is the cause of their suffering.

— Sri Ramakrishna
The greatness of Bhakti is now expounded:—

अपि चेतुदुराचारो भजते यामनस्वभावः
साधुरेव स मन्तवः सम्प्रवृत्त्वासितो हि सः ॥ ३०

अपि चेतु सुदुराचारः भजते साधु-अवे माम अनन्त-नाम्भजः
चाहुः एव सः मनृ-तथ्यः सम्प्रवृत्त्वि-अत्व-वितः हि सः ॥

api cet sudurācāro bhajate mām ananyabhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyah samyag vyavasito hi saḥ ॥

अपि api even चेतु cet if सुदुराचारः sudurācāraḥ a very wicked person भजते bhajate worships माम mām me अनन्तभाकः ananyabhāk with devotion to none else साधुः sādhuḥ righteous एव eva verily स: saḥ he मन्तवः mantavyaḥ should be regarded सम्प्रवृत्ति samyak rightly व्यवसित: vyavasitah resolved हि hi indeed स: saḥ he

Even if a man of the most sinful conduct worships Me with undeviating devotion, he must be reckoned as righteous, for he has rightly resolved. 30

The dirtiest water can be brought back to its original pure state through distillation. Even while in dirt its innate element is not lost. Man’s case is much more definite than that of water. There is no such thing as eternal damnation to the sinner as some religions would have it. The unpardonable sin is a misnomer. Salvation of mankind is the supreme plan of the Divine. The more man turns to God the purer he becomes. His mind gets automatically set aright in God-thought. His good action then follows in the trail of his purified thought. He emerges as one reclaimed in virtue.

How to wean people from worldliness to godliness, thought the twin saints—Nityananda and Gouranga. They struck upon
the plan of preaching that the chanting of the Lord’s name would bring in to them more of wealth and earthly enjoyments. Attracted by the offer, people in large numbers joined the saints in singing and chanting the glory of God. The divine ecstasy that emanated from that holy act made people forget all vulgar pleasures and turn their minds more Godward. God is the divine talisman for all worldly evils

— Sri Ramakrishna

How long does the convert take to reach Godhood? The answer comes:

कौन्तेय प्रतिष्ठिति न मे भक्तः प्रणवयिति
कौन्तेय ग्रहे-शास्त्रसंग शास्त्रवृत्त निगच्छिति
कौन्तेय प्रति-जा-नीहि न मे भक्तः प्र-नस्यिति

$k\acute{\text{i}}pram bhava\acute{\text{i}} dharm\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{m}}a\ sas\acute{\text{v}}ac\acute{\text{c}}\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{m}}\ nigung\acute{\text{c}}\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{i}}
kaun\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{e}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}}\ prati\acute{\text{j}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{i}}\ na me bhakta\acute{\text{h}} pra\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{y}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{i}}$

$k\acute{\text{i}}pram soon bhava\acute{\text{i}} (he) becomes dharm\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{m}}a righteous\ sas\acute{\text{v}}at\ eternal\ sh\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{i}}\ s\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{m}}\ peace\ nigung\acute{\text{c}}\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{i}}\ sas\acute{\text{v}}at\ eternal\ sh\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{i}}\ s\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{m}}\ peace\ nigung\acute{\text{c}}\acute{\text{h}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{i}}\ sas\acute{\text{v}}at\ eternal\ sh\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{i}}\ s\acute{\text{n}}\acute{\text{a}}\acute{\text{t}}\acute{\text{m}}\ peace$

soon does he become a man of righteousness and obtains lasting peace. O Kaunteya, know for certain that My devotee never perishes.

Many a sinner has within the span of a single life-time after conversion changed into the divine. The oldest case known to us is that of the sage Valmiki. An illustrious recent convert is Girish Chandra Ghose who after contacting Sri Ramakrishna changed quickly from profligacy to purity.
The Pandava brothers themselves bear testimony to the fact that the devotees of the Lord never get lost. All the five of them had unflinching devotion to Sri Krishna. They lost their empire; they were exposed to many dangers; untold trials and tribulations came upon them; the life of long exile in the forest was painful. But they did not falter in their faith in God. Adversity only increased their love of the Lord. They were blessed in the end with sreyas, the best in life.

The case of the mediocre is now taken into account:

मां हि पार्थ व्यपस्त्रित्वे वेदापि स्तुः पापयोनयः।
स्त्रियो वैस्यातथा शुद्रास्तेवाय गान्ति परां गतिम् ॥ ३२ ॥

मां मम me हि hi indeed पार्थ O Partha व्यपस्त्रित्वा vyapāsritya taking refuge in ये ye who अपि even अनि suh may be पापयोनयः pāpayonayah of mediocre ब्यवह निया women वैस्त्रा vaishya Vaisyas तथा tathā also शुद्रा sudra Sudras ते te they अपि api also गान्ति yānti attain परां parām the supreme गतिम् gatim goal

For those who take refuge in Me, O Partha, though they be of inferior birth — women, Vaisyas and Sudras — even they attain the Supreme Goal. 32

पापयोनि - pāpa yoni ought not to be misconstrued as sinful birth or wicked birth. It simply means
imperfect birth, quite common in Nature. It may be found that in all species the feminine body is less perfect and less majestic than the masculine. And in the human, the mind is more important than the physique. Women as a class are less developed in mind than men, though exceptions may be found. They only are classified as Vaisyas and Sudras who are not fully developed in mind. The inferior birth, therefore, is a statement of fact. Even the mediocre mentioned herein are competent to reach Godhood. No human being is debarred from this birthright.

When there is a hurricane, it is not possible to distinguish one tree from another. Similarly when there is the hurricane of bhakti in the mind, distinctions such as sex, caste, colour and race vanish of their own accord.

—Sri Ramakrishna

How about the fully qualified ones? The answer comes:—

कि पुनर्ग्रहणः पुन्यमभक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमूलसं लोकसिमं प्राप्य भजस्मात् मात्म | ३३ |

किम पुनः क्राहण पुण्यः भृकुट-ता: राज-क्रययतः तथा ।
ननित्यम् ध-धृतम् लोकम् तस्मात् भजस्वच्छम् मात्म |

kim punar brāhmaṇāḥ punyāḥ bhaktā rājarṣayaḥ tathā
anityam asukham lokam imam prāpya bhajasvamām

कि पुन: kim punah how much more ब्राह्मण: brāhma-
नाः Brahmans pūṇyaḥ holy भक्ताः bhaktāḥ devoted
rājarṣayaḥ royal saints tathā also अनित्यम्
anityam impermanent असुक्म asukham unhappy लोकम्
lokam world يسمع imam this prāpya having obtained सजस्व bhajasva worship साप्त mām me

How much more then the holy Brahmanas and devoted royal saints! Having come into this transient, joyless world, do worship Me.

Punyam is in contrast with pāpam already mentioned. A Brahmana is one who is perfect in mind and completely given over to spiritual life. The Kshatriya comes next to him and he is also entirely devoted to God. These two types of highly evolved people can easily attain Godhood.

What is sought as a fragrant and fresh flower today is cast aside as rubbish tomorrow. This is the case with everything in the world. Its transitoriness is self-evident. Misery is the counterpart of every earthly joy. Sorrow is ingrained in happiness. The highly evolved souls, the discerning ones should therefore take to the worship of Iswara so that they may transcend this relative existence.

How shall we attain the Lord?

Can you with a distressed heart pray to Him for His grace and revelation? You shed pots full of tears for the sake of your wife, children and property. Have you ever shed a drop of tear seeking the Lord? As long as the baby is interested in toys, the mother minds her own business. But when the baby throws away those things and screams, the mother rushes to attend on it. You behave likewise towards God; and He will reveal Himself to you.

— Sri Ramakrishna
How to pray to God? It is made clear.—

सन्मना भव मद्द्रको मध्या मां नमस्कृत
मानेियगिसि युक्तेियगात्मानं मतपरायण; || ३४||
मद्द्मना भव मद्द्मक मद्द्मानी माम् नमस्कृत||
माम् एव ए स्वाति युक्त तो एवम् अत्मानम् मद्द्मपर-अयन इ

manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru
mām evaı 'syasi yuktvar īvaı ātmānam matparāyanaḥ ||

सन्मना: manmanāḥ with mind filled with me भव
bhava be thou मद्द्रक mad bhaktaḥ my devotee मध्या मां
madyājī sacrificer माम् mām unto me नमस्कृत namaskuru
bow down माम् mām to me एव eva alone एष्यसि esyasi
thou shalt come युक्ता yuktvar having united एवम् evam
thus अत्मानम् ātmānam the self मतपरायण matparāyanaḥ
taking me as the supreme goal

Fix your mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice unto Me; bow down to Me. Having thus made yourself steadfast in Me, taking Me as the Supreme Goal, you will come to Me. 34

A selfish man resorts to God to have his desires fulfilled and his individuality preserved. But the injunction of the Lord to the discerning devotee is different. The sadhaka is not to practise escape-mentality nor is he to develop quietism. On the other hand his talents have all to be harnessed to make life a fulfilment. In dedicating himself and his service to the Divine he gets himself utilized to the maximum. As the river gives itself to the ocean and becomes one with it, the devotee gives himself to the Lord and becomes one with Him.
In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the ninth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF SOVEREIGN SCIENCE AND SOVEREIGN SECRET
VIBHUTI YOGA—THE YOGA OF DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS

CHAPTER X

Iswara the Source of Everything—The Knowledge of Vibhuti fosters Devotion—The Buddha yoga—Bliss Evident in God's Glories—The Vibhutis Defined—The Essence of the Vibhutis

Iswara the Source of Everything—16

Śrī Bhagavān uvāca

bhūya eva mahābāho āmnu me paramam vacaḥ
yat te 'ham priyamānāya vakṣyāmi hitakāmyayā

Śrī Bhagavān uvāca Śrī Bhagavān said:

bhūyaḥ: again eva verily mahābāho O mighty-armed āmnu āmnu hear me my supreme vacaḥ word yat which te te to thee aham I Śrīpriyamānāya who art beloved vakṣyāmi (I) will declare hitakāmyayā wishing (thy) welfare

The Blessed Lord said:

Once again, O mighty-armed, listen to My supreme word. Out of a desire to do you good I wish to speak of it to your absorbing delight.

The Lord is pleased with Arjuna's keen interest in hearing of His divine glories. The master's zeal to teach waxes in unison with the receptive faculty
of the taught. This psychological fact is made evident here. The Vedantic verdict—"Wonderful is the teacher, and equally clever the pupil" is more than proved by Sri Krishna and Arjuna. What the Lord imparts is the life-saving ambrosia to Arjuna.

The topic dealt with in chapters seven and nine is resumed and supplemented somewhat elaborately in this chapter. Repeated and comprehensive enquiry into the glory of the Lord clarifies the understanding and promotes devotion. For, knowing and loving are interrelated. What else can man do than bend his head in reverence before the Grandeur and Sublimity of the Lord!

But what grandeur can there be in a personality bound in this mortal coil? The Lord Himself answers:

न मे विदुः सुरगण: प्रभवः न महर्षयः ।
अहमादिहि देवानां महर्षिणां च सर्वेष: ॥ ॥

न मे विदुः खर-गणः प्र-भवः न महर्षयः ।
शाहदृ शादि: हि देवानाम् महर्ष्याम् च सर्वेष: ॥

na me viduḥ suragaṇah prabhavan na maharṣayaḥ ।
aham ādir hi devānām maharṣinām ca sarvasaḥ ॥

Na not sme me my vidiḥ know suragaṇah: suragaṇah the hosts of Devas prabhavan origin na not maharṣyaḥ the great Rishis aham I shad: ādiḥ the beginning hi hi for devānām devānām of the Devas maharṣinām of the great Rishis ca and sarvaḥ: sarvasaḥ in every way
Neither the hosts of Devas nor the great Rishis know My origin; for in every respect I am the source of the Devas and the great Rishis.

The birth of the son and his progress in life is known to the father, but the birth and boyhood of the father ever remains beyond the ken of the son. Analogously Brahman is the Source and Witness of the universe that comes from Him and merges into Him. This Eternal Brahman is to some extent cognized by the perfected beings like the great Rishis. But His glory in its entirety can never be known by the hosts of saints and sages. He only remains partially revealed even when He embodies as an Incarnation like Rama or Krishna.

The divine breeze blowing from the ocean of Sat-cit-ananda Brahman transports people into ecstasy. Sanaka, Sanantana and other ancient Rishis got themselves perfected by this divine breeze. A mere glimpse of this ocean sent Narada into raptures Suka the born Brahma-Jnani touched this water but once and got himself filled with Brahmanavasta and wandered the world as a divine lad. Siva the Cosmic Teacher took only three sips from this Great Ocean and became dazed with transcendental Bliss Indeed, who can measure the depth or the characteristics of the Infinite Ocean of Brahman

—Sri Ramakrishna

How then does Brahman serve us, the ordinary aspirants? The clarification comes:

यो मामञ्जराणांि च चेति लोकमहेश्वरस् ।
असंमूहः स मल्येणु सर्वपापः प्रमुच्यते ॥ ३

प. माम् ब्रज-मन् बनं-आदिम् च चेदौ-ति लोक-महा-हिंसरस्।
स-स-मुद्र त स: मल्येणु सर्वपापः प्र मुच्यते। ॥
yo mām ajam anādim ca vetti lokamaheśvaram
asaṃmūḍhaḥ sa martyeṣu sarvapāpaiḥ pramucyate

शः yah who माम् mām me अजम् ajam unborn अनादिम्
anādim beginningless च ca and वेत्ति vetti knows लोकं
loka maheśvaram the great lord of the worlds
असम्मूढः asaṃmūḍhaḥ undeluded स: saḥ he मर्त्येṣu
martyeṣu amongst mortals सर्वपाँचः sarva pāpaiḥ from all
sins प्रामुच्यते pramucyate is liberated

He who knows Me as unborn and beginningless,
as the Great Lord of the worlds, he among mortals
is undeluded and freed from all sins.

In His Absolute State, Brahman is unknown
and unknowable. Triputi or the triad of the seer,
the seen and the process of seeing is not in Him. But
in His Transcendent State, a glimpse of His Reality
is intuited by the perfected ones like the Rishis.
They realize the existence of the Imperishable as the
basis of the perishing Prakriti. This contact is like
the looking at the infinite sky through a peep-hole.
But this realization is very important to a sadhaka.
He intuits that the Lord is unborn and beginningless
and that He is the Supreme Sovereign of the worlds.
After knowing this truth he is no more deluded
about the functioning of the phenomenon. Sin
consists of construing man’s life as independent of
Iswara’s ordainment. But the sadhaka who links
his life entirely with the plan and purpose of the
Lord, gets himself freed from all sins.

To see into the way of the Transcendent Reality
is given to the Enlightened only. But Brahman
filters Himself down further into Immanence. In
this aspect of His, He is available to the ordinary sadhakas too. This is being described now:

इद्विन्द्रानन्दमभोजनो�
Damaḥ or self-restraint is the control of the external senses of touch, taste, sight, smell and hearing.

Samaḥ or calmness is the practice of the quietude of the mind and intellect.

अहिंसा समता तुषित्वं दानं यशोर्वशः ||
भवति भावन्ति भूतान्यं मत्त एव पुष्पविधाः || 5
श्र-हिंसा सम-ता वृष्टि: तपः दानम् यशः: श-यशः: ||
भव-अन्ति भावन्ति: भूतान्यम् मद्व-तः एव प्राणकु विधाः: ||

ahimsā samatā tuṣṭis tapo dānam yaso 'yasaḥ bhavanti bhāvā bhūtānāṃ mattaḥ eva prthagvidhāḥ ||

अहिंसा ahimsā non-injury समता samatā equanimity तुषि: tuṣṭiḥ contentment तपः tapaḥ austerity दानम् dānam beneficence यशः yasaḥ fame अयसः ayaśaḥ ill-fame भवां bhavanti arise भावन्ति bhāva qualities भूतान्य भूतानां of beings मत्त mattaḥ from me एव eva alone प्रथगविधाः prthagvidhāḥ of different kinds

Non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame and obloquy—these different qualities of beings arise from Me alone.

Samatā or equanimity is the balanced state of the mind in the midst of the happenings of the desirable and undesirable occurrences.

Tapas or austerity is the determined change of life-habits from bad to good through a rigorous self-discipline.

Dānam or charity is the gift of the good and useful things made to the deserving persons.
Yasah and Ayasah or fame and obloquy are the outcome of doing the right or wrong deeds.

Electric power utilized by man expresses itself differently through different instruments. According to their attainments acquired through their karma in this life and in the past lives, men become the instruments for the expression of the Sat-cit-ānanda positively as well as negatively. The qualities mentioned herein are all come from the same source --- Iswara.

Who are they that have been the vehicles for the abundant expression of the glories of Iswara? The adumbration ensues:—

maharsayah sapta pūrve catvāro manavas tathā
madbhāvā mānasā jātā yeśām loka imāḥ prajāḥ

The seven great Rishis and the four ancient Manus, endowed with My power, were born of My mind; and from them have come forth all the creatures in the world.

The seven great Rishis are Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri, Pulah, Pulastya, Kratu and Angiras. The four
ancient Manus are Svarochisha, Svayambhu, Raivata and Uttama. These potentates are not of human origin. They are all born of the mind of Brahma, the Creator. In other words, they are all personifications of the several phases of the Cosmic Reality. The seven great Rishis represent the seven planes of consciousness. They are therefore said to be the originators of beings at all levels of existence and all grades of evolution. Naught exists beyond the pale of their domains. While the seven Rishis represent the created beings in their entirety, the four ancient Manus function as the orderly administrators of the entire Creation. The precision and regularity evinced by Nature are all due to the efficient regime of the Manus.

What is the benefit that the sadhaka derives by knowing this structure of the Cosmos and of its orderly functioning? The answer comes:—

The Knowledge of Vibhuti fosters Devotion—7-9

एतां विभूति योगं च मम यो वैति तत्त्वं।
सो विकंपेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः॥ ७॥

एतां विभूतिव योगं च मम यो वैति तद्भवः।
सो विभूतिव मुक्तेः न कर्तः संशयः॥

etāṁ vibhūtim yogam ca mama yo vetti tattvataḥ.
sa 'vikampena yogena yujyate nā' tra saṁśayāḥ.||

एतां etāṁ these विभूतिव vibhūtim manifold manifestations of my being योगं yoga power च ca and मम mama mine य: yah who वैति vetti knows तत्त्वं tattvataḥ in truth स: saḥ he अविकंपेन avikampena unshakable योगेन yogena in yoga युज्यते yujyate becomes
established is not in the here doubt

He who knows in truth this glory and power of Mine is endowed with unfaltering yoga; of this there is no doubt.

Electricity manifests itself in various forms in instruments suited to those forms. In whatever form this energy expresses itself, the power is the same. This is a specimen of the primordial power of the Lord evolving itself into the glorious varieties of the sentient and the insentient, abounding in Nature. The discerning man knows that whatever he senses, is the power and glory of Iswara. He cannot therefore be any more separate from Iswara than he can be separate from earth. His yoga with God is thereby made unfaltering.

A lamp cannot burn without oil. Even so, man cannot be bereft of God.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is meant by unfaltering yoga? The answer comes:

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत: सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।
इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विता: ॥ ८ ॥

aham sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvam pravartate ।
iti matvā bhajante mām budhā bhāvasamanvītāḥ ॥

अहं अहं I सर्वस्य sarvasya of all प्रभव prabhave the source मतः mattaḥ from me sarvam every-

thing प्रवर्तते pravartate evolves इति iti thus मत्वा matvā
understanding भजन्ते bhajante worship साम् mām. me ज्ञानः budhāḥ the wise आचार्यमन्निष्टः bhāvasamanviśṭāḥ endowed with meditation

I am the origin of all; from Me all things evolve. The wise know this and adore Me with all their heart.

The farmer who wants to bring up robust plants gives all his attention to the soil, it being the basis of good cultivation. The wise in this wise give their mind to God knowing that He is the source of everything and that the thought of Him alone enriches and ennobles the mind. Their attention does not on any account deviate from God. As the plant gets itself rooted in the earth, the yogi gets himself attached to the Almighty. And that is the unfaltering yoga.

Is there then no provision for the varying temperaments to be drawn Godward? The answer is given:—

महिला मद्गतसहाया वोथन्त्रि: परस्परम्।
कथवन्त्रि: मां नित्यं तुष्मिति: च रमन्ति: च॥ ९॥
महिला: मद्गता-प्राणः: वोथन्त्रि: परस्परम्।
कथवन्त्रि: च सामू निलाम्। तुष्मिति: च रमातसति: च॥
maccittā maddgatapraṇā bodhayantaḥ parasparam ।
kathayantaḥ ca mām nityam tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca ॥

महिला: maccittāḥ with their minds wholly in me मद्गतात्माण: maddgata prāṇāḥ with their life absorbed in me वोथन्त्रि: bodhayantaḥ enlightening परस्परम् paras- param mutually कथवन्त्रि: kathayantaḥ speaking of च ca
and माम mām me नित्यम् nityam always तुष्यन्ति tusyanti are satisfied त ca and समन्ति ramanti (they) are delighted त ca and

With their minds fixed on Me, with their life absorbed in Me, enlightening each other and ever speaking of Me, they are contented and delighted. 9

The easiest of all acts for one is to fix one’s mind on what one likes most. The child that understands that its all in all are mother and father, gets spontaneously absorbed in the parents. The devotee who comes to know that the Lord is the source and stay of himself, naturally directs his mind on the Maker. An adult sacrifices his everything in the service of the parents. Nothing is dearer to one than life. The Bhakta devotes that life to the Lord. But it is not like the lovers doting on each other; for there is lustful selfishness in their act. The devotee, on the other hand, invites others to share the devotion with them. Temperamental differences are set aside in this holy act. The mention of the Lord, made to him by the others is delightful. He devotedly recounts his understanding of the Lord to the others and eagerly receives their experiences and dissertations on the Lord. Repeated recount of His glories does not render them stale or repugnant. Rather they become increasingly absorbing. Divergent dispositions do in this divine manner get commingled in God.

Holy communications create contentment and not the frustration which follows indulgence.
Ethereal bliss is the fruit of all forms of Godly pursuit.

No picture can be painted on a fresh glass. But if it be coated with the required chemicals, painting on it then becomes possible and effective. Similarly if man’s heart were coated with the chemicals of devotion, the imprinting of the august presence of Iswara on it becomes easy.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How does the Lord respond to these divergent devotional activities of the devotees? The assurance ensues:

The Buddha-yoga — 10-11

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां श्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
द्वासमि बुद्धियोगं ते भेन सामुपवान्ति ते ॥ १०
तेपाम् सतत-युज्य-ताताम् भजू-आताम् श्रीति-पूर्व-कम् ।
(ता-रा) चरा-सिः बुद्धि-योगम् तम् भेन सामू चर-वान्ति ते ॥

tेषां सतातयुक्तानां bhajatām prtitpurvakam ।
dadāmi buddhiyogam tam yena mām upayānti te ॥

tेपाम् teṣāṁ to them सततयुक्तानां satata yuktānāṁ
ever steadfast सजज्ञाम bhajatām (of the) worshipping श्रीतिपूर्वकम् priti purvakam with love द्वासमि dadāmi (I)
give बुद्धियोगम् buddhi yogam yoga of discrimination तम् tam that भेन yena by which साम् mām to me सप्तान्ति
upayānti come ते te they

To them, ever devout, worshipping Me with love,
I give the yoga of discrimination by which they come
to Me. 10

On trial sugar is found to taste sweet. Thought
is then bestowed to make varieties of sweetmeats with
it. This is the buddhi yoga pertaining to sugar.
The glory of God begins to dawn in the mind of the sadhaka who devoutly and persistently practises yoga. This initial experience gives impetus for further pursuit of yoga, leading to greater cognition of God’s glory. This is the buddhi yoga endowed with which the sadhaka gets to know more and yet more of the sweet sublimity of the Lord and be ardently drawn to Him. Devotion does this way wax with buddhi yoga.

A man confined within a dark room contacts a ray of light coming in through a tiny aperture. He gathers knowledge of light to that extent. But as the aperture increases in size his conception of light widens. A man in the broad day light has his own view of light. Similar to this, God reveals Himself in varying degrees and aspects according to the nature and attainments of His devotees. — Sri Ramakrishna

How does the buddhi yoga benefit the devotees?
The elucidation ensues:

तेशाम् एवं दत्तन कम्पार्थम् अनुकम्पाय भान्धार्थम् तमः।

त्रास्याम् ज्ञानाभाश्च ज्ञानोपेय भान्धार्थम् तमः।

तेशाम् एवं नृनं कम्पार्थम् अनुकम्पाय भान्धार्थम् तमः।

त्रास्याम् ज्ञानोपेय भान्धार्थम् तमः।

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The elucidation ensues:

तेशाम् एवं दत्तन कम्पार्थम् अनुकम्पाय भान्धार्थम् तमः।

त्रास्याम् ज्ञानाभाश्च ज्ञानोपेय भान्धार्थम् तमः।

तेशाम् एवं नृनं कम्पार्थम् अनुकम्पाय भान्धार्थम् तमः।

त्रास्याम् ज्ञानोपेय भान्धार्थम् तमः।
Out of pure compassion for them, dwelling in their hearts, I destroy the ignorance-born darkness, by the luminous lamp of wisdom.

The Lord's choosing to reside in the hearts of beings is His compassion. Because of His presence as Conscience, beings are prompted to seek what is good or at least what seems good. The lamp of wisdom that the Lord lights is constituted of divine components. Discrimination functions as the container of oil. The contentment coming from bhakti is the oil. The flame gets put out by foul air. But this flame is fed by the pure air of meditation on Iswara. Prajñā or the Awareness of the Self ensuing from the constant Brahmacārya, serves as the wick. The heart freed from all worries and anxieties is the lamp niche. A burning lamp runs the risk of being blown out by a gust. But a mind unaffected by attachment and aversion is the best wind-screen to this lamp. The unbroken consciousness of Iswara is the flame emanating from this lamp of wisdom, set up in the heart of the devotee. He beholds the Divine Presence within himself with the aid of this divine lamp.

The policeman patrolling at night carries a bull's-eye lantern with the aid of which he sees the persons loitering about. But this lantern does not disclose its carrier. If he, however, turns it on himself the others then come to know who he is. Likewise Iswara reveals Nature and its contents, but keeps Himself hidden. Nobody can see Him except through His grace and compassion.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Arjuna now recounts his understanding of the divine manifestations:
Bliss Evident in God's Glories—12-18

Arjuna uvāca

param brahma param dhāma
pavitram paramam bhavan

puruṣam sāsvatam divyam
ādidevam ajam vibhum

Arjuna said:

You are the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Abode, the Supreme Purifier, the Eternal, Divine Purusha, the Primeval Deity, the Unborn, the Omnipresent.

Param Brahman is the Supreme Brahman, Nirguna Nirupādhika Brahman, the Pure Consciousness.

Apara Brahman is Iswara, Saguna Brahman, the Reality with all attributes and glory.

Param Dhāma is the Substratum of everything manifest and unmanifest, the Supreme Abode.
āhus tvāṁ rśayāṁ sarve devaṁsir nāradas tathā
asito devalo vyāsāṁ svayam caiva braviṣī me

All the Rishis have thus acclaimed You, as also
the Deva Rishi Narada; so also Asita, Devala and
Vyasa; and now You Yourself say it to me. 13

The Rishi is one who has transcended the senses
and the intellect and contacted the Reality through
intuition.
The sun is immensely greater than the earth; but because of the distance it appears as a small disk. In this wise Iswara’s attributes are infinite, but we know very little of Him because of our ignorance.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The Lord being the Origin of everything:

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्य त्वं पुरुषोऽचम् ।
भूतभावन भूतेषा देवदेवं जगत्यते ॥ १५ ॥

śvayam eva 'tmanā 'tmānam vettha tvam puruṣottama ।
bhūtabhāvana bhūtesa devadeva jagatpate ॥

śvayam svayam thyself eva evo only ātmanā by thyself ātmanām ātmānam thyself वेत्य vettha (thou) knowest śvam tvam thou पुरुषेऽचम् puruṣottama O Purusha supreme भूतभावन bhūta bhāvana O source of beings
bhūtesa O Lord of beings devadeva O God of gods jagatpate O ruler of the world

Verily You alone know Yourself by Yourself, O Purushottama, O Source of beings, O Lord of beings, O God of gods, O Ruler of the world.

The individual souls are called Purushas out of courtesy because they temporarily occupy the Puri of the Prakriti and then they vacate it when they get mukti. But the Lord being the eternal Presiding Deity over the Prakriti, He is aptly eulogized as Purushottama.

Being the origin of all beings, He is Bhūta bhāvanaḥ.

Ruler of all beings that He is, the appellations Bhūtesa and Jagatpati are appropriate to Him.

His glory in its entirety is known to Him alone and to none else.

An individual took a diamond to the market-place for valuation and asked several shop-keepers about it. The brinjal seller opined that five baskets of brinjals might be bartered for that gem. The rice merchant viewed that two bags of rice could be liberally given in exchange for it. The draper in his turn held that a bale of linen might be unhesitatingly offered for that precious thing. Finally it was given to the diamond merchant who alone could value it at two lakhs of rupees! In this fashion the Lord is also beheld in varying ways according to the people's power of understanding. God's glories are verily unfathomable.

— Sri Ramakrishna
vaktum arhasya așeṣaṇa divyāḥ hy ātmavibhūtayaḥ
yābhir vibhūtibhir lokān imāṁ tvam vyāpya tiṣṭhasi

Vaktum to tell Arhasi (thou) shouldst
Aṣeṣaṇa without remainder Divyaḥ divine
Hū indeed Ātma vibhūtayaḥ thy glories
Yābhira by which Vibhūtibhir by glories
Lokān worlds Īmān these Śvam tvam thou
Vyāpya having pervaded Tīṣṭhasi existeth

Descend to tell without reserve of Your divine
Glories, by which glories You remain pervading all
These worlds.

A musician alone can bring out the fine touches
In melody. The strength of an elephant could be
demonstrated only by that stately animal turning
Out gigantic work. The wealth of a monarch can be
Well recounted by none but himself. It is only given
to an Incarnation of God to reveal all of His divine
Splendours and glories.

The revelation of God comes purely by His mercy. He is
The sun of knowledge. It is possible for a single ray of His to
Enlighten the whole world. We are therefore able to understand
One another and to acquire knowledge in all of its forms. More
Than all these, we get to know Him by His grace only.

—Śrī Ramakrishna

Kathāṃ vidyām aham yogīms tvām sadā paridhantayan
Kesu-kesu ca bhāveṣu cintya 'si bhagavan mayā
Kathāṁ kathāṁ how vidiyāṁ shall know āhams
aham I yogin O Yogin lām tvāṁ thee sada sada always pariĉintayant paricintayan meditating keṣu keṣu keṣu in what and what ca and bhāveṣu bhāveṣu aspects cintyaḥ to be thought of āsī (thou) art bhagavan O blessed Lord sava maya by me

How may I know You, O Yogin, by constant meditation? In what various aspects are You, O Lord, to be thought of by me?

How shall my extrovert mind cognize Your presence in things objective? The sight of the toys of the child stirs up the thought of that child in the mother: May I, in that manner, have the means to revel in You through the things of the world?

As the toy fruits and toy elephant remind one of the true fruits and elephant, the symbols and images remind the devotee of the eternal and formless God.

—Sri Ramakrishna

vistareṇaṁ yogyam vibhūtim ca janārdanaṁ
bhūyāṁ kathaya tṛptir hi śṛvataṁ nā 'sti me 'mrtam

vistareṇa in detail ātmāṁ thy yogam yoga vishvāṁ vibhūtim glory ca and janārdanaṁ janārdana O Janardana Bhūyāṁ again kathaya tell bhūyāṁ again kathaya tell tṛptih contentment hī for bhūyāṁ śṛvataṁ (of) hearing na not ātī is me of me abhūtah nectar
Tell me again in detail, O Janardana, of Your yoga powers and attributes; for I am not satiated with hearing Your life-infusing words.

He is Janardana who is adored by people both for earthly enjoyments and for emancipation. Yoga here indicates the power to know and handle things properly. They are the attributes of God which spontaneously remind man of Him. Absorption in the attributes of God is as good as the absorption in Him. While matters earthy are satiating, matters Godly are never so. The Jivaatman grows increasingy in divinity as he dwells on the divine attributes of the Paramatman.

The relationship between Iswara and Jivaatman is like that between magnet and iron.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The Vibhutis Defined — 19 40

श्री भगवानुवाच

हन्ते कथविच्यांमि दिव्या धातविभूतयः ।
प्राधान्यतः कुर्भेष नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥ १९ ।

हन्ते कथा-प्रतिपाद्य दिव्या हि भास्मा वि भूम तथा ।
प्राधान्यत हुस्रैत्र न भगु ति हन्त तिस्तरस्य मे ॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca

hanta te kathayisyāmī divyā hy ātmavibhūtayah ।
prādhāanyakah kuruśresṭha nā 'styanto vistarasya me ॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca Śrī Bhagavān said

हन्त हंता नोव, वे ते तो थे कथविच्यांमि

kathayisyāmī (I) will declare दिव्या दिव्याः divine हि

hi indeed धातविभूतयं आत्मा vibhūtayah my glories

80–35
The Blessed Lord said:

Very well! I shall now tell you My divine glories according to their prominence, O best of the Kurus; there is no end to the details of My manifestation. 19

The splendours in Nature are all verily the attributes of Iswara. It is impossible for Iswara Himself to recount them all. A few specimens only can be mentioned; His infinitude may be inferred from them.

To define God from scriptural knowledge is like defining the holy city of Banaras after getting an idea of it from the map.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The truth about the universe has to be known at the outset. That is:—

अहमात्मम गुडाकेश सर्वभूताःशस्यस्यतः ।
अहमादिदिव मयं च भूतानामसः एव च ॥ २०

aham ātmā gūḍākesa sarva bhūtāsavyasthitah ।
aham ādiś ca madhyam ca bhūtānāṁ anta eva ca ॥

aham ātmā the Self gūḍākesa O Gudakesa sarva bhūta āsavyasthitah seated in the hearts of all beings āham I the beginning ca and madhyam the middle ca and bhūtānāṁ bhūtānāṁ of (all) beings anta the end ca and eva even ca and
I am the Self, O Gudakesa, seated in the hearts of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of all beings.

The Lord is the innermost Self in all beings, which are all His gross manifestation. The effect is nothing but the cause in another form. The Lord is the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe. Gudakesa is he who has conquered sleep. The one awakened in the Self can cognize the fact that Iswara is putting on the appearance of the visible universe.

It is my Cosmic Mother who has become everything. She of omnipotence has become the universe and the beings in it. She reveals Herself as the body, the intellect, the virtuous path and the spiritual pursuit. Sakti and Brahman are one. In the manifest state She is Sakti and in the absolute state, Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

आदित्यानामः विष्णुव्योंतियां रविरंशुमानः ।
मरीचिर्मर्तलामस्वि नक्षत्राणामहः शस्ति ॥ २१
आदित्यानाम् बहम् विष्णु ज्योतिः आम् रवि अभ्रा-मान् ।
मरीचि सहस्र-आम् अस-भि नक्षत्राणाम् बहम् शस्ति ॥

ādityānām aham visnur jyotisām ravih amśumān ।
māricir marutām asmi naksatramān aham sāstī ॥

आदित्यानाम् । आदित्यानाम् among the Adityas बहम्
aham I viṣṇu Visnur Jyotisām amśumān among
lights रवि ravih the sun अभ्रा-मान् amśumān radiant मरीचि
māricir Marichi मरुतां marutām of the Maruts (winds)
असि asmi (I) am नक्षत्राणाम् naksatrānam among the
stars बहम् aham I शस्ती sāstī the moon
Of the Adityas I am Vishnu; of the luminaries, the radiant Sun; I am Marichi of the Maruts; of the asterisms the Moon am I.

Though all flowers, fruits and crops come from the same land, the best among them are selected for exhibition. The whole of the manifested universe is the glory of Iswara; but the prominent among them, those that arrest the attention of the beholder, are selectively mentioned as the vibhūtis, or the attributes of Iswara.

The same Aditya assumes twelve names during the twelve months. These names commencing from April are Amsu, Dhata, Indra, Aryama, Vivasva, Bhaga, Parjanya, Dvashta, Mitra, Vishnu, Varna and Pusha. The Aditya of January is called Vishnu, who is very much liked by people for his commencing his course towards the summer solstice progressively dispelling the pinching cold of winter.

In the Vishnu Sahasranama the 258th name is Vishnu attributed to the sun god traversing the universe. Vishnu Himself has become Suryanarayana.

Among the forty-nine Maruts or wind gods Marichi is the foremost. The wind causes immense good to the world. The best of the wind gods is therefore identified with Iswara.

The luminary of the day is the sun. The foremost among the luminaries at night is the moon. These two heavenly bodies are therefore viewed with veneration as the manifest representatives of Iswara.
Of the Vedas I am the Saman; I am Vasava among the Devas, of the senses I am the mind and among living beings I am consciousness.

One of the names attributed to Vishnu is Sāmaga, which means the chanter of the Sama Veda. Among the four Vedas, Saman is the one best set to music. It is therefore enchanting even to those who cannot understand it. Thought of God comes to all who chant or hear it. It is verily the glory of God.

Vasava is another name of Indra, the lord of the Devas. By sheer merit the deserving ones rise to this position. And all merits are the glories of God.

The functioning of all the five senses becomes purposeless when the mind wanders away from them. The ways of the absent-minded man verify this position very clearly. Mind being the recorder
of all the sensations, it is reckoned as an attribute of the Lord.

The difference between the living and the dead is in the presence or otherwise of consciousness. The more evolved the being, the clearer is the consciousness. Ultimately the Pure Consciousness gets equated with God.

As wealth distinguishes the wealthy man, these glories reveal the Lord.

रुद्राणां शांकराशास्तिम विचेशो यक्षरक्षसाम्।
वसुनाम पावकशास्तिम मेरुः शिखरिणामहम्॥ २३॥

रुद्राणांम शांकराशास्तिम विचेशो यक्षरक्षसाम्।
वसुनाम पावकशास्तिम मेरुः शिखरिणाम हाम्॥

rudpānām śāṁkaraś ca 'smi vīteśo yaksaraktasām |
vasnām pāvakas cā 'smi merūḥ sikhārinām aham ॥

रुद्राणाम rudpānām among the Rudras शंकर: śāṁkaraḥ
Sankara ca and अस्मि asmi (I) am विचेशः vīteśaḥ
Vittesa or Kubera यक्षरक्षसाम yaksaraktasām among
Yakshas and Rakshasas vasunām among Vasus
पावक: pāvakāḥ Pavaka ca and अस्मि asmi (I) am मेरुः
merūḥ Meru शिखरिणाम sikhārinām of mountains अहम्
aham ॥

Of the Rudras I am Sankara, of the Yakshas and
Rakshasas I am Kubera. Of the Vasus I am Pavaka
and of mountains I am Meru.

Rudras are eleven in number. Puranas are not
all agreed in naming them. But their wide accepted
names are Ajaikapad, Ahirbudhnya, Virabhadra,
Girisa, Sankara, Aparajita, Hara, Ankaraka, Pinaki,
Bhaga and Sambhu. The cosmic function of the Rudras is to make men cry, true to the etymological meaning of this word. Crying of people in particular is always for gain either in Preyas or Sreyas. The characteristic of the Rudras is to make them cry for Sreyas. Sankara among these eleven is the doer of good as his name indicates. Through distress, he takes the sadhakas direct Godward Spiritual anguish purifies people very quickly.

Yakshas and Rakshasas belong to the celestials. The former of these two groups are very fond of acquiring wealth and the latter of hoarding it. Both of these battalions serve their king Kubera, the lord of fabulous wealth. Whoever among men, strives for, on right lines, and saves money becomes a Kubera in his own way. Though of a transitory nature, wealth wields power in its own way and is therefore a glory of God.

Vasus are eight in number. They are land, water, fire, air, ether, moon, sun and star, constituting the gross structure of Nature. Of these, Pavaka or fire assumes various degrees of warmth and sustains life. The Lord therefore mentions it as His special manifestation.

The golden Mount Meru is believed to be the axis round which all the heavenly bodies rotate. But it is an allegorical representation of the brahma danda or the spinal cord in the human structure. The science of Yoga extols it as the golden lustrous sushumna from which all forms of sensation emanate. It is consciousness that gives it its brilliance. As the
Devas resort to the Mount Meru of mythological fame, the senses and prāṇa in the human tabernacle are all adhering to the spinal cord. The Lord therefore speaks of it as His special manifestation.

पुरोधसाम् च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ वृहस्पतिम्
सेनानीनामः स्कन्दः सरसामहिम सागरः

पुरोधसाम् च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ वृहस्पतिम्
सेनानीनामः आहम् स्कन्दः सरसाम अस्मि सागरः

purodhasāmca mukhyam mām viddhi pārtha O Partha vṛhspatim senānīnām aham skandaḥ sarasām asmi sāgaraḥ

purodhasām among the household priests च ca among मुख्यम mukhyam the chief शाम् mām me विद्धि viddhi know पार्थ pārtha O Partha वृहस्पतिम् bṛhaspatim Brihaspati सेनानीनाम senānīnām among generals आहम् aham I स्कन्दः skandaḥ Skanda sarasām among lakes अस्मि asmi (I) am सागरः sāgaraḥ the ocean

Of priests, O Partha, know Me to be the chief, Brihaspati; of generals I am Skanda and of bodies of water I am the ocean.

The function of the priest is to administer ritualistic worship and a sanctified code of conduct among people. Brihaspati discharges this sacred duty among the Devas and so he is a deity of great eminence. Seekers of learning and wisdom pay homage to Brihaspati. It is but proper to behold him as endowed with the attributes of Iswara.

Godhead can be reached only through right understanding and right execution. These two divine qualities are personified as Ganesa and Skanda, the sons of Siva. His second son, Skanda is the
best among the generalissimos leading Siva’s hosts to victory over the demons. It is but appropriate that the Lord claims this general as His own embodiment.

The ocean suggests the infinitude of the Lord. Merging the mind in its expanse is a form of the worship of the Almighty.

maharsinām bhṛghur aham girām asmy ekam aksaram yajñānām japa-yajñāḥ ‘asti sthāvarānām himālayaḥ

maharsinām maharsinām among the great Rishis bhṛghur Bhrigu abhim aham I nirām girām among words asmi (I) am aksaram syllable yajñānām among sacrifices japa yajñāḥ the sacrifice of silent repetition asmi (I) am sthāvarānām among immovable things himālaya Himalaya

Of the great Rishis I am Bhrigu; of utterances I am the monosyllable “Om”. Of Yajnas I am japa-yajna and of unmoving things, the Himalaya.

Among the Rishis born of the mind of Iswara, Bhrigu is ever in the highest superconscious plane. So the Lord’s glory is revealed best through him.

“Om” is the most sacred sound symbol of Iswara. Constant utterance of this monosyllable is a sure means to reach Divinity. It is equivalent to Iswara.
Yajna is the act of the Jivatman making himself over to the Paramatman. The easiest and the most potent of all yajnas is the Japa-yajna. Constant mental repetition of the Lord’s name is Japa-yajna. It can be performed at any time and in the midst of any other activity. It involves no harm or hindrance to anybody. The Lord is present where Japa-yajna takes place.

The Vegetable kingdom is classified as the un-moving beings. They are stationary lives, growing and thriving in the same place. Hills and mountains are held as imbued with dormant life. They are therefore classified with the vegetable kingdom. Among the mountains the Himalaya is the greatest, striking wonder on its beholder. The glory of God is patent in it.

अश्वत्थ: सर्वदुःखशाणां देवर्षों च नारदः ।
गन्धर्वर्षों चितरथं सिद्धान्त कपिलो मुनि: ॥ २६

अश्वत्थ: सर्वदुःखशाणां देवर्षों च नारदः ।
गन्धर्वर्षों चितरथं सिद्धान्त कपिलो मुनि: ॥

The trees asvatthāh sarvavrksānāṁ devarṣiṁ ca nāradaḥ ।
gandharvānāṁ citrarathāh siddhānāṁ kapilo muniḥ ॥

Of all trees I am Asvattha; of Deva Rishis I am Narada; of the Gandharvas I am Chitraratha and of the Siddhas I am the Muni Kapila.
Asvattha is the peepul or the holy fig tree. It yields no edible fruit and nothing in this tree is in any way useful to man. Still it has ever been associated with the worship of the Divine. Any thought of this tree brings in its train ideas and ideals all connected with God. It is, for this reason, recognized as His vibhūti.

The spiritually enlightened ones are called the Rishis. Not only from among men, but also from among the Devas. Rishis have sprung up. Among the Deva Rishis the sage Narada is the foremost. He constantly sings the glory of God. In addition to this he is famous for setting up strife and quarrels which end as blessings in disguise. Contact with Narada amounts to contact with God Himself. He is therefore the glory of God.

The Gandharvas are celestials with several good and useful traits. They are invoked to safeguard the intoxicating Soma juice associated with some forms of Yajnas. They are expert physicians and musicians. They are given to excessive lust and are for this reason invoked in wedlocks. The gamblers seek the aid of the Gandharvas, who are inordinately fond of this art. The Vedas set to tune are expounded by these celestials. At times they play the role of the preceptors to the Rishis, in this respect. Chitraratha being the king of these heavenly beings, it is proper that the Lord claims him as a divine attribute of His.

They are called Siddhas who are endowed from birth onwards with righteousness, wisdom, dispas-
sion and overlordship. A Muni is he who is constantly established in Japa-yajna. Sage Kapila is one endowed with all these virtues. He is the author of the Samkhya system of philosophy. Further he is held to be an incarnation of Vishnu. It is but natural that the Lord should claim him as His own.

उच्छेष्टसमधानां विद्धि मामस्तयोज्वम्।
पैरावतेण जेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपसम्॥ २७

उच्छेष्टस्त्रयानां विद्धि माम स्त्रयानुमानम्।
पैरावतेण गज़-इज्ञानाम् नराणां च नर-धिपतिसम्॥

uccaihśravasam asvānāṁ viddhi māṁ amṛtodbhavam।
airāvatam gajendrānāṁ narāṇāṁ ca narādhīpam॥

उच्छेष्ट समधान उच्छेष्टसमधानां Ucchaisravas among horses विद्धि viddhi know माम् mām me अम्रतोज्वम् amṛtodbhavam born of nectar पैरावतेण airavatam Airavata गजेज्ञानाम् gajendrānāṁ among lordly elephants narāṇāṁ among men च ca and नराधिपस samu narādhīpam the king

Of horses, know Me to be the nectar-born Ucchaisravas; of lordly elephants, Airavata and of men, the monarch. 27

Mythology speaks elaborately of the churning of the ocean of milk by Devas and Asuras to get nectar from it. The horse Ucchaisravas and the elephant Airavata along with several other high beings and great things came out of that unique undertaking. But this event is an allegorical statement of the eternal process of the good and bad people jointly churning the ocean of life to obtain happiness through wealth, learning and prosperity.
A monarch born with royal excellence is regarded as a spark of the divinity come in the human form. The best of the horses, the best of the elephants and the best of the human are indeed the manifestations of the divine glory of the Lord.

आयुधानामें वज्र धनुर्णामसिस कामधुक्स।
प्रजनशासिस कन्दर्पाः सर्पाणामसिस वालुकि॥ २८

Āyudhānām aham vajram dhenūnām asmi kāmadhuk ।
prajanaś ca 'smi kandarpaḥ sarpānām asmi vāsukiḥ ॥

Āyudhānām āyudhānām among weapons vaham aham I
vajram the thunderbolt dhenūnām among
cows asmī asmi (I) am kāmadhuk kāmadhuk Kamadhuk
(Surabhi) the heavenly cow which yields all desires
prajanaḥ the progenitor ca and asmī asmi
(I) am kandarpa kandarpa Kamadev sarpaṇām among serpents asmī asmi (I) am vāsukiṁ
vāsukiḥ Vasuki.

Of weapons I am the thunderbolt; of cows I am
Kamadhuk; I am Kandarpa of the progenitors; of
serpents I am Vasuki.

Mace and discus are the wonted weapons of
Sriman Narayana. Instead of referring to these
celebrated weapons, the Lord has purposely made
mention of Vajra or the thunderbolt. The former
weapons are eternally part and parcel of His innate
being. Whereas Vajra is a manufactured one for a
set purpose. Indra, the lord of the Devas found it
impossible to vanquish the invincible Vṛtrasura.
except with the weapon of Vajra. But where on earth or in heaven could the material be found to achieve this great end? The material for the manufacture of this all powerful arm is the bones of a sage who is all purity, all austerity and all perfection, voluntarily given to this cause of universal welfare. Indra found the fulfilment of all of these conditions in the sage Dadhichi. On Indra's presenting his case, the sage sat in Samādhi and gave up the body for the conquest of evil. The thunderbolt could be made because of the sacrifice of Dadhichi. Manufacture of Vajrāyudha is the ideal ever held out to India in particular and humanity in general, to combat wickedness. The willing self-sacrifice of a large number of holy men and women for public welfare is what is wanted. This holy act is allegorically put as the weapon of Vajra. The Lord is present where the weapon of Vajra is present.

Kamadhuk or the milch cow of desire is one of the rare products from the churning of the ocean of milk already mentioned. This cow has the power to supply all the requirements in life. Tradition has it that the Rishi Vasishtha was never in want because of the profuse supply made by this divine cow. Mention is made in chapter three, stanza ten that a willing and cheerful mind and the endeavours on right lines constitute this milch cow of desire. In plain words, an exuberant mind and wholesome ventures are indeed the glories of God.

Kandarpa is Cupid—the personification of the progenitive instinct. Progeny is possible because
of this urge in beings. It is not to be condemned as base but revered as divine in origin. The Lord puts it to us that this urge is His divine attribute.

The serpent is a venomous creature. All the same it is associated with Iswara in all of His forms. It is the symbol of Sakti, the Cosmic Energy. In man the dormant power is called the Kundalini Sakti or the coiled up energy symbolized as serpent power. Happiness and misery, life and death are both expressions of energy. The negative expression is the poison in the snake Vasuki the poisonous snake was utilized as the rope to rotate the Mount Meru in the act of churning the ocean. The Lord speaks of this snake as His own energy.

अनन्तशा सि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम्।
पित्रणामसाता चासि यमः सम्यमतामहम्। ॥ २९ ॥

अनन्तवरुणां च असि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम्।
पित्रणाम सातां च असि यमः सम्यमतामहम्।

anantas ca 'smi nāgānam varuno yādasām aham
pitṛnāṁ aryamā ca 'smi yamah samyamatām aham

अनन्त Anantah Ananta ca ca and असि asmi (I) am
नागानाम nāgānam among Nagas varūṇaḥ Varuna
यादसाम yādasām among water-deities aham I

Of the Nagas I am Ananta; of the water-deities I am Varuna. Of the Pitrus I am Aryama; of controllers I am Yama.
The Nagas are non-poisonous snakes. Ananta among them is conceived of or represented as five-headed. This is a symbol of the Prakriti being made up of the five elements. Because the Lord is resting on Ananta, He speaks of it as His vibhūti.

Varuna is one of the Vedic deities. He has his jurisdiction on earth and in heaven. He is noted for intelligence. With the march of time he associates himself with the water-deities and becomes their king; as such he is also one of the glories of the Lord.

Pitrus are the departed ancestors. The very first to enter the world of the manes is Aryama and so he is the presiding deity over them. All those who pay homage to their departed ancestors pray to Aryama as well. This way he becomes the vibhūti of the Lord.

The practice of self-control is called yama, in the science of Yoga. Punishment in the form of pain is inflicted on one who does not practise self-control. And this is the experience of one and all. The lord of death is called Yama. He does not deviate an iota in his deal of justice. Life and death are meted out by Yama to beings according to their desert. He is therefore the best among the controllers. This merit comes to Yama from Iswara.
praḥlādasya śmi dāityāṇāṁ kālāḥ kalayātāṁ aham
mṛgāṇāṁ ca mṛgendro 'ham vainateyas ca paksināṁ

prasād: praḥlādasya Prahlada ca and asmi
(1) am dāityāṇāṁ among Daityas kālāḥ
time kālayātāṁ among reckoners aham
1 mṛgāṇāṁ among beasts ca and mṛgendro
mṛgendraḥ the lord of beasts (lion) aham
vainateyaḥ son of Vinata, Garuda ca and
paksināṁ among birds

Of the Daityas I am Prahlada and of reckoners
I am Time; of beasts I am the lord of beasts, and
Vainateya of birds.

The Daityas were the sworn enemies of the
Devas. Prahlada was the son of Hiranyakasipu, the
king of those Titans. From birth onwards Prahlada
showed extreme devotion to the Lord Vishnu, which
act of his ran counter to the plan and design of his
father. Prahlada is the model of the Bhaktas.
Proof is found in him of the fact that great ones are
sometimes born of the low. It is befitting that he is
an attribute of Iswara.

Time is the great and unfailling recorder of the
appearance, stay and disappearance of the things
and beings in the universe. That it is identified with
Iswara is therefore appropriate.

The lion is the lord of beasts. He is majestic
and magnanimous in his own way. Because of his
prowess he has become the vehicle of the Cosmic
Mother. The glory of the Lord does indeed reveal
itself in this beast.
Vainateya is the son of Vinata. This is another name for Garuda who, being the vehicle of Sri Vishnu, may be equated with Him.

पचनः पवतामसि रामः सत्यसुतावहसि।
झयाणां मकरावसि स्रोतसामसि जाह्नवी। II 31

पचनः पवताम असु-मि रामः शर्त-पृतावहसि।
झयाणाम सकरः च असु-मि स्रोतसाम असु-मि जाह्नवी। II

pavanah pavatam asmi ramaḥ sattrabhṛtām aham
jhāsānām makaras cā 'smi srotasām asmi jāhnavi II

पचनः: pavanah the wind pavatam among purifiers असि asmi (I) am राम: ramaḥ Rama śatya-suttāmaḥ satra bhṛtām among wielders of weapons (warriors) अहम aham I jhayānām jhāsānām among fishes सकर: makaraḥ Makara (shark) च ca and असि asmi (I) am srotasām among streams असि asmi (I) am jāhnavi jāhnavi the Ganges

Of purifiers I am the wind; of the wielders of weapon I am Rama. Of fishes I am the shark, and of rivers I am the Ganges.

All the four elements—earth, water, fire and air—are in fact purifiers. Among them air is all pervading and doing this great work very effectively. It is capable of purifying earth, water and fire too. It makes fire burn; it converts impure water into vapour and reinstates it as pure rain water. The smell produced by earth and earthly things is purified and made smell-less by air. The glory of the Lord reveals itself through this great purifier.

Unarmed countries and under-armed countries are exposed to intrusion and invasion. In this
respect Rama has a lesson to teach to countries and governments. Weapon is a power for good or for bad. Rama’s weapon was the deadliest in those days, but he never abused it. Evil would have ensued if he had ever abused it. Whenever he put his weapon to action, good only came out of it. To be well armed and to make good and timely use of the arm is the lesson that Rama teaches kings and rulers. Any deviation from his teaching is not for public safety. Rama is an Incarnation of God, and Krishna identifies Himself with Him.

Among fishes the shark is most powerful. It has derived that power from God’s cosmic energy.

Ganges is also known as Jahnavi because of her having become the daughter of the sage Jahnu. When Bhagiratha was escorting the Ganga, she inundated the sacrificial field of the sage Jahnu, who became annoyed at her intrusion and swallowed her up. But at the supplication of Bhagiratha the sage permitted the river to come out of his ear. That way she became Jahnavi. Among rivers Ganges is the most sacred. Her water bottled for any length of time does not putrefy. She is venerated as having come from the head of Siva. Many sants and sages have performed austerity on the banks of this river. She has a sanctifying influence on the sadhakas. This divinity in her is derived from the Lord.
sargaṇām adir antas ca madhyām cai 'vā 'ham arjuna
adhyātma vidyā vidyānāṁ vāḍaḥ pravadatām aham

सर्गाणां सर्गाणां among creations शास्त्रः adiḥ the
beginning अन्तः antaḥ the end च ca and सम्बन्धः madhyām
the middle च ca and एव eva also अहम् aham I अर्जुन
arjuna O Arjuna ज्ञातसविद्या adhyātma vidyā the science
of Self विद्यानां vidyānāṁ among sciences वाधः vāḍaḥ
logic मज्यताम् pravadatām among controversialists अहम्
aham I

Of created things I am the beginning and the
end and also the middle, O Arjuna. Of the sciences
I am the science of the Self; of those who debate I am
the reason.

In the twentieth stanza of this chapter the Lord
states that He is the beginning, the middle and also
the end of beings. Here He states that the same is
the case in regard to the elements as well. While
making an ornament, while maintaining it as such
and while melting it back to the original state, gold
the material cause of it, remains ever the same. In
this way Iswara the root cause of the universe is
ever Himself even while projecting and preserving it.

The science of the Self is Atma vidyā or Brahma
vidyā. Ignorance vanishes when Brahman is known.
The delusion of birth and death disappears; all
problems get solved. The knower of Brahman
becomes Brahman. There is no science superior to
this. The Lord is Himself this Atma vidyā.

Reason is the most useful instrument possessed
by man for enquiry into the real and the non-real,
into truth and its opposite. Brushing aside all
prejudices and predispositions, if reason be faithfully followed it takes the inquirer up to the gateway of intuition. Pure reason is a glory come from God.

Know the One that is the root of everything. Then truth becomes self-evident to you. Put the number one first and then add the zeros to it, this done, the zeros have their value. Without the number one, they are valueless. The many get their values from the original number one. Iswara is the number one, the universe and the beings are the zeros appended to it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

अक्षराणामकारोऽसि इन्द्रः सामासिकस्य च
अहंमेवाश्च भारी विश्वजीविः स: ॥ २३ ॥

अहंकारः अत्र-मि इन्द्र सामासिकस्य च ॥
अहं कष्म एव अ-कष्म भारः अहम् विश्व-मूखः ॥

aksarānāṁ akāra 'smi dvandvaḥ sāmāsikasya ca ।
aham eva 'ksayaḥ kālo dhātā 'ham visvatomukhaḥ ॥

अक्षराणाम् aksarānām among letters अकारः akārah the letter A अस्मि asmi (I) am इन्द्रः dvandvaḥ the dual सामासिकस्य sāmāsikasya among all compounds च ca and अहम् aham I एव eva verily अक्षयः aksayaḥ the in-exhaustible or everlasting कालः kālaḥ time धाता dhātā the dispenser अहम् aham I चित्रवत्तोऽसि visvatomukhaḥ the all-faced

Of letters I am the letter A, and of word-compounds I am the dual (Dvandva). I am verily the inexhaustible Time. I am the Dispenser facing everywhere.

Brahman, the Unmanifest Reality, manifests Itself as Nāda Brahman or Sound Reality. The universe is the gross manifestation of Sound Reality. A thing in the world is called pada-artha which
means word and its meaning. The homogeneous sum total of the sound in the Cosmos is "Om." The very first phase of this monosyllable is the letter A, the modifications of which form the other letters. In all languages A is the first letter and it is rightly equated with Brahman.

Word-compounds in Samskrit conform to certain principles. While compounding themselves when two words retain equal importance they are called the dual or dvandva. For example, Rama and Krishna together form Ramakrishna, both the personalities maintaining their individualities.

A moment, an hour, a day, a year—divisions of time such as these have their beginnings and ends. But time in itself is beginningless and endless, and it is equated with God who is called Mahākāla.

The Lord Himself has become the multitudinous beings, each of them enjoying the fruits of its own karma. In this way the Lord is the Dispenser. Because of His being present everywhere as the countless individualities, He is termed as facing everywhere. This fact is self-evident in Nature.

mrtyuh sarvaharas ca 'ham udbhavaḥ ca bhaviṣyatām kirtiḥ srir vak ca nārtām smṛtir medhā dhṛtiḥ kṣamā

mrtyuh death sarbhṛt sarvaharaḥ all-devouring ca and āham I kṛṣṇa udbhavaḥ the prosperity
ca and भविष्यताम bhaviṣyatām of those who are to be prosperous कीति kītih fame श्री śrī prosperity वाक vāk speech च ca and नारिणाम् nārīṇām of the feminine स्मृति: smṛtiḥ the memory नेवा medhā intelligence धृति: dhṛtiḥ firmness श्रम kṣamā forgiveness

And I am the all-devouring Death. I am the prosperity of those who are to be prosperous; and of female qualities I am Fame, Fortune, Speech, Memory, Intelligence, Constancy and Forbearance. 34

Life and death are the obverse and reverse of existence. To the born, death is certain. The Lord is as much the force of destruction as He is of creation.

As the rain-bearing clouds are attracted to the verdure of forests, the grace of the Lord in the form of prosperity comes to those who have made themselves worthy of it.

Fame, fortune, speech, memory, intelligence; constancy and forbearance are termed female qualities because of their grace and tenderness. Wherever these excellences are found in exuberance, there the presence of the divine is prominent.

It is the Cosmic Mother that reveals Brahman. Without the Vidya maya or revealing power of the Mother, who can comprehend Brahman? Without knowing the Sakti, Iswara cannot be known.

—Sri Ramakrishna
bhatsāma tathā sāmnāṁ gāyatraṁ chandasāṁ aham |
māsāṁm margasirsaṁ 'ham ṛtvāṁ kusumākaraṁ ||

ब्रह्मसाम bhatsāma Brihatsama तथा tathā also सामनाम्
sāmnāṁ among Sama hymns गाजी, gāyatri Gayatri
chandasāṁ among metres अहम् aham I मातानाम्
māsāṁ among months सागी, margasirsaḥ Margasirsha अहम् aham I अतुलाम् ṛtvāṁ among seasons
cusumākaraṁ kusumākaraḥ the flowery season

Of the Saman hymns I am the Brihat-Saman; of
metres I am Gayatri. Of months I am Margasirsha
and of seasons I am the flowery spring. 35

Music is one of the means to approach God.
Among the Vedas, the Saman abounds with hymns
set to music. Both Siva and Narayana are said to
be very fond of the Saman hymns. Ravana the
Demon pleased Siva by singing the Saman. In this
Veda again that portion known as the Brihat-Saman
is the best. The combination of music and sublime
matter have made it so.

Metre is characteristic of poetry. The Vedas
contain various types of metres, the Gayatri metre
among them being the foremost. Adoration to the
several Deities comes in the forms of their respec-
tive Gayatri. The Devi Gayatri, the Rudra Gayatri,
the Brahma Gayatri, the Paramahamsa Gayatri and
several other Gayatris may be found in the Vedas.

There is a special merit in the month of Marga-
sirsha. The time before the sun-rise is called the
Brahma-muhārtam, the most favourable time for
spiritual practices. An earthly year is a day for the
Devas. Margasirsha is the month in December-
January in which the *Brähma-muhūrtam* is contained. The worship of God done in this month has a salutary effect on the mind. The Lord therefore extols this month as a special attribute of His.

The life of the vegetable kingdom and that of the others too to some extent, get suspended in the snowy winter; but in the spring they get reanimated. Men and beings beam with fresh life and activities. So the Lord describes Himself as the Vasanta or the flowery spring among the seasons.

\[ \text{दृश्वे चलयतामिसि तेजस्तेजस्विनिमहम्} \]
\[ \text{जयोदिसि व्यवसायोदिसि सत्त्व सत्त्ववतामहम्} \]
\[ २६ \]
\[ \text{द्युतम् चलयताम् अस्मि तेजस तेजस्विनिम् अहम्} \]
\[ \text{जयो अस्मि व्यवसायो अस्मि सत्त्वम् सत्त्ववताम् अहम्} \]

*dyūtam chalayatāṁ asmi tejas tejasvināṁ aham*
*jayo 'sми vyavasāyo 'sми sattvaṁ sattvatām aham*

"*dyūtaṁ* the gambling *chalayatāṁ* of the fraudulent *āsмi* (I am) तेजः *tejaḥ* splendour तेजस्विनः *tejasvināṁ* of the splendid *aहम* (I am) जयः *jayah* victory *āsмi* (I am) व्यवसायः *vyavasāyah* effort *āsмi* (I am) सत्त्वः *sattvaṁ* the goodness सत्त्ववताः *sattvatāṁ* of the good *aहम* *aham*

I am the gambling of the fraudulent, I am the splendour of the splendid; I am victory; I am effort; I am the goodness of the good.

Robbery, forgery, fixing undue price on things, passing imitation articles as genuine—acts of these kinds are all fraudulent. Gambling also comes under this category. But peoples and governments
approve some forms of gambling as lawful. Betting for example on horses in a race is accepted as lawful. Gambling with dice was approved as legal during the Mahabharata days. Deceptions other than the approved gambling cannot be openly practised. In an open assembly Pandavas and Kauravas gambled with dice in which they staked their empire and everything else.

Some forms of gambling require the use of intelligence on which their success depends. Intelligence in all forms comes from Iswara. As the light of a lamp is equally useful for forgery and for pious reading, the discernment derived from the Cosmic Intelligence is available both for noble and ignoble purposes. As the light of the lamp is not in anyway affected by the abuse the forgerer makes of it, the Cosmic Intelligence which is the Lord is not tainted by the misuse the gambler makes of It. His intelligence also gets its light from the Cosmic Intelligence. This fact is explained by the Lord.

*Tejas* is the original word for splendour. The brightness that is evident on the physique as a result of excellent health, sense-control and continence is termed as *Tejas*. Victory consists of the elimination of the bad and the establishment of the good.

*Vyavasāya* is effort to execute the good and useful undertaking with all perseverance. It leads to noble and great achievements. It is effort again that takes man to the presence of the Lord.

*Sattva* is here spoken of as the good. Though all the three Gunas are the constituents of the
Prakriti, the sattva alone among them takes one Godward.

Of the Vrishnis I am Vasudeva; of the Pandavas, Dhananjaya; of the sages I am Vyasa and of the seers I am Usana the seer.

The Yadavas had come of Vrishni race; so they were called Vrishnis. Krishna was the son of Vasudeva and so He is called Vāsudeva. That He is the best among the Yadavas is evident.

Arjuna is called Dhananjaya because he had claimed the hoarded up treasures of several kings and utilized them all for good purposes. There is a purpose in the Lord saying that He is Arjuna and not Yudhishthira among the Pandavas. He reminds Arjuna that he has no individuality apart from the Lord. This is the position of all the beings. When man comes to know of it, he would be rid of conceit and self-importance.
A Muni is he who turns his mind within and realizes divinity there. The sage Vyasa is one who has in this way become a perfect Jnani. He is also renowned as Veda Vyasa and Badarayana. Yet other names by which he is distinguished are Dvaipayana and Krishna-dvaipayana. This last name came to him because of his dark complexion. He was born of Satyavati to Parasara. The Vedas were compiled by him and the Vedanta Sutras composed by him. The Mahabharata and the eighteen celebrated Puranas were all written by him. He is the father of Suka, the born Brahma-Jnani. It is no wonder he is viewed as an incarnation of Vishnu.

He who had an intuitive knowledge of things was a Kavi according to the ancient lore. But latterly a poet is called Kavi. Usana Kavi was a famous figure. He was also known as Sukra. He had the psychic power to bring the dead to life. Because of the training he imparted to the Asuras, they became very powerful.

dandho damayatam asmi nityr asmi jigitatam
maunam cai 'vah 'smi guhyanam jnanam jnanavatam
aham

dandha the sceptre damayatam among punishers asmi (I) am niti statesmanship jigitatam among those who
seek victory सीतम् maunam silence च ca and एव eva also अर्थम् asmi (I) am गुह्यानाम् guhyānām among secrets शान्तम् jñānam the knowledge शान्तवताम् jñānavatām among the knowers अहम् aham I

Of punishers I am the sceptre; of those that seek victory I am statesmanship; and of secrets I am also silence; and I am the wisdom of the wise. 38

The duty of the monarch is to mete out just punishment to the offender. The sceptre is the symbol of the measured punishment and justice. This done, the accused himself feels that he has been justly handled. Not only does this act reform the convict, but it is also a lesson to the common man. Punishment is therefore the grace of the Lord come in this shape. It may be mentioned here that diseases and ailments are the punishments awarded by Nature for known and unknown irregularities in life. Not only does Iswara function as Yama, He also functions as the sceptre.

Neeti is rendered here as statesmanship. Right attitude, right relationship and right proceedings are all born of Neeti. Any victory won by wrong method will not be lasting; it will only lead to new complications. Noble means alone lead to noble ends. Adoption of sound policy in mutual relationship is statesmanship. Such a policy savours of divinity.

Secret is that which is not divulged to the others for valid reasons. The technic of harnessing certain resources of nature is kept secret for the exclusive advantage of the concerned few. The hidden powers of Nature are kept secret by others for some
other considerations. God-knowledge remains a secret to the majority not because of any narrow outlook on the part of those who have had God-realization, but because of this science being open to those only who are pure in heart and who have a thirst for sacred knowledge.

Nature is ever in vibration, and whatever vibrates produces sound. Silence is not therefore in Nature. Brahman is motionless; no vibration takes place in Him. Silence and Brahman are one and the same. To the knowers of Brahman nothing is more eloquent and public than Brahman. To the ignorant nothing is more secret and hidden than Brahman.

The universe is where there is the triad of the knower, the knowledge and the object known. When the process of knowing is directed on the knower it becomes Atma vidyā. Here the subject and object become one. Referring to this Self-knowledge the Lord says “I am the wisdom of the wise.”

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां चीजं तदभज्जन ।
न तद्दृश्य चिन्ता वस्त्रस्य मया भूतं चरानंतरम् ॥ ३९

yi ca ’pi sarvabhūtanāṁ bijam tad aham arjuna
na tad asti vinā yat syān mayā bhūtam carācaram ॥

yat yat which ca and api also sarva bhūtanām among all beings chisam bijam seed tat tat that aham aham i arjuna O Arjuna na na not tat tat that asti is china vinā without yat yat
which स्यात may be मया maya by me मूलम् bhūtam being चराचरस् carācaram moving or unmoving

And whatever is the seed of all beings, that am I, O Arjuna. There is no being, whether moving or unmoving that can exist without Me.

It may be summed up that the varieties of existences, at all levels, the moving and the unmoving have all taken their source in Brahman.

Has the `Lord exhausted the account of His divine attributes? He gives the answer —

नान्तोपति सम दिव्याणां विभूतीनां परंतप ।
एव तुदेश्वरः श्रीको विभूतेविन्तिस्तः मया ॥ ४०

nā 'nto 'sti mama divyānām vibhūtinām paramātapa ।
esa tā 'ddesātah proktō vibhūter vistarō mayā ॥

There is no end of My divine manifestations, O harasser of foeces; this is only a brief exposition by Me of the extent of My glories.

The mother hen puts the chicks in the way of helping themselves to grains of food. The young ones catch the process and continue to feed themselves. Likewise the way of recognizing the Divinity
in all is pointed out by the Lord. The sadhaka cognizes God alone everywhere as he pursues the spiritual path. The act of seeking God evolves into seeing God.

Who can know Iswara in His entirety? That power and privilege are not given to us. Again, it is not necessary that we know His infinitude. As our understanding permits, it is enough if we know Him alone to be the Real. Let it be supposed that one wants to see the Ganges and have a holy dip in it. Plodding along from Gangotri to Gangasagar, that is from the source to the estuary, need not be gone through. Contact with this sacred river at any convenient spot serves the purpose.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How does the knower of God view the world? It is explained:

The Essence of the Vibhutis — 41-42

यद्यहि सूतितमस्त्तथे श्रीसुङ्किताचेत वा।
तत्तदेवा गर्भच्छ तर्य सम देवो शसंभवम्॥ ४१

यद्य यत्व विभूतिस्तथा सर्वम् श्रीमान् कान्तिम् एव व।
तत् तत् एव अववर्तन्त त्वम् सम देवा वेशासंवर्म॥

yad-yad vibhūtimat sattvam śrimad ārjitam eva vā।
tat-tad eva 'vagaccha tvāṁ mama tejomāsasambhavān॥

यद्यत यद्यत whatever व्यूहतित्म सर्वम् sattvam being श्रीमान् śrimat prospective उर्जितम् ārjitam powerful एव eva also वा vā or तत्त् tat-tat that एव eva only अवर्तन्त्व avagaccha know त्वम् tvāṁ thou सम mama my तेजः अस्स संस्कर्मो tejah āmsa sambhavān manifestation of a part of the splendour

Whatever being there is glorious, prosperous or powerful, know that to have sprung but from a spark of My splendour.
The sun's ray spreads everywhere and reveals things in their true perspective. The revealing light here is different from the things revealed. But God is Self-revealed. He manifests Himself as everything. As glory, as brilliance, as splendour, as beauty, as power and as so many other divine attributes, He is expressing Himself. Whatever catches our imagination, draws our attention, sends us into raptures and infuses bliss into us, that is none but the glory of God.

Do you know what is meant by Brahman with divine attributes? It is like a vast expanse of water with waves, ripples, bullows, bubbles, sprays, froths and so on. Forms appearing in Citt-akasa or the Expanse of Consciousness can be experienced. Even the Incarnations of God come within this category.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Is it to be inferred then that the sum total of the manifested universe and God are one and the same? The Lord clarifies this point.—

अथवा बहुनेतन किं ज्ञातेन तयार्जुन ।
विष्टाब्धयाहिमिदं कुलं एकाशेन शितो जगद् ॥ ५२

धयं बहु एतेन किम ज्ञातेन तयार्जुन ।
विष्टाब्ध अहं एतस्म यत्समु एकासस्म स्थितः जगद् ॥

athavā bahunai 'tena kim jñātena tavā 'rjuna ।
visṭābhya 'ham idam kṛtsnam ekāmsena sthito jagat ॥

अथवा athavā or bahunā (by) many eteṇa (by) this kim what jñātena known tava of thee arjuna O Arjuna visṭābhya supporting āham I āham idam this kṛtsnam all acaśeṇa ॥ ॥ ॥

80—37
ekamsena by one part śīṁaḥ; sīhitah exist jagat, jugat

the world

But what need is there, O Arjuna, for this detailed knowledge? I stand supporting the whole universe with a single fragment of Myself.

An expert cannot display all his talents when tied into a gunny bag and made to run. Though the Lord reveals Himself in multi-forms, these revelations are but partial. All manifestations are in fact limitations. The waves are mere insignificant aspects of the ocean. Even so the infinite phenomenal expressions of Iswara are all just a negligible speck in His magnitude. When this itself is unfathomable, what to speak of Him as the Unmanifest!

God is with form, without form and also transcending all these. He alone knows who and what He is.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपानिषद्वृत्तम् भर्मविद्यायां श्रीमहायज्ञानसंवृद्धियो विभूतियोगोऽन्नम्

दशमोऽध्यायः ॥

iti srimad bhagavadgitasūpaniṣadād isu brahmavidyāyāṁ
yogasāstre śri kṛṣṇārjuno saṁvāde vibhūtī yogo
nāma dasamo 'dhyāyah ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the tenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS
Arjuna's Supplication — The Divine Eye — Iswara's Cosmic Form —
The Cosmic Vision Defined — The Lord Embodied as Time — Arjuna Praises the Lord — Arjuna Pleases for the Vision of Gentle Form —
Arjuna's Blessed Privilege — The Wonted Serene Form — The Message of the Cosmic Form

Arjuna’s Supplication — 1-4

अर्जुन उवाच

मद्दुमद्याय परसं गुह्यभव्यत्समाम्बितम् ।
यत्वयोक्ति वचस्तेन मोहेष्यथं विगलो मम ॥ १ ॥

मद-अजु-मद्याय परसं गुह्यम् लघु तात्म्य सस्तः-श्लिष्टम् ।
यत स्वयं (तय) उच-तत्त्व मनो तेन सोहः कयमः विगमृत-तः मम ॥

arjuna uvāca

madanugrahāya paramaṁ guhyam adhyātmasamyāñjītam
yat tvayo 'ktam vacas tena moho 'yam vigato mama ॥

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

मद्दुमद्य mad anugrahāya out of compassion towards me परसं paramam the highest गुह्यम् guhyam
the secret अध्यात्मसम्बितम adhyātma sanyāśītam Adhyatma
named यत् yat which स्वयं tvaya by thee उक्तम uktaṁ spoken वचः vacaḥ word तेन tena by that सोहः mohaḥ
delusion अययम् ayaṁ this विगलतः vigataḥ gone सम mama
my

Arjuna said:

By this profound discourse concerning the Self, which You have delivered out of compassion for me, my delusion has been dispelled.
The Lord made it clear to Arjuna that it is just with an infinitesimal fraction of His Entirety that He has become the manifested universe and that His unmanifest Reality is immeasurable. Based on this truth Arjuna has revised his conceptions about himself, about the world, about his relationship with the world and about his duty. He has thus been delivered from delusion.

Moreover:

भवाप्ययो हि सूतानां श्रुव्यैैै बिस्तरशो मया ।
त्वतः कमलपत्रादश माहात्मयपि चाव्ययम् ॥ २

bhavāpyayaḥ hi bhūtānāṁ śrutau vistarasaṁ mayā ।
tvattāḥ kamalapatrākṣa māhātmyam api cā 'vyayam ॥

bhavāpyayaḥ the origin and dissolution hi hi indeed bhūtānāṁ bhūtānāṁ of beings śrutāṁ srutau have been heard बिस्तरशः vistarasaḥ in detail मया mayā by me त्वतः tvattāḥ from thee कमलपत्रादश kamala patrākṣa O Lotus eyed माहात्मयम् māhātmyam greatness अष्ठि api also च ca and अव्ययम् avyayam inexhaustible

From You, O Lotus-eyed, have been heard by me in detail of the origin and dissolution of beings and also of Your inexhaustible greatness.

The dilatation made by the Lord is brief from His own standpoint and it is elaborate from the standpoint of Arjuna. Each of them is in this respect, a standard for himself.
Iswara is the source of the universe. But on this ground He is not entangled. The working of the universe derives its design and process from the Lord. He suffers no mutation on this account. It is all His glory.

एवमेतवव्यात्थ तुमात्मानं परमेष्वरः
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपेष्वरं पुरुषोत्तमं

evam etad yathā 'ttha tvam ātmānam paramesvaram
draṣṭum icchāmi te rūpam aitvaram purusottama

एवम् evam thus etat this yathā as ātmā hast declared tūm tvam thou ātmānam ātmānam thyself paramesvāra O Supreme Lord draṣṭum draṣṭum to see icchāmi icchāmi (I) desire te te thy rūpam rūpam form aitvaram aitvaram sovereign puṣpotama O Purusha Supreme

As You have declared Yourself to be, so It is, O Lord Supreme. (Yet) I desire to see Your Iswara form, O Purushottama.

Divine attributes are inherent in Iswara. As brilliance cannot be separated from burning fire divine excellences cannot be effaced from Him. Outstanding features such as knowledge, lordship, strength, potency, heroism and brilliance may be easily marked in Him. There are hidden glories which may be cognized only when He condescends to reveal. Arjuna supplicates for a vision of His latent glories.
If You, O Lord, think it possible for me to see it, then do, O Lord of yoga, show me your Eternal Self.

Not only does yoga emanate from Iswara, but He is also the bestower of it on worthy aspirants. Creating, protecting, withdrawing, veiling and revealing—these are the five divine activities which the Lord is pleased to carry on eternally. Among these five, the glory of the Cosmic revelation it is that Arjuna supplicates to have a glimpse of. The granting of the spiritual vision is an act of grace that comes from the Yogeswara.

To give prominence to personal will is not the way of the Bhakta. He subordinates self-will to the will of the Lord. Consistent with this attitude, Arjuna pleads that the vision of the Cosmic Form of Iswara might be granted to him if the Lord thought he was worthy of it.
The Lord’s response comes as follows:

The Divine Eye — 5-8

The Lord said:

Behold My forms, O Partha, by hundreds and thousands, manifold and divine and of multi-colours and shapes.

Things and beings seemingly extraneous to Iswara are not so in fact. Naught exists outside the pale of the Lord. Offshoots as they are of His immensity, the divine element is in one and all of them. It is going to be revealed shortly that the diversities in form, colour, nature and existence are all really the manifestations of the Cosmic Entity who is one without a second.
By asking Arjuna to behold His macrocosmic form, the Lord recognizes his worthiness for that holy communion.

It is Narayana who has become the all. Man is Narayana; all creatures are Narayana; the Rishi is Narayana, the wicked man is Narayana; whatever is, is Narayana. Narayana sports in multiforms, displaying His glory in all these forms.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Paryaaditayalvaksnavardhanevadhibno samstatha
dhun-vahastyangini paryayasthyanigya Bharat

Pashya adhisthanam vasun rudran asvinau marutas tathah,
bahuni adhiapurvani pashya ascaryani Bharata

Pashya behold adityaas vasun the Adityas
vasun the Vasus dhravan rudran the Rudras
asvinau the (two) Aswins
marutas the Maruts
tathah also bahuni
ascaryani wonders Bharata O Bharata

Behold the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the two Aswins and also the Maruts. Behold, O Bharata, many marvels never seen before.

The manifest aspect of Iswara is finite compared with His unmanifest infinitude. But even this seemingly finite aspect expands into infinitude to the inquirer who seeks to probe into it. The stupendousness of the solar systems or of the stellar systems, the subtlety in the structure of the atom receding
into infinitude—these are sufficient data to make
man stand aghast at the structure of the universe
which is ever available for observation.

Furthermore—

इहैकस्मं जगत्क्षतं पश्याचं सचराचरम् ।
भम देहे गुडाकेश यथान्त्यद्वृत्तमिच्छितसि ॥ ७

इहैकस्मं जगत् कृत्स्नं पश्य थव स चर-चरवस् ।
भम देहे गुडाकेश इश यत्तु न अन्वतं द्रव्यम् इच्छि ति ॥

ihai 'kastham jagat kṛtsnam paśya 'dya sacarācaram
mama dehe gudākesa yac cā 'nyad drāṣṭum icchasi
d

इहै इह इस एकस्मम् ekastham centred in one जगत्
jagat the universe कृत्सनम् kṛtsnam whole पश्य paśya
behold अय adya now सचराचरम् sacarācaram with the
moving and the unmoving मम mama my देहे dehe in
the body गुडाकेश gudākesa O Gudakesa यत् yat that च
cā and अन्यतं anyat other द्रव्यम् drastum to see इच्छिति
icchati (thou) desirest

Behold here today, O Gudakesa, the whole universe
of the moving and the unmoving, and whatever else
you desire to see, all integral of My body.

In chapter 2 stanza 6, Arjuna raised a doubt
whether Pandavas should vanquish Kauravas or
Kauravas should vanquish Pandavas. The answer
to this question can now be found self-revealed in
the working of the Cosmos. The plan and purpose
of the universe ever stand self-revealed. It is open
to the enquirer to get at them whenever he wants.

Are the physical eyes and the ordinary intellect
sufficient to cognize the whole of the truth pertaining
to the Lord? The answer is given.—
In the scheme of the evolution of life, one species evolves into another until perfection in body and mind is reached in the human. Nothing in Nature can be found parallel to the human tabernacle, the human brain and the human mind. Man is a repository of knowledge. He has added marvellously and continues to add to his knowledge of things in Nature. He is correspondingly gaining mastery over everything in it to an enormous extent. Human-contrived aids to sense-knowledge, such as the telescope, the microscope, the X-ray and the stethoscope are equally marvellous. But the seeming mastery over Nature has not minimized his proneness to misery; it has in a way aggravated it. His enormously increased intellectual knowledge has
not solved the problems of life and death; it has only complicated them further.

Yoga steps in here to make the human life a fulfilment. Through the practice of yoga a supersense called the divine eye can be developed. It is neither a freak nor an accident. With precision and certainty the spiritual eye can be evolved. It is the outcome of a perfectly disciplined pure life. Man completes his evolution with the acquisition of this divine insight. After getting established in spiritual excellence the sadhaka is required to subordinate his personal will to the Cosmic Will which is termed as the grace of the Lord in theological parlance. When these conditions are fulfilled the realization of God becomes possible.

God reveals Himself variously in the various planes of consciousness. At the mental plane He is cognized as the phenomenon; at the ethical level as the infallible Law; at Bhāva samādhi or the divine eye level as the Immanent or the kinetic aspect of Iswara; at Nirvikalpa samādhi or the intuition freed from mind, as the Transcendental Reality or the static aspect of Iswara; finally the individual merges into the Absolute which is Brahman. God-realization takes place in this order.

Arjuna is blessed with the vision of the Immanent Iswara. This realization relieves him of all of his problems, personal and public. He gets enlightened so as to discharge his duty as a willing instrument at the hands of the Lord. The Sage Vyasa is all perfection and he intuits Iswara in all of His
aspects. By the grace of this sage, Sanjaya is favoured with the same Cosmic Vision which Arjuna gets and he faithfully reports it to his blind monarch Dhrtarastra.

The great ones compare Bhakti with the magic collyrium applied to the eye. Sreemati Radha once told her companion maids that she saw Sri Krishna only wherever she turned her eyes. “You have anointed your eyes with the divine collyrium of Bhakti; therefore you behold your darling Krishna in this way,” answered the companions.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Iswara’s Cosmic Form — 9-14

संजय उवाच
evam uktvā tato rājan mahāyogesvaro hariḥ ।
darśayām āsa pārthāya paramam rūpam aisvaram ॥ ९

संजय उवāca Sanjaya said:

Evam evam thus uktaḥ having spoken tattah then rājan O king mahā yogesvarah mahā yogesvarah the great Lord of yoga hariḥ Hari darśayāmāsa showed pārthāya to Partha paramam supreme rūpam form ēśvararam sovereign

Sanjaya said:

Having thus spoken, O King, the great Lord of yoga, Hari showed to Partha, His supreme Iswara-form.
With many mouths and eyes, with many marvelous sights, with many divine ornaments, with many uplifted divine weapons; 10

The entire universe is His manifest body; His mouths and eyes are therefore countless. Many a divine happening is beyond the scope of the human knowledge. Such happenings have to be admired as marvellous to look at. Beauty emanates from Iswara. The attractive and lovely forms all over Nature adorned with magnificent decorations appear as if decked with divine ornaments. The divine designs and happenings are inevitable. Nothing can resist God’s plans and executions. The uplifted divine weapons reveal Him as the Almighty.
divya mālyāmbra dharam divya gandhānulepanam sarvāscaryamayām devam anantam visvatomukham

Wearing heavenly garlands and raiments, anointed with celestial perfumes, all wonderful, resplendent, boundless, with faces on all sides.

Panorama corresponding to this definition is available even to the physical eye; what to speak then of the spectacle cognized with the divine eye! Godly features alone are in evidence everywhere and at all levels.

divi sūrya sahasrasya bhaved yugapat utthitaḥ yadi bhāḥ sadṛśi sā syād bhāsas tasya mahātmanah

divi in the sky sūrya sahasrasya of a thousand suns bhaved were yugapat at once arisen yadi if sā that sā that mahātman: mahātmanah of the mighty being
If the splendour of a thousand suns were to blaze forth all at once in the sky, that would be like the splendour of that Mahatman.

The unknown has to be inferred citing the known as the pattern. Even then the inference can only be vague if not erroneous. The realized souls only can have a correct view of Him. Men with godly qualities alone can cognize God in His true import. The simile of a thousand suns indicates that Iswara is unparalleled. He is therefore Mahatman— the Great Soul.

tatrai 'kastham jagat krtso nam pravibhaktam anekadhā apasyad devadevasya sarire pāṇḍavas tadā
tatra there ekastham resting in one jagat the universe kṛtsnam the whole pravibhaktam divided anekadhā in many groups apasyat saw devadevasya of the God of gods sarire in the body pāṇḍavaḥ son of Pandu tadā then

There in the body of the God of gods, Pandava then saw the whole universe with its many divisions drawn together into one.

Unity in variety is the plan of Nature. The Cosmic Life is manifesting Itself as the celestials, as the human beings, as animals, as birds, as the vegetable kingdom and other species. These are all
expressions of the same Consciousness. The celestial world, the terrestrial world, the nether world—these are all regions intended for enjoyments of various kinds. And each region has its own objects of enjoyment. All these are contained in Isvara who is the Life of lives; this is how the unity in variety is made possible.

तत: स विस्मयाविष्टो हर्षरोमः धनंजयः ||

प्रणम्य शिरसा देवम् कुटाभिरभास्यत || १४


प्र-नम्य शिरसा देवाम् कुट-शावलः व-भाप-त ||

tataḥ sa vismayāviśṭo hrṣtaromā dhanamjayaḥ ।
pranamya Ārasā devam kṛtānjalir abhāṣata ॥

तत: tataḥ then sa: saḥ he vismayāviśṭaḥ filled with wonder hrṣtragha dhanamjaya Arjuna pranama having prostrated śirasā with (his) head devam the God kṛtānjaliḥ with joined palms abhāṣata spoke

Then Dhananjaya, struck with amazement, his hair standing on end, bending down his head to the Lord in adoration, spoke with joined palms. 14

When a yogi is blessed with the vision of God, its exuberance reveals itself through the spiritual charge it induces in his body and mind. Being struck with blissful amazement is the effect it brings on his mind. The hair standing on end, the head bowing down in reverence and the palms joining in spontaneous adoration are the marks of ecstasy visible on
his body. Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. The following is a sample of the rapturous utterance —

The Cosmic Vision Defined — 15-31

अर्जुन उवाच

पश्यामि देवांतर्व देव देहे सर्वास्थ भूतविदेशसदान।
महाप्रभुविने कमलासनसमस्मृतं तर्कसुरगांध्यं दिव्यांन।

अर्जुन उवाच

पश्यामि देयां तव देय देहे सर्वान् तथा भूत-विदेश-सदान।

अर्जुन उवाच

arjuna uvāca

pasyāmi devāṃs tava deva dehe
sarvāms tathā bhūta visesa samghān

brahmānam tsam kamalāsanastham

ṛṣims ca sarvāṃ uragāṃs ca divyān

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

पश्यामि (I) see देवान devān the gods तव tava thy देव deva O God देहे dehe in the body सर्वान sarvān all तथा tathā also भूतविदेशसदान bhūta visesa samghān hosts of various classes of beings ब्रह्मान् brahmānam Brahma ईसाम āsam the Lord कमलासनस्मृतं kamala āsana stham seated on the lotus र्षिन sages च ca and सर्वान sarvān all उरगान uragān serpents च ca and दिव्यांन divyān divine

Arjuna said:

I see all the gods, O God, in Your body and hosts of all grades of beings; Brahma, the Lord, seated on the lotus and all the Rishis and celestial serpents.

The four-faced Brahma is the Creator of all beings; he is therefore revered as tśa. He is seated 80—38
on the lotus come out of the navel of Mahāvishnu. Beings movable and immovable are all contained in the Cosmic Form. Rishis like Vasishta and serpents like Vasuki are visible therein.

अनेक बाहुरक्षणतेजः पश्यामि त्वा सर्वतोन्नतःरूपम्।
नान्ते न मध्ये न पूनस्तवादि पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विशवतः॥ १६॥

aneka bāhūdara vaktra netram
paśyāmi tvām sarvato ’nantarūpam
na ’ntam na madhyam na punas tavā ’dim
paśyāmi viśvesvāra viśvarūpa ॥

अनेकबाहु पद्यक्षणतेजः aneka bāhu udara vaktra netram with manifold arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes पश्यामि paśyāmi (I) see त्वाम् tvām thee सर्वतो: sarvatah on every side अनन्तरूपम् ananta rūpam of boundless form न not अनंतम् antam end न not मध्यम madhyam middle न not पुनः punah again तव tava thy आदिन् adin origin पश्यामि paśyāmi (I) see विश्वेश्वर viśvesvāra O Lord of the universe विश्वरूप viśvā rūpa O cosmic form

I behold You, infinite in forms on all sides, with countless arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes; neither Your end nor the middle nor the beginning do I see, O Lord of the universe, O Universal Form. 16

All the varieties of manifestations are His forms and He also transcends them all.
I see You with diadem, club, and discus; a mass of radiance blazing everywhere, hard to look at, all round dazzling like flaming fire and sun, and immeasurable.

Any brilliance experienced in dream seems to dazzle the physical eyes though they are not actually affected thereby. The divine eye is said here to get dazzled on a greater measure, but its effect on the mind is salutary. Even the spiritual eye which is of a calibre superior to that of the fleshy eye, is not helpful to cognize the Cosmic Form in its entirety. It is therefore adored as the immeasurable.

The colour of the sattva guna is white. The reflection therefore of the brilliance of Atman on it is more dazzling than the bright sun.

The conclusion that Arjuna has arrived at is as follows,—
tvam aksaram paramam veditavyam
    tvam asya visvasya param nidhanam
    tvam avyayah sasvata dharma goptah
    sanatanas tvam puruso mato me

You are the Imperishable, the Supreme Being to be realized. You are the great treasure-house of this universe; You are the imperishable Guardian of the Eternal Dharma. You are the ancient Purusha, I deem.

He who realizes Iswara becomes worthy of attaining Him. The realization of that Supreme Being is therefore the goal of the sadhaka. The Lord is the treasure-house of this universe even as aksasa is the treasure-house of the moving clouds. When the universe perishes periodically, He remains imperishable. In His sublime proximity the Eternal Dharma or the functioning of the universe takes
place regularly. Arjuna is now convinced of these verities.

anādī madhyāntam ananta viryam
ananta bāhum sāsi sūrya netram
pasyāmi tvām dipta hutāsa vaktram
svatejasā visvam idam tapantam

�नादी मध्य अन्तम anādi madhya antam without beginning, middle or end अनन्तवरिष्य ananta viryam infinite in power अनन्ताव्रहाः ananta bāhum of endless arms शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् sāsi sūrya netram the sun and the moon (thy) eyes पश्यामि pasyāmi (I) see त्वाम् tvām thee दीप्ता हुतासा vaktram the burning fire of thy mouth स्वतेजसा svatejasā with thy radiance विस्वम् visvam the universe इदम् idam thus तपन्तम् tapantar heating

I see You without beginning, middle or end, infinite in power, of infinite arms, the sun and the moon being Your eyes, the burning fire Your mouth; heating the whole universe with Your radiance.

There is no beginning, middle or end to the One who is beyond time, space and causation. Iswara is infinite in power because He creates, sustains and withdraws the universe as a mere sport. God is of infinite arms as He gets His Cosmic scheme worked out engaging all beings as His instruments. It is the brilliance of Atman that shines as the light in the
senses. The light in the sun, moon and fire is only a reflection of the original Atmajo. Speaking of the sun and the moon as the eyes of Isvara and of the fire as His mouth is poetic. The universe is cognizable because of the radiance of Isvara.

This space between heaven and earth and all the quarters are filled by You alone. Having seen this, Your marvellous and terrible form, the three worlds are trembling with fear, O Mahatman.

Arjuna now realizes that the Lord is all-pervading. The Lord is not only all charm and sweetness, He is also all fierceness and terror. Of these opposites the experience of the one or the other comes to
the beholder only to reflect his own frame of mind. Arjuna sees this terrible form of the Lord quite in tune with his disposition. He who did not want to create a ghastly war scene now realizes that with or without his instrumentality, the Lord has assumed this terrific form to purge the world of evils.

अमी हि त्यां सुरसङ्क्रणिनि के कंतिष्ठ्रितः प्राज्जलयो गृहनि।
स्वसत्तीसमविर्म रहिन्त सिद्धसङ्क्रणि: स्ववनि त्यां स्वतनिमि: पुष्करलाभि:।

अमी हि त्यां सुर संघ विष्णु-अन्तिनः के चिते भी-ता प्र-अर्थविष्णु गृहनि।
स्वसत्ती इति (वचः) उप-ता महाभ-विश्विन्द ध्या। स्ववनि त्यां स्व-स्वतिमि पुष्करलाभि।

ami hi tvam surasamgha visanti
kecid bhutah pranjalayo grnanti
svasti ty uktvah maharsi siddhasamghah
stuvanti tvam stutibhih puskalabhih

अमी amī these हि hi verily त्यां tvam thee त्यां सुरसङ्क्रणि sura samghah hosts of Devas विश्रामित विसांति enter के कंतिष्ठ्रितः
kecit some भीता bhutah in fear श्राज्जलयो pranjalayah with joined palms गृहनि grnanti extol श्रवति svasti
may it be well इति iti thus उक्तवः uktvah having said महापितिष्ठतवः maharsi siddha samghah bands of great Rishis and Siddhas स्ववनि stuvanti praise त्यां tvam thee स्वतिमि stutibhih with hymns पुष्कराभि puskala-bhiih complete

These hosts of Devas indeed enter into You; some in awe extol You with joined palms; bands of great Rishis and Siddhas pronounce, “May it be well” and praise You with sublime hymns.

When the need for it comes, the Lord destroys not only the human beings on a large scale, but also the Devas who are called immortals by courtesy.
As disease cleanses the body of bad matter, the Lord cleanses the world of wickedness by destruction on a colossal scale. Those who vaguely understand this design of the Lord, tremblingly submit themselves to the inevitable, with folded hands. There is as much grandeur in the sunset as there is in the sunrise. Like this, there is as much divinity in the Lord's wiping out the universe as in His creating it. Great Rishis like Narada and Siddhas like Kapila intuit the sublimity of this divine sport and go into raptures in extolling it. Their hymns abound with inspiring ideas clothed in exuberant language. The purport of the praise is, "Lord, may good come out of Your great deeds!"


drādivyā vaṣṭro yeva ca sādhyā
visve 'svinau marutas ca 'śmapās ca

gandharva yakṣāsura siddha saṁghā
vikeṣante tvāṁ vismitās ca 'vā sarve


drādivyā: rudra ādityāḥ Rudras and Adityas संवरः: vasavaḥ Vasus yeva these ca and sādhyāḥ Sadhyas vīśve Visvedevas adhvānī aśvinau (the two) Aswins saktaḥ: marutaḥ Maruts ca and Ṛṣipāḥ: 'śmapāḥ Pitrus ca ca and ganvah yad abhūr siddha sāhā: gandharva yakṣa asura siddha saṁghāḥ hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas vikeṣante are looking at tvām thee vismitāḥ: vismitāḥ astonished ca ca and eva even sarve all.
The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, Viswas, Asvins, Maruts, Ushmapas, hosts of Gandharvas, Yaksas, Asuras and Siddhas—they are all gazing at You and they are amazed.

_Ushmapas_ are they who delight in partaking of hot cakes and hot drinks. _The Pitrus or maues are called Ushmapas_. Even the celestials are not able to gauge the Cosmic Form of Iswara in its entirety. Some aspects of it come within their purview and drive them into bewilderment.

रूपम् महते वहुवक्त्रनेत्रां महाबाहो वहुवाहुर्स्पादम्।
वहुदर्म वहुदर्माकरालं हर्षा लोका: प्रवन्ययितात्स्थाहस्॥ २३

रूपम् महते वहु-वक्त्र-नेत्रां महाबाहो वहु-वाहु-उच्च-पादम्।
वहु-उदराम वहु-दुर्म-करारम् दर्शाला लोका प्रवन्ययिता तथा भास्॥

_rūpam mahat te bahu vaktra netram_
_mahābāho bahu bāhūru pādam_

_bahudaram bahu damstrākarālam_
_drstvā lokāḥ pravyathitās tathā 'ham_ ॥

_रूपम्_ rūpam form महतम्_ mahat immeasurable_ ते_ te thy_ वहुवक्त्रनेत्राम्_ bahu vaktra netram_ with many mouths and_ eyes_ महाबाहो_ mahābāho_ O mighty-armed_ वहुवाहु_ vahuvahā_ उर्स्पादम्_ bahu bāhūru pādam_ with many arms, thighs and feet_ वहु_ vahū_ उदराम_ bahu udaram_ with many stomachs_ नर्त्रारम्_ nacstrā karālam_ fearful with many tusks_ drstvā_ having seen_ लोका_ lokāḥ_ the worlds_ प्रवन्ययिता:_ pravyathitāḥ_ are terrified_ तथा_ tatha_ also_ ahām_ I_

Seeing Your immeasurable form with myriad mouths and eyes, O mighty-armed, with myriad arms, thighs and feet, with myriad stomachs, and terrible with myriad tusks—the worlds are terror-struck, and so am I.
Man projects the contents of his mind and cognizes them in the world outside. Arjuna had no idea till then that it is Iswara who has become the entire universe and that there is also a terrific aspect to His manifestation. The sudden and unexpected vision of it frightens him even though he is a person of extraordinary calibre. He projects this unsettled state of his mind on the world and says that the worlds are terror-struck even as he is. He mentions the cause of his being frightened as follows:—

नभः स्पष्टं दीर्घमनेकवणी व्याचारनम् दीर्घविशालनेत्रम् ।
हृद्या हि ल्वां प्रवचथितांतरतमा चृति न विन्दामि शम्भ च विषो ॥

नभः: स्पष्टम् दीर्घम् अनं-एक-वणीम् वि-राज-राजनम् दीर्घ-विशाल-नेत्रम् ।
हृद्या त्वा हि ल्वां प्र-वचथित-अन्तरतना चृतिम् न विन्द्-शामि समम् च विषो ॥

\[ nabhaḥ sprṣaṁ diptam aneka varṇaṁ \]
\[ vyāttānanam dipta visāla netram \]
\[ drṣṭvā hi tvām pravyathitāntarātmā \]
\[ dhṛtim na vindāmi samāṁ ca viṣno ॥ \]

नभः: स्पष्टम् nabhaḥ sprṣaṁ touching the sky दीर्घम्
\[ diptam shining अनेकवणीम् aneka varṇaṁ \]
\[ vṛtyānananam with mouths wide open दीर्घविशाल \]
\[ नेत्रम् dipta visāla netram \]
\[ with large fiery eyes हृद्या drṣṭvā \]
\[ having seen हि hi verily ल्वाम् tvām the प्रवचथित \]
\[ अन्तरतमा pravyathitāntarātmā \]
\[ terrified at heart चृतिम् dhṛtim \]
\[ courage न na not विन्दामि vindāmi (1) \]
\[ peace च ca and विषो viṣno O Vishnu \]

When I see You touching the sky, blazing with many colours, with mouths wide open, with large fiery eyes, my heart trembles in fear and I find neither courage nor peace, O Vishnu.
It is but natural that one gets unnerved when one is driven into an inconceivable world-devouring sight. One gets settled understanding only when one realizes that fury and calmness are concomitant in the ocean of the Cosmic Being.

Arjuna confesses the effect of the terror created in his mind —

र्कट्टकारालानिं च ते सुखानि द्वित्रि कालानलसम्मिलिनि।
दिशेऽ न जाने न रमे व शर्म प्रसीद्द देवेश जगानिवास।। २५

र्कट्टकारालानिं च ते सुखानि द्वित्रि-श्वा एव काल अनः तनिमानि।
दिशेऽ न जाने न रमे व शर्म म पौष्टिक देव-श्वा जागानिवाः।।

*damstrā-karālāni ca te mukhāni*

*drṣṭvān 'va kālānalasamnibhāni*

*diso na jāne na labhe ca sarma*

*prasida devesa jagannivāsa*

चृक्त्कारालानि *damstrā karālāni* fearful with tusks च ca and ते te thy सुखानि mukhāni mouths द्वित्रि drṣṭvā having seen एव eva even काल अनः समन्तिमानि kāla anāla samnibhāni blazing like Pralaya-fires दिशः disah the quarters न na not जाने jāne know न na not रमे लभे do (I) find च ca and शर्म सर्मापि peace शशी prasida have mercy द्वेशः devesa O Lord of the Devas जगानिवास jagannivāsa O abode of the universe

When I see Your mouths terrible with tusks resembling Pralaya-fires, I know not the four quarters nor do I find peace. Be gracious, O Lord of the gods, O Abode of the universe.

The quarters are discerned with the help of the sun and the moon. But let it be supposed that one gets immersed in the womb of the blazing and bound-

25
less sun. In such a situation the quarters and the directions are all lost sight of. Arjuna finds himself in such a position now. Like the fire of the dissolution of the universe, the all-consuming blaze of the Cosmic Form has confounded Arjuna. Therefore he begs of the Lord to withdraw that terrible form and resume the calm and gracious form.

असीि च तवां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्रा: सर्वे सहैवाचनिपालि: ।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सुतुग्रस्तस्यासो सहासादीपैरि: योगशुश्रुषः: ॥

कब्राणि ते लघमाणा विश्रावि दुर्गवरकालानि भयानकानि ।
केषीढिल्या दशानान्तरेऽय संस्कृतयते चूणितोपर्यासः: ॥

असीि च ताम् धृतोऽराष्ट्रस्य पुत्रा: सर्वेऽह एव असानी-पालि-संधि: ।
भीष्मः द्रोणः सुतु-ग्रा: तथा असीि सह असमर्दी: अपि योध-गुर्दः: ॥

कब्राणि ते लघमाणा: विश्रावि दुर्गवरकालानि भयानकानि ।
केषी वि-सूंसा: दशान-वान्तरेऽय सु-दहूः-वन्ते चूणिते: उत्तमः-श्रेष्ठः: ॥

amous ca tvāṁ dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ

sarve sahai 'vā 'vanipālasamghaiḥ ।
bhṛṣmo dronāḥ sūtāputras tathā 'sau
sahā 'smadtyair api yodhamukhyaiḥ ॥
vakranti te tvaramāṇa visanti
daniṣṭrākarālāni bhayanakāni ।
kekic vilagnā dasanāntaresu
samāraṣyante cūṇitair uttamāṅgaiḥ ॥

असीि amī these च ca and तवां tvāṁ thee धृतराष्ट्रस्य
dhṛtarāṣṭrasya of Dhrtaraśtra पुत्रा: putrāḥ sons सर्वे
sarve all सह saha with एव eva even अचनिपालि: avani
pāl saṃghaiḥ hosts of kings of the earth भीष्म: bhīṣ-
maḥ Bhishma द्रोणः dronāḥ Drona सुतु: sūta putraḥ
Sutaputra तथा tathā also असीि asau this सह saha with
वस्माविध: asmadiyaṁ with (those) of ours अष्ट: api also 
योधासुर: yodha mukhyaiḥ (with) warrior chiefs

वक्त्राणि vaktrāni mouths ते te thy ल्यात्मणा: tvaramā- 
नापह hurrying विषंति visanti enter दंशकरालानि đamstrā 
करालानि terrible-toothed भयानकानि bhayānakāni fearful 
to behold केचि kecit some बिलमा: vilagnāḥ sticking 
द्वान धन्यथेऽ dāsana antaresu in the gaps between the 
उष्म संदेशयन्ते samṛṣyante are found चूर्णितेः: cūrṇitaiḥ 
crushed to powder उच्चम अथेः: uttama aṅgaiḥ with 
(their) heads

All the sons of Dhrtarashtra with hosts of kings 
of the earth, Bhishma, Drona and Sutaputra, with the 
warrior chiefs of ours,

Enter hurrying into Your mouth, terrible with 
tusks and fearful to look at. Some are found sticking 
in the gaps between the teeth with their heads crushed 
to powder.

Sutaputra means the son of a charioteer. Here 
this word connotes Karna, the sworn enemy of 
Arjuna. He sees his arch-enemy doomed to death. 
Further his enemies are all already in the grip of 
death. His allies are also destined to be wiped out 
in the imminent conflagration. The object of the 
impending great war is to rid the world of the dead 
weight of the human weed. The loss for the victor 
is going to be no less than that for the vanquished.

यथा नर्कान् वह्योऽम्पुज्ञेव: सत्यद्वेवामिश्रमिः सार्वत: ।
तथा तवाम नर्लोकवीरा गितान्ति वक्त्राण्यमितिविज्ञलितं ॥ २८

यथा नव्यायेऽवञ्चः: कसामुवेगः: यमुद्दू पूर्व-सिंहा: इववनिः ।
तथा सर्व नर-व्योक्तिरी: विस्त-सम्मिति द्वन्दनापि ससिंह:विद्वनिः ॥
yathā nadināṁ bahavo 'mbuvegāḥ
samudram eva 'bhimukhā dravanti

| tathā tava 'mi naralokavīrā
visanti vaktrāṇy abhivijvalanti  ||

Truly, as the many torrents of rivers rush towards the ocean, so do these heroes in the world of men fling themselves into Your fiercely flaming mouths.

The rivers that emerge from mountains have no alternative but to rush to empty themselves in the ocean. The rulers of the earth plan for their permanent domination over it while actually they are caught in the death-trap of Destiny. While being consumed they are planning for conquest.
As moths rush headlong into a blazing fire for destruction, so do these creatures hurriedly speed into Your mouths for their destruction.

Though merged in the ocean, the waters of the rivers continue to play their parts in the cosmic function. Whereas, as moths rush only to perish in the blazing fire, these multitudes are marching into the coming conflagration for their destruction which has become a cosmic necessity. But their redemption lies in their being reborn with a change of attitude.
Devouring all the worlds on every side with Your flaming mouths, You lick Your lips. Your fiery rays, filling the whole world with radiance, are burning, O Vishnu!

Vishnu is he who is all-pervading. He pervades the world as a force creative and destructive. At this juncture the Lord appears to Arjuna as a destructive force. In his desolation he supplicates as follows:

आक्ष्याहि मे को भवातुग्रहयो नमोनस्तुः ते देववर प्रसीद्।
विज्ञातुरिष्क्षायैं सवन्तमार्गेन न हि प्रजानामी तव प्रवत्तिनु।

वि-ज्ञा-तुम सङ्क्ष्पर्वां भवत्व भावम् न हि प्र-ज्ञा-ना-सि तन प्र-श्वत-विम्।

ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugrarūpo
namo ’stu te devavara prasīda
vijñātum icchāmi bhavantam ādyam
na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttim

आक्ष्याहि आक्ष्याहि tell me me क: kaḥ who (art) भवान् bhavān thou उप्राप्त: ugra rūpaḥ fierce in form नम: namāḥ salutations अस्तु astu be ते te to thee देववर deva-vara O God supreme प्रसीद् prasīda have mercy विज्ञातुः vijñātum to know इच्छामि icchāmi (I) wish सवन्तम् bhavantam thee आद्यां ādyāṃ the original being न na not हि hi indeed प्रजानामि prajānāmi (I) know तव tava thy प्रवत्तिम् pravṛttim doing

Tell me who You are, so fierce in form. I bow down to You, O God Supreme; have mercy. I desire to know You, the Primal One. I know not Your purpose.
The calm, charming and beautiful form of God attracts the devotees. Being drawn to Him in this way is deemed as devotional worship. His terrific form arrests the attention of the devotee in another way. And getting absorbed in it is also a form of worship. The fully qualified devotee is he who accepts the sublime and the terrific aspects of God with equal devotion and absorption. Fear is conquered by the worship of the fearful. But Arjuna like many an ordinary devotee is not prepared for the worship of the Terrible.

That Iswara is everything is being realized by Arjuna. But what all phases are comprised in that everything, is not known to him and it is impossible for him to know. A man and his activities are interrelated. Knowing his activities is one of the ways of knowing the man, to some extent at least. Similarly God can be known in a way through His doings. And that is the supplication that Arjuna makes. The Lord deigns to reveal His purpose —

The Lord Embodied as Time — 32-34

śrī bhagavān uvāca
kaśāyākṣo lokaśyakṣaṇaśvādavo lokān samātātumśaḥ prabhun: ।
śravīdenā tvaḥ na bhikṣyaṁ nīrdešaṁ yedvīśhitaṁ: pratyākṣeṇāḥ yathā: ॥ 32
kaśāyākṣaḥ sūciṁ lokākṣaṁ-kārya-prakārya lokānārū gama-kāra-hṛdaśrūḥ ca prabhunśa: ।
śravīdenā tvaḥ na bhikṣyaṁ nīrdešaṁ yedvīśhitaṁ: pratyākṣeṇāḥ yathā: ॥

sri bhagavān uvāca
kālo 'smi lokakṣayakṣaṁ pravṛddho
lokān samāhartinā pravṛttāḥ: ।
rte 'pi tvāṁ na bhāvāmyoṁ sarve
ye 'vasthitāḥ pratyāmkesu yodhaḥ: ॥ 80-39
The Blessed Lord said:

I am the mighty world-destroying Time now engaged in wiping out the world. Even without you the warriors arrayed in hostile armies shall not live.

In spite of a life-long companionship with Sri Krishna, what Arjuna has come to know of Him is very little and what remains to be known is much. Hence rises the question, “Tell me who You are.” The answer, “I am the mighty world-destroying Time” is one among the numerous definitions of Iswara. He is known as Mahākāla. This answer solves the immediate puzzle in the mind of Arjuna.

All events in Nature get buried in time. Relentlessly and constantly it is consuming everything. Again it is time that measures all events. As ākāśa contains all manifested things in itself, time contains all events or causation in itself. As one ascends a hill one sees the ups and downs below merging into a vast expanse. Similarly in the infinitude of time all the happenings in the universe get swallowed. This Time is verily Iswara.
"I know not Your purpose" is the frightened inquiry made by Arjuna. The Lord deals with that mystery. He says He is intent on wiping out the world. Death in fact is taking place ceaselessly. When it is scattered and spread out, it is called the law of nature; but when it is concentrated, it is called a catastrophe. The Lord has this work of extermination done in both the ways—severally and collectively; extensively and intensively. The Mahabharata war is an instance of His intensive destruction of mankind. Whenever a need for it arises He does it very effectively. He truly adores God who sees His hand at work in all destructions small and great. Nothing in the world is terrible to the knower of the ways of the Lord.

Arjuna is given to understand now that the destruction of Bhishma, Drona and Karna is inevitable. He who did not want to be the cause of the death of the venerable ones, realizes now that it is not possible for man to avert the design of the Lord. Arjuna’s eagerness to take revenge on Karna is now shorn of its personal poignancy and spite.

It is certain that these men of might are going to perish independent of Arjuna’s instrumentality. Why then should he at all engage himself in this carnage? The necessity for it is explained:—

तसात्मचाय यशो लभस्व जित्वा शत्रू श्रृंग राज्यं समुद्रम्।
मैधित्वं निहत्तः पूज्यवेद निमित्तस्मवं भव सन्ध्यशाचितिः॥ ३२

तस्याद्य लम्बू दुर्दिश्व शत्रुः सम-स्व जी-सत्र शत्रुन् श्रृंग्न राज्यम् समृद्धम्।
सम्य एव एवे नि-देन-शा: पूवेन्य एव निमित्त-समातूम् भव चन्द्र-चालिन्॥
tasmāt tvam uttiṣṭha yāso labhasva
jitvā satrūn bhūṅkṣva rājyam samṛddham
mayai 'vai 'te nihatāḥ pūrvar eva
nimittamātram bhava savyasācin

You therefore arise and obtain fame. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. By Me have they been verily slain already. You be merely an outward cause, O Savyasachin.

The Lord’s work does not depend on the agency of man for its fulfilment. Precisely and effectively it takes place of its own accord. Man but earns merit by participating in it. By rising equal to an occasion and by discharging his duty, man emerges the better for it. By availing himself of the opportunities and facilities providentially provided in the training ground of this world, man builds his personality. And that is his gain in being a willing instrument in the hands of the Lord.

Fame is not an end in itself. It comes as a by-product of an exemplary and dutiful life. The man of sterling character and noble deeds is praised by all even as a fully blossomed flower is admired by all.
Opposing evil and vanquishing it is the duty of a Kshatriya. The Lord’s design here is conducive to this auspicious end.

Prosperous earthly life is no detriment to spiritual progress. Rather it is a stepping stone to Sreyas. Earthly kingdom conquered by conforming to dharma is a rare achievement. Efficient and prosperous protection of the kingdom enriches man’s life temporally and spiritually.

The Lord has willed to wipe out wickedness from the world. Arjuna is no more confronted with any uphill task. It is more than sufficient if he merely makes a show of waging the war. The total destruction of the enemies will be the result. But Arjuna is not a man of mediocre stuff. He is a Savyasachin (ambidexterous) — one who can make a deadly delivery of the arrow with the left hand even. He is invincible in war. The opportune moment has come to him to show his valour. By being an instrument in the hands of the Lord, he can gain the glory of having defeated Drona and Bhishma. Right action at right time leads to victory, prosperity and blessedness.

A doubt may rise in the mind of Arjuna whether the vision that he has had just now was not a self-created illusion. The Lord relieves him of this apprehension as follows:—

"द्रौणं च भौज्मं च जयद्व च कण्ठः तथान्वानयो योधवीरान्।
सष्म हतांस्वं जहि मा व्यक्ष्यिता युध्यस्व नेतासि रनो सप्तानार्॥ ३४"
Slay Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other brave warriors who are already doomed by Me. Be not distressed with fear. Fight and you will conquer your enemies in battle. 34

It has been already made clear that the killing of Drona and Bhishma is not contrary to dharma. The next question is whether they can be killed at all. For, Drona is endowed with weapons divine. And Bhishma is one whom death cannot approach without his own permission. Nobody has so far successfully combated with him. Yet another problem is in regard to Jayadratha. By hard penance his father has acquired the power to make the head of that man burst who succeeded in slaughtering his son. Fourthly vanquishing Karna is equally problematic.
He is armed with "Sakti," a deadly weapon bestowed upon him by Indra. There is no escape for that man against whom this weapon is used. Karna keeps it to take vengeance on Arjuna. To be hesitant with fear is but natural to one in Arjuna’s plight.

“When God is with us who is against us? When God is not with us, who is for us?” — This maxim is worth pondering over and to be pursued in life. God is here with Arjuna. What can his powerful enemies do against him? The Lord has willed to have them destroyed. Their prowess is already withdrawn from them. They are now like pictures which can be easily brushed aside. Arjuna has only to function just as an arrow at the hands of an archer. The Lord will have His work done through his agency. The glory of a great conquest will be his, as a reward for this agency. This point is driven home into the mind of Partha.

Arjuna Praises the Lord—35-44

सञ्जय उवाच

एवर्कृत्वा चचनं केषवस्य क्रताजजिल्लिपयमानं किरिती ।

नमस्त्वा भूय एवाह कुण्यं सप्तदं भीतभीतं: प्रणम्य ॥ ३५

एतत् श्रु-स्वा वचनम् के-शब्दं क्रत-कस्यं: केष-मानं किरिती ।

नमस्त्वा भूय: एव बाहु कृण्मु व-गृहदम् भीत-भीतं: प्र-नम्य ॥

samjaya uvāca

etac chruṭvā vacanam keśavasya

kṛtaṁjalir vepamānaḥ kiriti ।

namaskṛtvā bhūya eva 'ha kṛṣṇam

sagadgadam bhītabhītaḥ praṇamya ॥
Sanjaya uvāca Sanjaya said:

Having heard that speech of Kesava, the crowned one (Arjuna) with joined palms, trembling, prostrating himself, again addressed Krishna, in a choked voice, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear.

The crown is the symbol of monarchy. A king with a crown on, should not bow his head to anybody. To be fearless is his dharma. Instead of paying homage to others he is to receive homage from others. To be firm and resolute in his utterances is the way of a crowned one. But such kingly conventions have all taken to their heels. Even kings have to humble themselves before God. The more the Jīvatman humbles himself before the Paramatman, the better it is for him.

What did the trembling Arjuna do? It comes from his own lips:—

अञ्जुन उच्चाच

स्थाने दृष्टिकेष तव प्रक्रियास्मात् जगत्त्रहस्त्यात्यतन्त्रवते ।

रक्षाति भीतानि दिशो इत्यत्त्वं तर्यं नमस्त्वत्तं व सिद्धस्वर: ॥ ३६
Arjuna uvāca

sthāne hṛṣīkeṣa tava prakīrtyā
jagat praḥṛṣyaty anurajyate ca
raksāmsi bhitāni diśo dravanti

Arjuna said:

It is meet, O Hrishikesa, that the world is delighted and rejoices in Your praise; Rakshasas fly in fear in all directions, and all the hosts of Siddhas bow to You.

If a rustic from a remote rural area be brought into a huge factory with gigantic machinery, he would get terrified and run away. People with some knowledge about the modern machines would stand by and look on the huge machines at work, while the mechanics and technicians would be busily working in that factory.

Arjuna’s vision of the cosmic form of Iswara is parallel to this. The Rakshasas who are ignorant
about the working of the universe run pell-mell bringing ruin on themselves. The knowing devotees of the Lord admire His macrocosmic creation and speak highly of it. The perfected ones such as the yogis and Siddhas pay their reverence by participating in His cosmic functions.

People are all variously related to Iswara. The Rishis are all His kith and kin. The other spiritually advanced people are like His friends and companions. The commonalty is just His creation.

— Sri Ramakrishna

कस्मात् ते न नमेरनमहात्मसन् गरीयसे ब्रह्माणोद्याकित्कवे ॥
अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास स्यमक्षरं सदसनत्तप यद् ॥ ३७
कस्मात् च से न नमेरन महा-भास्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्म: क्षिप्य भादि-क्षं ।
अनन्त अनन्त देव-देश जगदू-निवास स्यम्ब-स्य-क्षरम् सत् स-सत् तत् परम् यद् ॥
kasmāc ca te na nameran mahātman
gariyase brahmaṇo 'py ādikartre ।
ananta devesa jagannivāsa
tvam aksaram sad asat tat param yat ॥
कस्मात् kasmāt why च ca and ते te thy न na not
नमेरन nameran may prostrate महात्मन महात्मन O
great-souled one gariyase gariyase greater ब्रह्म ब्रह्म: brahma-
नाह nāh of Brahma api also आदि अदि adi kartre the pri-
मल cause अनन्त ananta O infinite being देवेश devēsa
cal O Lord of gods जगन्निवास jagannivāsa O abode of the
universe स्यम्ब tvam thou स्य-स्य-स्य-स्य-स्य-स्य-स्य-aksaram imperishable
tat sat the being असात असात non-being तत् tat that param
param the supreme तत् yat which

And why should they not, O Great-souled One, bow to You, greater (than all), the Primal Cause even of Brahma, O Infinite Being, O Lord of gods, O
Abode of the universe; You are the Imperishable, the being and the non-being, that which is the Supreme.

The urge to praise Iswara rises spontaneously in the minds of the enlightened ones. For, knowing and admiring are interrelated. Iswara is *Mahātman* as there is none greater than He. He is *Ananta* due to His transcending time, space and causation. He is the Lord of all the gods, their destiny being shaped by Him. As the ocean is the abode of the waves, the Lord is the abode of the universe. Brahma the Creator is the Immanent Aspect of Iswara. He is also known as Hiranyakarshana. For the convenience of our conception of him, he may be put as the sum total of the *Jivatmans*, Iswara is the primal cause of Brahma even, just as the ocean is the primal cause of all the waves put together. The manifest aspect of the universe is *sat*, the unmanifest being *asat*. Iswara is glorified as *Akshara* since no modification of any kind takes place in Him, even when the universe comes into being from Him. The Lord is not only the Immanent Reality, but He is also the Transcendental Reality. For this reason He is praised as *Param*. The glories of God are infinite. What else can the realized souls do than going into raptures and extolling Iswara? The *sadhaka* rises in spiritual stature as he indulges in the praise of the Lord.
tvam ādidevaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇas
tvam asya viśvasya paramī nidhānam
vettā 'si vedyam ca param ca dhāma
tvayā tataṁ viśvam ananta rūpa

You are the Primal God, the Ancient Purusha; You are the Supreme Abode of all this, You are the Knower and the knowable and the Supreme Abode; this universe is pervaded by You, O Being of infinite form.

The Lord is ādideva or the Primal God because of His being the source of everything sentient and insentient. The Puri of Prakriti is His construction; and He being its oldest occupant, He is Purāṇa Purusha. When Prakriti is withdrawn during Pralaya, it goes to rest in Him. For this reason He is called Param Nidhānam or the Supreme Abode.

The sun throws light and reveals the earth that has come out from itself. Akin to this, the Lord is the cognizer and the object cognized. The sea is the abode, it being the originator, the sustainer and the withholder of the waves. Even so, the Lord is the Supreme Abode, Param Dhāma, of the universe.
The effect known as the universe is pervaded by the cause known as Iswara in His infinite forms.

Vāyuḥ-varuṇaḥ: śrādaḥ: prajāpatiśeṣvē praptamahās

namō namastētu sahasrākṛtvā: punāḥ bhūyo'pi namō namastē ॥ ३९

Vāyuḥ Yamā yamo gnir varuṇah sasānkaḥ

prajāpatis tvam prapitāmahās ca

namō namas te 'stu sahasrākṛtvāh

puṇas ca bhūyaḥ 'pi namō namas te ॥

Vāyuḥ Vayuḥ Yamā yamo yamāḥ Yama agniḥ Agni

varuṇah Varuna śrādaḥ: sasānkaḥ Moon prajāpati.

prajāpatiḥ Prajapati tvam tvam thou praptamahā: prapitā-

mahāḥ great-grandfather ca and namō namāḥ saluta-

tions namō namāḥ salutations te te to thee again astu be

sahasra kṛtvāh thousand times punāḥ again ca and bhūyaḥ again apī also namō namāḥ salutations namō namāḥ salutations te te to thee

You are Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the Moon, Prajapati and the Great-grandfather. Salutation, salutation to You, a thousand times, and again and again salutation to You.

Prajāpati is the progenitor of beings Brahma
the Creator is the Grandfather, he being the progeni-
tor of the Prajāpatiś The Lord Himself is the Great-
grandfather since Brahma has come out of Him.
The innumerable salutations indicate the upsurge of
devotion.

namō purusādāḥ praptamā yamō'pi sahasrākṛtvāh ॥ ॥ ४०
NAM: purastād prasātaḥ prastatreṇa
VAM: vāsudeva

Namaḥ purastād atha prsthataḥ te
namo 'stu te sarvata eva sarva
ananta vṛṣṭyāmita vikramas tvam
sarvam samāpnoṣi tato 'si sarvah

NAM: namaḥ salutation purastāt purastāt (from) before atha also prastreṇa: prsthataḥ (from) behind te
VAM: tvam sarvam sarvataḥ on every side eva even sarv sarva O all ananta vṛṣṭyā infinite in power

freshetikasam: amita vikramah infinite in powers tvam thou sarvam sarvam all samāpnoṣi pervadest tuto
tataḥ wherefore ātirasi (thou) art sarvam all

Salutation to You before, salutation to You behind, salutation to You on every side, O All! Infinite in might and immeasurable in strength, You pervade all and therefore You are all.

The question of seeking God does not arise to the enlightened; it is a matter of seeing and recognizing Him everywhere and in everything. Arjuna has now risen to this exalted position.

The Lord is revealing His omnipotence exuberantly through the working of the universe. A reverent recognition of it is a form of adoration offered to the Almighty. Nay, man has something more to do. The powers and resources he is gifted with, have all come from God. A proper utilization of them for public good is a potent form of prayer. It is the proper application of man's dharma. He who fails to discharge his dharma spoils his life.
Just as a fruit is inclusive of the pulp, the seed and the skin, Iswara is inclusive of the universe and the beings in it. In the act of adoring the Lord, the act of upholding and propitiating the beings is included. In serving the beings, the Lord is served well.

Now that Arjuna has known Sri Krishna in His true perspective, does he revise his relationship? It comes in his own words —

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं हेण यादव हेण सखेति।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं सत्या प्रवादात प्रणयेन वापि।॥ ४१॥
यथावासार्थंसत्कुलोद्धितं विहारश्रणयासनभोजनेः।
एकोद्द्वारप्रल्युतं तत्समर्थं तत्क्षामयं त्वामहंसप्रेयम्।॥ ४२॥
सक्षे 'ति मत्वा प्रसाहम् यदुक्तम् हेण यादव हेण सखेति।
अ-जानता महिमानम् तव इदम् सत्या प्रवादात प्रणयेन वापि।॥
यदु च भव-द्वाय अर्थं अ-सत्कुल अऽसि विहार-श्रणयासनभोजनेः।
एको द्वार यथा बसितं चब्द्वतं तत्त समाश् तत्क्षामयं त्वाम् महंस प्र-प्र-प्रेयम्॥

sakhe 'ti matvā prasabham yad uktam
he krsna he yādava he sakhe 'ti ||
ajñatā mahimānām tave 'dam
mayā pramādat pranayena vai 'pri ||
yac ca 'vahāsārtham asatkrtō 'si
vihāra sayyāsana bhōjanēḥ ||
eko 'thāvā 'py acyuta tat samaksam
tat ksāmaye tvām aham aprameyam ||

सत्या sakha friend इति iti as मत्वा matvā regarding
prasabham presumptuously यदु yat whatever
उत्तम uktam said हेण he krsna O Krishna हेण यादव
he yādava O Yadava हेण सत्या he sakha O friend इति iti
thus जाननताः ajañatā unknowing महिमानम् mahimānam greatness तत् tava thy इदम् idam this मयां mayā by me यमात्रान् pramādaṭ from carelessness प्रणयेन praṇayena due to love च vā or य य epi even यत् yat whatever च ca and अवहााः_sampler avahāsārtham for the sake of fun असक्तत: asaktatā disrespectfully असि asi (thou) art चिह्नारस्या chिह्नारस्य आसनोजोजये vihāra sayyā āsana bhojanesu while at play, on bed, while sitting or at meals एकः ekah (when) one अयया athava or य य epi even अष्टुत acyuta O Achyuta तत् tat so समक्षम samakṣam in company तत् tat that आसये āsaye implore to forgive त्वाम् tvām thee अहम् aham I अप्रमेयम् aprameyam immeasurable

Whatever I have rashly said from carelessness or love, addressing You as “O Krishna, O Yadava, O friend,” looking on You merely as a friend, ignorant of this Your greatness;

In whatever way I may have insulted You for jest while at play, reposing, sitting or at meals, when alone, O Achyuta, or in company — that I implore You, Immeasurable One, to forgive.

It is but natural that the vision of the cosmic form of Iswara brings a dramatic change in the attitude of Arjuna. His assuming a spontaneous reverent relationship with Sri Krishna is the immediate transformation that has come over him. Not only in him, but in all sadhakas this solemn attitude requires to be invoked and extended to the entire creation. The truth is that the Lord is manifesting Himself in all of these forms. All are therefore unknowingly cognizing fragments of His cosmic form
Cultivation of reverent attitude towards the entire creation is the most potent among spiritual practices.

What makes Arjuna plead for forgiveness? Let it be heard from him.

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य तजस्य पूज्यवः गुरुपारीयान्।
न त्वत्समोभयस्यभविः कुलोज्ज्यो लोकस्यर्क्षस्यश्रतिश्राव। ॥ ७३॥

पिता भ्र-ि लोकस्य चर-चरास्य तास अस्य पूज्य: च गुरुः गरीयान्।
ध्वन्त्र-िम प्रा: भ्र-ि अनि-भष्य: कुट: ब्रह्म: लोक-नये अषि भ-प्रव-प्राण। ॥

pitā 'si lokasya caraacarasya
tvam asya pūjyas ca gurur gariyān ॥
na tvatsamo 'sty abhyadhikaḥ kuto 'nyo
lokatraye 'py apratima prabhāva ॥

पिता pitā father ओसि asi (thou) art लोकस्य lokasya
of the world चर अचरस्य cara acarasya of the moving
and unmoving तस्मू tvam thou अस्य asya of this पूज्य:
pūjyaḥ to be revered च ca and गुरुः guruḥ the Guru
gariyān weightier न na not त्वत्सम tvatsamaḥ
equal to thee ओसि asi is अशष्य: abhyadhikāḥ surpassing कुट: kutaḥ whence अन्य: anyah other लोकस्य
loka traye in the three worlds अषि api also अशष्य: apratima prabhāva O being of unequalled power

You are the Father of this world moving and unmoving. You are to be adored by this world, You the Greatest Guru; none there exists, who is equal to You in the three worlds; who then can excel You, O Being of unequalled power?

If there were more than one Iswara, there is the possibility of one counteracting the doings of another. That would lead to confusion and chaos. But Iswara
being unparalleled and His suzerainty supreme, the entire creation adores Him as the Greatest of the great and as the All-powerful.

The Lord being all in all, what should the sadhaka do?

तस्मात्प्रणयम्य प्राणिधाया कार्य प्रसादये त्वाममीतांगीमित्वम् ।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सहेव सत्यः प्रियः प्रियायाहि सते सोधम् ॥ ४४ ॥

तस्मात् प्र-नम-य प्र-नि-पा-य कामम् प्र-सादये त्वाम् अहम् ईःम् ईःम्।
पिता ईः पुत्रम् सत्यः ईः सत्यः प्रियः प्रियायाहि अहम् ईःम् ॥

tasmāt praṇāmya praṇidhāya kāyam
prasādaye tvāṁ aham iśam idyam
pite 'va putrasya sakhe 'va sakhyuḥ
priyāḥ priyāyāḥ 'rhasi deva sōdhum ॥

tasmāt therefore praṇāmya saluting
prāṇidhāya having bent kāyam body prasādaye
prasādaye crave forgiveness tvāṁ tvāṁ thee aham
iśam the Lord idyam adorabe pita pita
father tvā like putrasya of the son
sakha sakha
friend tvā like sakhyuḥ of the friend
priyāḥ beloved priyāyāḥ to the beloved
arhasi (thou) shouldst deva O God sōdhum bear.

Therefore, bowing down, prostrating my body, I implore You, adorabe Lord to forgive me. Bear with
me, O Lord, as a father with a son, as a friend
with a friend, as a lover with his beloved.

When the glory of the Lord is realized man
cannot help adoring Him. That adoration sponta-
neously expresses itself as bowing down and prostrat-
ing. Vast difference in power and wealth among the worldly people creates a gulf between man and man. But the greatness of God is no hindrance to the insignificant man gaining free access to Him. Arjuna feels instinctively the filial love of the son for the father. But there is a certain amount of reverent aloofness of the son from the father. That handicap is removed by raising the relationship to that between two intimate friends moving on terms of equality. This love is further made charming and sweet by converting it into the dotage of the lovers upon each other. None is dearer to man than God.

When man develops ecstatic love, he feels God as his own. It is like the Gopis of Brindavan identifying themselves with Sri Krishna. They always claimed Him as Gopinatha and not as Jagannatha.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Arjuna Pleases for the Vision of Gentle Form—45-46

अद्वैतपूर्वः हृदिकोणिं दृष्टा मनोच च प्रव्यथितम मनो मे ।
तदेव मे दर्शः देव रूपं प्रसीद देवेश जगद्विवास ॥ ४५

adṛṣṭapūrṇam hṛṣito 'smi dṛṣṭvā
bhayena ca pravyathitam mano me ।
tad eva me darsaya deva rūpan
prasīdā deveśa jagannivāsā ॥

What was never seen before

हृषितः: hṛṣitaḥ delighted अस्मि asmi (I) am दृष्टवः dṛṣṭvā having seen bhayena with fear च ca and प्रव्यथितम् pravyathitam is distressed मनः manah mind ने me my
I rejoice that I have seen what was never seen before, but my mind is confounded with fear. Show me that form only, O God; have mercy, O God of gods, O Abode of the universe.

The watery expanses on the globe are endless, presenting varieties of aspects of theirs. The boisterous part is one among them. Parallel to this, in the cosmic form of Iswara, the terrific is an aspect only. This aspect in particular is shown to Arjuna in order to relieve him of his war problems. Having been enlightened in regard to his function in this inevitable catastrophe, he does not desire any further to behold that terrible vision. He pleads that he might be put in communion with the placid and pleasant aspect of the cosmic form. While the boisterous aspect is by the way, the peaceful and the blissful aspect is the norm with beings as well as with Iswara.

Brother Hari puts on the make up of a lion for the fun of it and teases his sister into fear. But when he sees the jest too much for the timid girl, he throws away the mask and reveals himself in his true form. In this wise Brahman covers Himself with maya and puts on a destructive and terrible form. When the veil of maya is removed He shines in His original calm and blissful splendour.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Arjuna now appeals for the revelation of the auspicious form quite pleasing to him:—
I desire to see you as before, crowned, bearing a mace and a discus in the hand, in Your former form only, having four arms, O thousand-armed, O Universal Form.

The human beings are two-armed. God is conceived of as four-armed as an indication of His superhuman powers. It is mentioned in the Bhagavata Purana that Sri Krishna had on a few occasions revealed Himself as the four-armed Vishnu to some of His devotees. Even with the two arms He was ever manifesting superhuman and divine powers. Arjuna now says that this human form would be quite sufficient and highly desirable for their normal relationship.
The Lord accordingly resumes His benign form and consoles His disturbed companion:—

Arjuna’s Blessed Privilege — 47-49

The Blessed Lord said:

Graciously have I shown you, O Arjuna, this Supreme Form, by My yoga power, this resplendent, universal, infinite, primeval, which none but you has ever seen.
Spiritual exuberance and the experience thereof is the common inheritance of all. Exclusiveness and favouritism have no place in it. Arjuna is beset with a worldly problem. The solution for it has to be found on the background of the cosmic functioning of the Lord. Along with it a peep into the beyond also is provided for him by the grace of the Almighty. Each man finds the reflection of his own face in the mirror. Similarly Arjuna finds problems peculiar to himself solved in the cosmic setting. His peculiar case is no doubt a solitary incident fittingly solved by the Lord.

न वेदयाज्ञाध्यायानां दाननं च क्रियास्मिन्तपोमिः।
एवं रूपः शक्य अः नूळोके द्रष्टं त्वदन्येन कुःप्यवीर ॥ ५८

न वेद-प्रार्थ-अधि-अन्यन: न दान: न च क्रियास्मि: न तपो-स्मि: वै: ।
एवम् रूप: रहु-य: श्रद्धा हृ-चोके द्रष्टं त्व: जनवेन कुः-प्रयवीर ॥

na vedyajñādhyayānair na dānair
na ca kriyābhīr na tapobhīr ugraiḥ ।
evam rūpah sakya aham nṛloke
drāṣṭum tvad anyena kurupravīra ॥

न na not वेदवाज्ञाध्यायानां: veda yajña adhyayanaṁ by the study of the Vedas and of Yajña न na not dānāṁ: dānāṁ by gifts न na not ca and क्रियास्मि: kriyābhiḥ by rituals न na not तपोस्मि: tapobhiḥ by austerities है: ugraiḥ severe एवं रूपं evam rupah in such form शक्यः sakyaḥ (am) possible अहम् aham I नूळोके nṛloke in the world of men द्रष्टम् drāṣṭum to be seen त्वत् tvat than the अन्येन anyena by another खुंयवीर kurupravīra O great hero of the Kurus
Neither by the study of the Vedas, nor by Yajnas, nor by gifts, nor by rituals, nor by severe penances, can this form of Mine be seen in the world of men by any one else but you, O hero of the Kurus.

All the meritorious acts mentioned herein are good in themselves. They are all conducive to spiritual growth as well. But in the practice of all of them, egoism prevails to some extent at least. Individualism, however refined it may be, has its own limitations. But when a devotee gives himself over to the Lord and depends on His grace, the reward that comes to him is abundantly great.

One man gets intoxicated with one peg of liquor while another needs an overdose of it before he becomes tipsy. But when intoxicated both are in the same state. In this way some get into bliss with a ray of realization while the others do so after coming into the blaze of the Divine Presence. However, the effect is the same in both the cases.

—Sri Ramakrishna

मा ते व्यथा या च विद्युद्भावो द्वागः रूपः घर्मीहितक्षेमेदसः

व्यवेस्त्वभी: प्रीतमनाः युनस्तः तदेव से रूपसिद्धि मनः ॥ ४८

ि मा ते व्यथा सा च विन्दु-भवः द्वागः रूपः घर्मीहितक्षेमेदसः

वि-क्षिप-हस्त-भी: प्रीतमन: युन: तद्व न न न रूपम इदम् न-पः ॥

Ma te vyathā mā ca vimudhabhāvo
dṛṣṭvā rupam ghoram idṛk mame 'dam ॥

vyapetabhīḥ pritamanāk punas tvam
tad eva me rupam idam prapasya ॥

Mā mā not te thee vyathā fear mā mā not
cā and vimudhābhavāk bewildered state
dṛṣṭvā having seen rupam āḥ form gharam
terrible āḥ idṛk such mā mā my āḥ idām this
Be not afraid nor bewildered on seeing this terrific form of Mine; free from fear and delighted at heart, do you again see this My former form.

The seafarer is delighted when the boisterous waters become pacified. The child is pleased when mother’s anger changes into affection. The Jivatman is transported with joy when he beholds his terror-striking God resume His benediction-showering form.

The Wonted Serene Form — 50-51

Samjaya uvāca

Ity arjunam āsudevas tatho 'ktvā
svakam rūpaṁ darsayāṁ āsā'bhūyāḥ ।
āśvāsāyāṁ āsa ca bhītam enam
bhūtvā punaḥ saumyavapur mahātma ।

संजय उच्चाच

saṁjaya uvāca Sanjaya said:

Iti iti thus āsūrasya arjunasya to Arjuna vāṣudeva Vasudeva tathā so uttuḥ śaktvā having spoken svakam his own rūpaṁ darsa-
yāmāsa showed ipples: bhūyāḥ again āśātvācavāmāsā āśātvācavāmāsā consoled ca and bhītam who was terrified enam him sūlva bhūtvā having become punāḥ again sāvnya vapaḥ of gentle form mahātmā mahātmā the great-souled one

Sanjaya said:

Having spoken thus to Arjuna, Vasudeva showed again His own form; and the great-souled One assuming His gentle form consoled him who was terrified. 50

Vāsudeva is the son of Vasudeva and Devaki. While being born as their son, He showed His benign and soul-captivating form to His parents, then in imprisonment. The Lord strikes terror only to the extent necessary to tame the strayed into the right path. He is Mahātmā because of this noble act of reclamation.

Arjuna uvāca

dṛṣṭve 'dam māṇuṣam rūpam tava saunyam janārdana
idānām asmi saṁvṛttah sacetāḥ prakṛtim gataḥ

Arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

dṛṣṭvā having seen idam this māṇuṣam human rūpam form tava thy sāvnya
saunyam gentle Janardana Janardana idānim now asti asmi am svayam: samyttāh composed saceṭāh with mind prakṛtim to nature gatah restored

Arjuna said:

Having seen this Your gentle human form, O Janardana, I am now composed and am restored to my own nature.

The fish in the troubled water is ill at ease; it regains its normalcy when water becomes calm. Even so the Jīvalman cannot remain composed when put in touch with the terrific aspect of Iswara. Arjuna bears evidence to this fact.

The Message of the Cosmic Form — 52-55

śri bhagavān uvāca

sudurdarsāṁ idāṁ rūpam drśṭavāṁ asi yan mama
deva apy asya rūpasya nityam darsāna kāṅkṣīṇaḥ

śri bhagavān uvāca Sri Bhagavan said:

sudur dasarāṁ very hard to see idāṁ this rūpam form drśṭavāṁasi thou hast seen yat which mama my dēvāḥ gods api also ārya asya (of) this rūpasya of form nityam ever darsāna kāṅkṣīṇaḥ (are) desirous to behold
The Blessed Lord said:

Very hard it is, indeed, to see this form of Mine which you have seen. Even the Devas are very eager to see this form.

In the scale of evolution the Devas are superior to the human beings. But their knowledge of Iswara is in no way higher than that of the human aspirants. In the spiritual enlightenment that Arjuna has had just now, he has excelled the Devas who are also ardently trying to probe into the mystery of the Supreme.

What are the paths pursued by the sadhakas for the attainment of Iswara? The elucidation follows:

\[
\text{nāṁ bṛndāṅga tapasaṁ na dānena nā chāleṇa} \]
\[
\text{शक्य एवं विधिः प्रह्लाद स्तवानसि मां यथा} \]

\[
\text{nā 'ham vedair na tapasaṁ na dānena na ce 'jyayā} \]
\[
\text{sakya evaṁ vidhāh draṣṭum drṣṭavān asi māṁ yathā} \]

\[
\text{n na not abham aham I bṛde: vedaiḥ by the Vedas na na not} \]
\[
\text{तपसः by austerity na na not dānena by gift na na not cā and} \]
\[
\text{इज्यया by sacrifice śakya (am) possible एवं विधिः evaṁ vidhāḥ like this} \]
\[
\text{प्रह्लाद draṣṭum to be seen प्रह्लाद स्तवानसि drṣṭavānasi (thou) hast seen माम me यथा yathā as} \]

Neither by the Vedas, nor by austerity, nor by gift, nor by sacrifice can I be seen in this form as you have seen Me.
The Lord has repeatedly made it plain that these meritorious acts are at best conducive to the purification of the mind. These are no more useful for the attainment of the Lord than a diligent search is for a gold coin, on which the concerned man happens to be standing.

Which then is the direct and sure path? The statement is —

सङ्गमायत्वं त्वमन्यया शक्यं आहमेवंचिंगोत्सुन ।
शातु द्रृष्टे च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टे च परस्तप ॥ ५४
भक्त्य त्व अनन्यया शक्य य आहम् एवविधेय अेणुः।
श्व द्रृष्टे च तद्विते प्रवेष्टे च परस्तप ॥

bhaktyā tv ananyayā sakya aham evamvidho 'rjuna ।
jñātum drastum ca tattvena pravestum ca paramtapa ॥

भक्त्या bhaktyā by devotion tu tu indeed अनन्यया
ananyayā single-minded शक्य sakyah (am) possible
आहम aham I एवविधेय evam vidhaḥ of this form अेणु
arjuna O Arjuna श्व द्रृष्टे ज्ञातम to be known द्रृष्टम dras-
tum to be seen च ca and तत्त्वेन tattvena in reality प्रवेष्टम
cal pravestum to be entered into च ca and परस्तप param
tapa O Parantapa (O scorcher of thy foes)

But by unswerving devotion can I, of this form, be known and seen in reality and also entered into, O scorcher of foes.

Ananya bhakti is unswerving devotion. In this state, the sadhaka recognizes nothing but Iswara. He makes over his entire being to the Lord. All that he contacts through the senses and the intellect is He. Whatever he does is the Lord's activity.
From the way in which the subordinates and attendants conduct themselves in a palace, the presence of the king in it can be inferred. One should not be satisfied with that inference. Seeing the king in person is superior to believing in his presence. There is a state greater than seeing the sovereign. Contact and communion with him is what is wanted. *Ananya bhakti* takes the devotee through all of these stages in his pursuit of the Lord. He feels first the presence of the Divine; he gets the vision of the Lord next; then he moves intimately with Him until unison is reached. Unswerving devotion provides all these possibilities.

Many have heard of milk. Those who have seen it are lesser in number. The partakers of milk are lesser still. Even such is the contact of man with God.

A talk arose whether man can see God with his physical eyes. No, He cannot be perceived with fleshy eyes. When *bhakti* is practised, the *sadhaka* develops a superior sense organ, which has the power to see and hear supermundane things. With that spiritual eye, God is beheld and the devotee is commingled with Him.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What should the *sadhaka* do then? The injunction comes:—

\[
\text{मत्कर्मकृतम्यतपरमो मद्द्रक: सहजवलितः |} \\
\text{निर्मेतः सर्वभूतेऽथ: स मामेति पाण्डवं} \ ॥ ५५ \\
\text{मद्द्र-कर्म-हत: मद्र-परम: मद्र-भक्त: सहज-वलितः |} \\
\text{निर्मेतः सर्व-भूतेऽथ: स मामू ए-ति पाण्डवं} \ ॥
\]

*matkarmakrṇ matparamo madbhaktah sangavajjitaḥ nirvairāḥ sarvabhūtesu yah sa mām eti pāṇḍava ॥*
mat karmakrt does actions for me mat paramah looks on me as the supreme mad bhaktah is devoted to me saniga varjitaḥ is freed from attachment nīraḥ without enmity sarva bhūteṣu towards all creatures yah who saḥ he māmāṁ to me ēti goes pāṇḍava O Pandava

He who does work for Me, who looks on Me as the Supreme, who is devoted to Me, who is free from attachment, who is without hatred for any being, he comes to Me, O Pandava.

It is in the nature of beings to work. The make of an individual is known from the work he engages himself in. To work for oneself is the way of the world. The devotee however works not for himself but for the Lord.

Worldly people strive for prosperity, power and enjoyment. The devotee strives to attain the Lord Supreme.

The mind thrives getting attached to one thing or another. But it does not cling to two things at the same time. As it grows in devotion to the Lord, its attachment to the world wanes.

Hatred is born of rivalry or mutual exclusion. But these base motives have no place in the devotee’s attempt to recognize the immanency of God in all beings.

Man gains that to which he applies himself. By giving himself to the Lord, he gets Him in return, and there is no gain superior to this.
Do you know what kind of devotion we ought to have towards our Maker? The love of a chaste wife to her husband, the attachment of a miser to his hoarded wealth, the craving of a worldling for sense-pleasure—all these rolled into one and directed towards the Lord make Bhakti. We shall verily gain Him in this way.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीताःपरिशः स्याधित्यायां योगाशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णास्ते विद्धविधुत्तयोगो नाम एकदशोऽध्यायः ॥

iti srimad bhagavadgītāsūpanīṣatsa brahmavidyāyām yogasāstre sri kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde visvarūpa darsanayogo nāma ekādāso ’dhyāyāḥ ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eleventh discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF THE VISION OF THE COSMIC FORM
BHAKTI YOGA — THE YOGA OF DEVOPTION

CHAPTER XII

Brahman with and without Attributes — The Worship of Saguna Brahman — The Devotee’s Divine Traits

Brahman—with and without Attributes — 15

अर्जुन उवाच

एवं सततयुक्ता ये मकास्त्वा पर्युपासते ।
ये च चत्वार्थपरिश्रमं तेषां के योगविचारम् ॥ ॥

एवं व्याहः सतत्युक्ता ये मकास्त्वा अवयक्तं तेषां के योगविचारम् ॥

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca

evam satatayuktā ye bhaktās tvām paryupāsate ।
ye ca ṣṇpy aksaram avyaktam tesaṃ ke yogavittamāḥ ॥

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said

एवम् evam thus satata yuktāh everstead-fast वे ye those भक्ताः bhaktāḥ devotees त्वाम् tvām thec पर्युपासते paryupāsate worship वे ye those च ca and अष्टि aksaram the imperishable अव्यक्तम् avyaktam the unmanifested तेषां tesaṃ of these के ke which योगविचारम् yogavittamāḥ better versed in yoga

Arjuna said:

Those devotees who, ever steadfast, worship You thus, and those again who worship the Imperishable, the Unmanifest — which of these are better versed in yoga?

At the conclusion of chapter eleven the adoration of the Supreme was advocated But Brahman

80—41
is both with and without attributes. Of these two aspects of His, which is better suited for worship? This is the point raised herein for clarification.

 Śrī bhagavān uvāca

mayy āvesya mano ye mām nitya yuktā upāsate
sraddhayā parayo ‘petās te me yuktatamā matāḥ

Śrī bhagavān uvāca Śrī Bhagavan said:

mayi on me āvesya fixing mind: manah
the mind ye who mām me nitya yuktā
ever steadfast worship upāsate with faith
sraddhay ā paraya (with) supreme
endowed these me of me yuktā
the best versed in yoga: matāḥ (in my)

The Blessed Lord said:

Those who have fixed their minds on Me, and
who, ever steadfast and endowed with supreme
Sraddha, worship Me — them do I consider perfect in

The Lord is having the cosmos for His physical
body. He is Parameswara, Saguna Brahman. He
rules remaining immanent in the universe. He is
the Lord of the yogis, the Omniscient. His devotees
are they who have dedicated themselves to His
worship. They are free from attachment, aversion
Thought of the Lord alone dominates their hearts day and night. They live for the service of the Lord. They are therefore perfect yogis.

It is quite all right to meditate on God viewing Him as formless. But do not entertain the thought that only your own conception of God is correct and that the beliefs of the others are erroneous. To meditate on Him as with form is also a method. You persevere staunchly in your path until you reach the realization of God. After that, you will come to know that all paths lead to the same goal.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Are they not yogis, who take to the adoration of the Attributeless Absolute Reality—the Nirguna Brahman? The answer is given—

ye tv aksaram anirdeśyam avyaktam paryupāsate
sarvatragam acintyam ca kūtastham acalam dhruvam

ye who tu verily aksaram the imperishable anirdeśyam the indefinable avyaktam the unmanifested paryupāsate worship sarvatragam the omnipresent acintyam the unthinkable ca and dhruvam the eternal

But those who worship the Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the Unchangeable, the Immovable, the Eternal—
Having restrained all the senses, even-minded everywhere, engaged in the welfare of all beings—verily they also come unto Me.

_Nirguna Brahman_ is indeterminate Pure Consciousness. It can be arrived at by eliminating all obstructive modifications which are characteristic of _Prakriti_. _Aksharam_ is the Imperishable. The universe of form appears and disappears; whereas Pure Consciousness is ever Itself.

_Anirdesyam_ means the Indefinable. It cannot be defined by comparison as there is nothing similar to It.

_Avyaktam_ means the Unmanifest. The manifest is that which can be cognized with the aid of the senses. But no sense organ can have any access to Pure Consciousness. As such It is unmanifest.

_Sarvatragam_ means the Omnipresent. A lump of ice buried at the bottom of the sea, remains ever
unmanifest and uncognized. Is it because of concealment somewhere in this way that Brahman is unmanifest? No, there is nothing to hide. It, the Omnipresent. Space is negated in Brahman. A huge mountain perceived in dream exists in the space created by the dreaming mind. But in wakefulness the dream space is negated. Similarly the space in the universe is negated in Brahman, who is Omnipresent.

Achintyam means the Unthinkable. Mind thinks of the good and bad and feels happy or miserable. Brahman does not lend Itself to be conceived by the mind in this way. It is the Wakefulness throwing light on the mind, but inaccessible to it.

Kūṭastham means the Unchangeable. The word Kūṭa connotes the painful and impermanent phenomenal existence. The permanent basis to this changing existence is Kūṭastha, the Unchangeable Brahman.

Achalam means the Immovable. The moving clouds are supported by the wind which in turn is moving in its own way. But that kind of relative movement is not in Brahman. It is constant.

Dhruvam means the Eternal. ākāsa which is the background of the wind and clouds is constant; it does not move. But in Pralaya this ākāsa does not exist. From the immovable state it goes into the state of dissolution. Brahman does not suffer from that feature. It is the Eternal.

The sadhaka who is competent to adore the Formless Reality has the following attainments. He has complete mastery over the senses. He neither
runs after the pleasant nor recoils from the painful; he remains unaffected by both of them. Does the sadhaka reduce himself then to the position of a corpse which lies unaffected by pleasure and pain? No, he raises himself to even-mindedness which is found in him only who is ethically and spiritually evolved. This attitude again does not mean passiveness. It expresses itself in the form of service to all beings, recognizing Divinity in them. When the sadhaka's mind flows out in this way, cognizing Godhood everywhere, it is to be regarded as the worship of Brahman.

When a bell is rung, each stroke has a sound-form of its own. But the formless sound is also heard for a while after stopping the striking. Similarly God is both with form and without form.

— Sri Ramakrishna

If both the ways of worship are one and the same, may one adopt any method according to one's liking? No, one should not; for:"
deha\textadho\textadho for the embodied अन्द्रापृष्टे av\textapriate is reached

Greater is their difficulty whose minds are set on the Unmanifested, for the goal of the Unmanifested is very hard for the embodied to reach.

Though the goal is the same, the worship of God without form is very difficult for the sadhaka soaked in body-consciousness. As he thinks of himself with form he cannot help thinking of his God also as with form. The worship of Saguna Brahman is easy. He who adores Nirguna Brahman has to be free from body-feeling right from the beginning. But the attainment of that state is not possible for all. The spiritually advanced soul alone rises to that level. The easy and natural course for the ordinary sadhaka is to proceed with the worship of God with form.

The Jnani or the realized soul says "Aham Brahmasmi—I am Brahman." But the body-bound man should not say so. It is harmful to him to say "I am Brahman" when actually he is the body. He deceives himself and the world by such a statement.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How should the sadhaka proceed with the worship of Iswara? The way is shown —

The Worship of Saguna Brahman—6-12

वे हूँ सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मल्लरा: ।
अनन्येऽध्ये योगेन सां ध्यायस्य उपासते ॥ ६

वे हूँ सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि सन्त-विवु-व्य नस्य-परा ।
भनु-अन्येऽध्ये एव योगेन सामु ध्यायस्त उप-अनु-सते ॥
ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi mayi samnyasya matparāh
ananyenai 'ya yogena māṁ dhyāyanta upāsate

ye ye who tu but sarvāṇi all karmāṇi kar-
māṇi actions mayi in me samnyasya renoun-
cing matparāh regarding me as the supreme
goal ananyena single-minded eva even yeṣeṇa
yogena with yoga māṁ māṁ me dhvayāntah
meditating upāsate worship

But those who worship Me, renouncing all actions
in Me, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, meditat-
ing on Me with single-minded yoga —

tetāmāh śāmudrātā mṛtyu samsāra sāgarāt
bhavāmi nacirāt pārtha mayy aśeṣita cetasām

tetām teṣām for them aham I samud-
dhartā the saviour mṛtyu samsāra sāga-
rāt out of the ocean of the mortal Samsara
bhavāmi (I) become na cirāt ere long pārtha
O Partha mayi in me aśeṣita cetasām of those whose minds are set

For them whose thought is set on Me, I become
very soon, O Partha, the deliverer from the ocean of
the mortal Samsara.

The ignorant man who segregates himself from
the Whole which is Brahman invites complication
and trouble to his earthly career. He, on the other
hand, who attunes his personal life to the cosmic functioning which is the sport of Iswara, gains in Sreyas and gets into the plenitude supremely above the wheel of birth and death.

There are harbinger of the attainment of Godhood. He in whom Bhakti is surging with fervour has already come to the threshold of Divinity. Know it for certain that he will very soon get into union with Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How should the embodied one prepare oneself for the attainment of the plenitude? The answer comes:

मन्येव मन आप्तलम मयि बुद्धि निवेशयाव ।
निवसिष्यसि मन्येव अत ऊर्भे न संशयः ॥ ८

मयि एव मन आप्तलम मयि बुद्धिनुविष्यसि नवेशय।
निवसिष्यसि मयि एव कल ऊर्भे न संशयः ॥

mayy eva mana ādhatśva mayi buddhim nivesaya ।
nivasisyasi mayy eva ata ʿurdhvam na samsayah ॥

मयि mayi in me एव eva only मन मanah the mind
आप्तलम ādhatśva fix मयि mayi in me बुद्धिम buddhim (thy)
intellect निवेशय nivesaya place निवसिष्यसि nivasisyasi
thou shalt live मयि mayi in me एव eva alone अत ऊर्भे
ata ʿurdhvam hereafter न na not संशय samsayah doubt

Fix your mind on Me alone, let your thoughts dwell in Me. You will hereafter live in Me alone. Of this there is no doubt.

To feel is the way of the mind and to decide is the way of the intellect. And these are the inner subtle organs of man. A man's residence need not be reckoned basing on the locality where he has
placed himself bodily. Man verily is where his mind is. There are those who live in hell on earth; and there are those others who make a heaven of this earth. It is the mind of man that makes the heaven and the hell. When this mind is made over to God, man is then verily in the Divine Presence. The Lord says there is no doubt about this; the devotee can verify this verity for himself.

Man is born with two tendencies, Vidya guna and Avidya guna—the noble and the base, dormant in him. The former leads him Godward and the latter makes him earth-bound. In babyhood both the tendencies are in equilibrium, as if equally distributed in the two scales of a balance. If he grows in the life in the senses, the scale of worldliness goes down with that base weight. But if he emerges in spirituality, the scale in him of Godliness goes down towards Iswara with that holy weight.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What has that Sadhaka to do, whose mind is not staunch and steady in the pursuit of God? The injunction comes:

अथ विचरं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्विरम् ।
अस्म्यात्स्योऽनेन ततो मामिच्छामु धन्यः ॥ ९ ॥

अथ विचित्तम समृ-आ-ग्राहे स शक्नोषि मयि स्विरम् ।
असि-व्यास-स्योऽनेन ततः मामू इच्छ आश-द्रामू धन्यः ॥

atha cittam samādhātum na saknoṣi mayi sthiram ।
abhāṣa yogena tato māṁ icchā 'ptum dhanaṁjaya ॥

अथ atha if vicitram cittam the mind समाधिम samā
dhātum to fix न na not शक्नोषि saknoṣi (thou) art able मयि mayi in me स्विरम् sthiram steadily अस्म्यात्स्योऽनेन abhyāsa yogena by the yoga of constant practice चत: tatāḥ then सामू māṁ me इच्छ इच्छा wish आश-द्रामू, āptum to reach धन्यः dhanāṃjaya O Dhananjaya
If you are not able to fix your mind steadily on Me, O Dhananjaya, then seek to reach Me by Abhyasa-yoga.

Staunch is that devotion of the sadhaka which does not deviate from the Lord. Wavering is that devotion which oscillates between God and the world. Through constant practice the mind has to be weaned away from the world. It is Abhyasa-yoga which is practised ceaselessly until the mind is permanently reclaimed from baseness. The impossible can be made possible through constant practice. Nature can be changed by nurture; it being the most effective means.

A man was rearing a pet dog allowing it undue indulgence. One day when he was conversing with a learned visitor the dog, as was its wont, jumped on to the lap of its master and licked his face. "This is no good," observed the new comer. The remark produced a salutary effect on the man who decided then and there to train the dog properly. Thenceforth, he gave a knock every time the dog jumped up to lick his face. The sagacious animal was not slow to find out that the master did not approve of that act. It changed its habit accordingly. Similarly the unwanted desire is a wretched dog that man has fondly reared. It dominates over him and depraves him woefully. Repeated blows in the form of counter thoughts and ideas are the only way to rectify it.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Is there any other course open to the sadhaka, if his mind does not submit to Abhyasa-yoga? The next course is pointed out —

अन्यायायेंकन्यस्मरणोक्ति मत्स्यपरमो भव ।
सदर्थमपि कर्मणि कृत्यन्तिद्विंद्रवाच्यपि ॥ १०
abhyāse 'py asamartho 'si matkarmaparamo bhava
mad artham api karmāṇi kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi

अभ्यासे abhyāse in practice अषि api also असमर्थः
asamarthah not capable अषि asi (thou) art matkarmaparasm:
matkarma paramaḥ intent on doing actions for my
sake मव bhava be सदर्थम् mad artham for my sake अषि
api also karmāṇi actions कुर्वन kurvan by doing
बिद्विषम siddhim perfection अवाप्लस्ति avāpsyasi thou
shall attain

If you are unable even to practise Abhyāsa-yoga,
be you intent on doing actions for My sake; even by
performing actions for My sake you will attain per-
fection.

Force of habit is too strong to be altered or
curbed; it drags the man along its own way. Even
such a bent can be turned to advantage. While the
bent is allowed to have its sway, it is utilized in the
service of the Lord. A talkative man for example,
may go on talking of God instead of worldly things.
An active man may work hard for the glory of his
Maker and not for mammon. When he becomes an
instrument of the Lord in this way, no work taints
him. His mind becomes gradually purified. God-
hood is reached.

When a man changes his attitude he is freed from
bondage. Whatever work takes place through man is actually
the work of the Lord. “Lord, You have Your work done by me.
In ignorance I feel ‘I am the doer.’ May I be only an instru-
ment.” Attitude of this kind emancipates the aspirant.

— Sri Ramakrishna
But there are men who work only for themselves. They are not able to feel that they are serving the Lord. Is there no way out for such men from attachment to karma? The way is shown:

अथैंतद्वपश्चकोशिस्व केवल मधोगमार्श्वितः ।
सर्वकार्मफलत्वाग्नि तत्सः कुः यत्तात्मावाच ॥ ११ ।

When one has the thought, "I am doing the yoga," he is carried in the name of yoga. When one has the thought, "I am doing the fruit of all actions," then one should do what is required.

_atha_ _tad_ _apy_ _asaktos_ _si_ _karmam_ _madyogam_ _ásritaḥ_ ।
sarva _karma_ _phala_ _tyāgam_ _tataḥ_ _kuru_ _yatātmavān_ ॥

If you are not able to do even this, then taking refuge in Me, abandon the fruits of all action with the self-subdued.

Among virtues, unselfishness is the most paying. Godhood is the reward for complete self-abnegation. When the _sadhaka_ established in unselfishness meditates on God, he hastens his union with Him. But selfishness dies hard. It persists in many an unknown subtle form and causes hindrance to meditation. That hindrance has to be eliminated by _Abhyāsa-yoga_. Failing in that, all actions inherent in man may be performed for the glory of the Lord. But if the selfishness be so deep-rooted that a man
does not desire to get out of it, or is incapable of outgrowing it, even for him there is a way out.

The earth-bound man is not prepared to abandon the fruits of his actions. Rather he wants to gather more and yet more fruits of his work. He ought to be told that the fruits of his karma will last long with him if he lived a life of self-control. He must be told next that more profit would come to him if he relied on God. Thirdly he must be induced into the belief that by offering a portion of his income to God and through God to His children, his income is bound to be multiplied. He learns by experience that selfishness is more paying when it is based on selflessness. An effort at abandoning the fruits of action is to be instilled into the ordinary man gradually in this way. In course of time he comes to learn that supramundane life comes of self-denial and not of self-seeking.

You cannot remain without doing work. Your inborn nature forces you to work. Therefore let your activities be carried on well. But if they were done without attachment, they take you Godward. Be not affected by the pleasure and pain ensuing from your activities. Associate them all with Iswara. Prepare yourself in this way for union with Him.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What are the indications of progress in spiritual practices? They are delineated as follows:—

\[ श्रेष्ठे दि ज्ञानमेयासूत् ज्ञानाध्यायानि विशिष्यते \]
\[ ह्यानात्स्वरूपसङ्गस्त्रयागम्याच्छतिरनन्दस्य \]

\[ वेयम् दि ज्ञानमु असि-आलि ज्ञानात् ज्ञानम् विशिष्यत-दे \]
\[ ह्यानात्स्वरूपसङ्केत-ह्यायः \]
\[ ह्यानात् शानि-अन्तायः \]
sreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāt jñānād dhyānam visīsyate dhyānāt karmaphala tyāgas tyāgāc chāntir anantaram

श्रेयः sreyah better हि hi indeed ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge अभ्यासात् abhyāsāt than practice ज्ञानान् jñānāt than knowledge ध्यानम् dhyānam meditation विज्ञेयते visīsyate excels ध्यानान् dhyānāt than meditation कर्मकल्याणः karma phala tyāgaḥ the renunciation of the fruits of the actions कल्याणः tyāgāt from renunciation शान्तिः sāntih peace अनन्तरम् anantaram immediately

Better indeed is knowledge than (formal) Abhyasa; better than knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is the renunciation of the fruit of action; peace immediately follows renunciation.

Ritualistic religious practice is called Abhyāsa. Many a man does it mechanically without any feeling behind it. With him it is a social habit involuntarily picked up, falling in line with what the others are doing. A conventionally pious man goes to the temple, stands before the symbol of the Deity, pays homage with folded palms, turns round on all directions palms remaining folded as they are, prostrates before the Deity and goes home with the thought that he has discharged his duty to the Maker. He knows nothing of the principles underlying his actions.

There is another man who is not given to this habitual formalism, but who knows theoretically that the cognition of the Divinity should commence at the temple, but that it should not end there. That adoration ought to be extended in all directions to aught that is. This second man’s act of understand-
ing the principle is better than the first man’s act of ignorantly observing a formality.

A third man sits at appointed hours and meditates on the truth that it is Divinity that is manifesting Itself as the various beings that he contacts every day. What this man does is better still because he attempts to get fixed in the truth that he has intellectually grasped.

A fourth man gives a practical shape to his understanding by devotedly sharing with others whatever good things he has procured by his personal efforts. Because of the renunciation that he practises, this man stands foremost among the sadhakas. Heartfelt abhyāsa, right knowledge and good meditation are all implicitly contained in this holy act of his.

That peace immediately follows renunciation is self-evident. A few dogs fight among themselves for a few pieces of bread strewn about. Evidently there is no peace among them. Elsewhere a crow calls its comrades to share some scattered rice. They flock and eat peacefully because of their spirit of mutual help which is equivalent to the spirit of renunciation. This is an objective example. Subjectively a yogi can feel how much of peace and exuberance there are in giving away and sharing with others, than in grabbing and jealously keeping things all to oneself. Renunciation is the key to higher life.

A kite snatched a piece of meat from a butcher’s shop and flew to a branch of a tree to feast on it. But immediately ensued a scramble when some other birds swooped to loot it. The kite flew from tree to tree, but there was no escape from the raiders.
To avoid this botheration it let go the meat and perched quiet upon a bough — A sage who saw this scene learnt a lesson from the kite — Tranquillity is born of renunciation

— Sri Ramakrishna

Who again, among the devotees, becomes the favourite of the Lord? This point is clarified now —

The Devotee’s Divine Traits — 13-20

अद्वैता सर्वभूतानां मैत्र: करुण एव क ||

निर्मः निरहर्द्वारः समदुःखसुखः श्यम || १६

सत्तस्त: सत्तः योगी यतात्मा द्विनिषयः ||

मस्मयिंभिनमनोधनिवयैः मद्द्रकः स मे प्रयः || १५

अद्वैता सर्वभूतानां मैत्र: करुण पुत्र च ||

निर्:मम निर्:हर्द्वारः सम-दुःख-सुखः श्यम ||

सम् दुःख-सत्तात्मा योगी श्र-महा ज्ञान-द्वि-चरणः

भिव शरीरमुक्ति य मद्द्रक स मे प्रयः ||

advesa sarva bhutanan maitrah karuna eva ca
nirnaya mahan karuna bhutanan ksamite
samstustah satatam yogi yatam drdhanistayah
mayy arpita manobuddhir yo madbhaktah sa me priyah

अद्वैता advesa not hating सर्वभूतानाम sarva bhutanan of (to) all creatures मैत्रः maitrah friendly karuna karunah compassionate एव even एव ca and निर्मः nir maha without mineness निरहर्द्वारः nir ahankara without एव eva even एव ca and निर्मः nir maha

सत्तस्त: सत्तस् satatam ever steady in meditation योगी yogi practitioner यतात्मा yatam self-controlled द्विनिषयः dvina niscayah possessed of firm conviction भिव शरीरमुक्ति य mayy arpita
mano buddhiḥ with mind and intellect dedicated to me v: yah who smṛtuḥ: madbhaktah my devotee s: saḥ he से me to me प्रिय: priyah dear

He who hates no being, who is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from the feeling of ‘I and mine,’ even-minded in pain and pleasure and forbearing, 13

Ever content, steady in meditation, self-controlled and possessed of firm conviction, with mind and intellect fixed on Me, he My devotee is dear to Me. 14

The feeling of oneself as alien to others is born of ignorance. An aggressive form of this feeling is hatred, capable of creating poison in the system. This destructive feeling therefore has no place in the wholesome life of a devotee.

Mere avoidance of hatred is not sufficient. Stones and stone-like people do not hate; but they are none the better for it. Life should take a positive turn. Feeling oneself friendly to all is the mark of a devotee’s life.

Careerists often cultivate friendship with all, with the base motive of self-advancement. But a devotee of God is he who has nothing to seek, but everything to give. He is so compassionate that he ever promotes the welfare of the others.

Of all forms of egoism, the spiritual egoism is the most dangerous one. If one develops the egoistic feeling that he is rendering spiritual help to others, he can hardly ever get out of that harmful quagmire. A true devotee is always free from the feeling of ‘I and mine.’
Resulting from his benign service to others, a devotee may lose his possessions, may even be put to hardship. But that ordeal causes him no pain. When the world happens to speak highly of his exemplary life and work, he derives no pleasure from that praise. He is even-minded in the midst of these occurrences.

It is not unoften that a devotee is put to unwarranted affliction by the ignorant and wilful ones. But in such a trying circumstance a genuine devotee is always forbearing.

Contentment, bliss and buoyancy ever mark a yogi for their own. Being established in yoga, self-control and disciplined life become part and parcel of his being. In matters spiritual he is not wavering, he is one of firm conviction. His refined feelings and his clarified understanding are all centred on the Lord. As the needle of a compass always points to the north, the faculties of the devotee are ever intent on Him. Such a devotee is ever dear to Him.

Does the Lord attach any value to the wealth and property dedicated to Him? Nothing whatsoever. The Lord bestows His grace on that devotee only who has an inordinate love and devotion for Him. The Blessed Lord attaches all importance to devotion, discrimination and detachment from worldliness.

— Sri Ramakrishna
yasmān no’dvijate loko lokān no’dvijate ca yah
harṣāmarṣabhayodvegair mukto yah sa ca me priyah

yasmāt from whom न na not उद्विजते udvijate
is agitated लोकः lokoḥ the world लोकात् lokaḥ from the
world न na not उद्विजते udvijate is agitated च ca and यः
yah who हर्ष अमर्ष भय उद्वेगायिक harṣa amarṣa bhaya udvegaik
by (from) joy, envy, fear and anxiety मुक्तः muktah
freed यः yah who सः saḥ he च ca and मे me to me विष विष priyah dear

He by whom the world is not afflicted and whom
the world cannot afflict, he who is free from joy,
anger, fear and anxiety — he is dear to Me.

The life of a devotee causes harm to nobody in
the world. Directly or indirectly, everything good
emanates from his life and nothing evil. Some of
his doings may sometimes seem painful to others;
but even in such actions intrinsic good alone prevails.
What the surgeon does to the patient and the teacher
to the pupil may appear hurtful; but in effect they
are wholesome. A devotee in the position of Arjuna
is obliged to bring about a carnage. But ultimate
good to the world is contained in that seeming evil.
Again, whatever harm befalls a devotee from the
world is not viewed by him as an injury. Sterling is
his mind which accepts all afflictions as blessings in
disguise come from the Most High. The more the
affliction, the greater is the devotee’s delightful
submission to the will of the Lord. Prahlada is the
model of the super-devotee.

What is the sort of self-culture that brings forth
this genuine frame of mind in the devotee? The rest
of this stanza gives the answer to this question. One should not feel joyous when one comes at things pleasant, for, that mind which is a victim of joy is also a potential victim of misery. A strong mind, on the other hand, remains unaffected by joy and sorrow. A devotee is he who conquers anger and envy which are his twin enemies. Every time he is overcome by either of these, the stamina of his mind declines. The wind of anger or envy may toss the creeper of the mind of the ordinary man, but the mind of the devotee stands like a stalwart tree, unperturbed by it. He is too strong to be affected by such petty feelings. Fear is worse than death, which can only rob man of his body, whereas the former wrecks the entire personality. The frightened man is a heap of empty sensation, nothing worthy emanates from him. The devotee knows no fear and so divinity beams out of him. Anxiety is another mental disease which eats into the stamina of man. The devotee takes all happenings as divine dispensation and there is nothing to be disturbed about. The devotee who is made up of such sterling qualities is claimed by the Lord as His own.

That man wastes his own time and energy who always engages himself in recounting the worth of the others. For, in doing so, he neither gains in building his own character nor in getting fixed in the glory of the Lord.

— Sri Ramakrishna

अन्ये शुचिर्देश उदात्तिनो गतियथः ।
सम्पूर्णभरित्याणि यो मन्द्रकः स में प्रियः ॥ ९६
ष्ट्र-अप-दृष्ट्र छचि दृष्टि उदाहरित्त गतियथः ।
सबं-धार्मिक परिस्थापणी यां मद्द-भूष स में प्रियः ॥
anapekṣah sucir dakṣa udāsīno gatavyathah
savarāmbha parityāgī yo madbhaktiḥ sa me priyāḥ

अनपेक्षः: anapekṣah free from wants शुचिः: sucih pure
dakṣah expert उदासीनः: udāsinah unconcerned
gatavyathah untroubled सर्व अरस्म परित्यागी sarva
ārambha parityāgī renouncing all undertakings यः:
yah who मद्भक्तः: mad bhaktiḥ my devotee स: saḥ he मे:
to me मियः: priyāḥ dear

He who has no wants, who is pure and prompt, untroubled, and who is selfless in all his undertakings, he who is thus devoted to Me, is dear to Me.

That man is free from wants who does not seek after sensual pleasures. He becomes pure to the extent he rids himself of all sensual pleasures. When the thought, word and deed of a man are not contaminated by sensuality he is established in purity. To be prompt in the discharge of duty is possible only for him who lives a disciplined life. Even a very grave crisis, suddenly sprung upon him, does not confuse his understanding; he handles it promptly as he ought to. Worldly people behave in one way towards friends and in quite another way towards foes. But the devotee of the Lord is unconcerned whether those he deals with are friends or foes. He behaves in the same simple and straightforward manner with one and all. His dealings being clean he remains untroubled by their consequences. Serving the Lord being his sole motive, he is selfless in all his undertakings. He has everything to dedicate to the Maker and His beings; he has nothing to ask of them. Therefore he is dear to the Lord.
He who is not deceived by his own mind—a person such as he alone, gains access to the divine presence of the Lord. The point comes to this—an attitude free from guile and deceit and a devotion true to the core—these are the means to take one Godward.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Yo 'n hṛṣyati nā dveṣṭi nā śočati nā kāṅkṣati ।
śuभāṣuभवपरिवारी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ १७ ॥

c. yaḥ who n na not hṛṣyati rejoices n na not dveṣṭi hates n na not śočati grieves n na not kāṅkṣati desires śuभāṣuभवपरिवारी subhā asubha parityāgī renouncing good and evil bhaktimāṇ full of devotion 'yaḥ who s saḥ he s me to me प्रियः priyah dear

He who neither rejoices nor hates nor grieves nor desires, renouncing good and evil, full of devotion, he is dear to Me.

The worldly people rejoice obtaining things pleasing to the senses; but the lover of God does not behave as they do. They hate them who create unwanted situations; but the devotee pays no heed to bad people and unpleasant situations. He does not grieve when he is deprived of worldly possessions nor does he desire to procure them for his personal enjoyment. His intense devotion to the Lord admits no other desire into his heart. He is free from the notions of good and evil, even as an
innocent baby is. A devotee with these excellences is endearing to the Lord.

God's presence cannot be felt in that heart which is given to attachment, aversion and fear.

— Sri Ramakrishna

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः || शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेदुः समः सज्जविचारितः || १८
tulānīnāntāदत्तिमानी संतुष्टो थेन केन नेनलितः ।
अनिकेतः फियामतिभक्तिमान्ये प्रियो नरः || १९
समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा सान-अप-सानयोः ।
शीत-उष्ण-सुख-दुःखेदुः समः सज्ज-विचारितः ।
tulā-निन्दा-द्रुतिः भौती सम-उष्णः थेन केन-नेनलितः ।
अनिकेतः फियामतिः अफ़ि-मानू ने प्रियः नरः ||
samaḥ satrau ca mitre ca tathā mānāpamānayoh ||
sītoṣṇa sukha duḥkheṣu samaḥ saṅgavivarjitaḥ ।
tulaṃ nindā stutir mauni saṁtuṣṭo yena keṇacit ।
aniketaḥ sthiramatir bhaktimān me priyo naraḥ ।

समः samaḥ the same शत्रौ satrau to foe च ca and
मित्रे mitre to friend च ca and तथा tathā also मान अपमानयोः:
māna apamānayoh in honour and dishonour शीत-उष्ण-सुख
दुःखेदुः sita uṣṇa sukha duḥkheṣu in cold and heat, in
pleasure and pain समः samaḥ the same सज्जविचारितः:
saṅga vivarjitaḥ free from attachment

tulānīnāntāदत्तिः tulaṃ nindā stutih to whom censure
and praise are equal भौती mauni silent संबुः: saṁtuṣṭah
contented थेनकेनचित्तं yena keṇacit with anything अनिकेतः:
aniketaḥ homeless फियामतिः sthiramatih steady-minded
अफिमान् bhaktimān full of devotion से me to me प्रियः
priyaḥ dear नर: naraḥ (that) man
He who is the same to foe and friend and also in honour and dishonour, who is the same in cold and heat, in pleasure and pain, who is free from attachment,

To whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded, full of devotion — that man is dear to Me.

Day and night are inevitable on earth, but in the blazing sun they have no place. Friendship and enmity are but natural among fellow beings, but in the fervour of the divine love of God these differences vanish of their own accord.

An illicit love in the initial stage is mindful of shame and social decorum. But when it deepens into open familiarity all sense of shame is set aside. There is some similarity between this and the divine love of God, which pays no heed to honour and dishonour. While the former leads the fallen one to depravity, the latter elevates the devotee into the Sublime. The worldly people are flippant both in honouring and dishonouring a devotee of God. But unconcerned that he is with these passing phases, the devotee goes headlong in his love of the Maker.

To the one subject to body-consciousness the feeling of cold and heat is natural with the change of climate. But to the one given to divine ecstasy born of Bhakti, this feeling does not come.

The feeling of pleasure and pain is concomitant with the feeling of cold and heat. When the attachment to the body is overcome, these feelings disappear as a matter of course.
A worldly man with a talent for music sings to receive the applause of the public. He derives pleasure in their praise and pain in their censure if any. But when a Bhakta sings the glory of the Lord, he is indifferent to the censure and the praise of the people. His activities are likely to be exposed to public remarks. But he remains dead to all their observations and goes his own divine way.

The devotee prefers to be silent. If at all he talks, it would be about the Lord and nothing else. His training the tongue in this way is equivalent to the practice of silence.

A person unexpectedly and hurriedly returning home on some important business, reconciles himself with any means of transport that is immediately available. He is not much worried if there be any lack of amenities and facilities in the travel. The Bhakta's position in the world is very much like this. Communion with God is his sole concern. He is therefore content with anything worldly that comes his way in his earthly sojourn.

To a hurrying traveller sitting accommodation in any of the railway coaches is sufficient. The Bhakta, the Godward pilgrim on earth does not claim any residence as his home. He holds on to the ideal:

"Have thou no home. What home can hold thee, friend? The sky thy roof; the grass thy bed;"

The devotee seeks nothing but God. He is therefore steady-minded. He gives himself completely to God. So he becomes the favourite of God.
Do not allow worldly thoughts and concerns disturb your mind. Discharge your duties as and when they present themselves to you. But fasten your mind ever at the feet of the Lord.
— Sri Ramakrishna

They, verily, who follow this immortal dharma described above, endued with Sraddha, looking upon Me as the Supreme Goal, and devoted—they are exceedingly dear to Me.

Sraddha is the common factor to all the forms of spiritual practices. It is therefore linked here with the path of Bhakti. On the ground of his holding the Lord as the Supreme Goal, the devotee does not abandon work. He holds fast to the practice of dharma. Mukti and Immortality being the outcome of the practice of dharma, it is here equated with Immortality. It is also called the Sanatana Dharma. He who conforms to dharma never comes
to grief or destruction. Being both an ardent devotee and a staunch practiser of dharma, he is the dearest to the Lord.

*Bhakti* is of two kinds—the *Vaidika bhakti* and the *Prema bhakti*. To conform to the injunctions in the Scripture, to chant the name of the Lord as many times as prescribed, to fast and pray, to go on pilgrimage, to perform ritualistic worship with the aid of the enjoined materials—all these belong to the former kind. An earnest pursuance of these means leads the devotee ultimately into the latter, the *Prema bhakti*, in which there is no place for any kind of earthly attachment. The Bhakta gives himself over entirely to the Lord. This whole-hearted offering is graciously accepted by the Lord and the devotee becomes His own.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The path of karma in the first six chapters and the path of *Bhakti* in the second six get united here. In the following six chapters the path of *Jnāna* remains to get united with these two.

हति श्रीमद्रज्जगद्वैतावस्त्रनियतं सदविद्वायशं योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे मकंदोगो नाम
द्वादशोष्वयः ॥

*itī śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmanavidyāyāṁ
yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇarjuna samvāde bhaktiyogo
nāma dvādaso ’dhyāyāḥ ॥*

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the twelfth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF DEVOTION
Prakriti and Purusha Constitute Everything — The Vehicles of Revelation — The Constituents of Kshetra — Self-culture — Brahma Defined — The Effect of Evolving in Wisdom — One Appearing as the Many — Bhakti Evolves into Jnana — Prakriti and Purusha are Eternal Verities — The Seed of the Mundane Life — Brahma Jnana Dispels the Delusion of Birth — The Four Yogas — Gaining in Unity is Muktikarma Pertains to Prakriti — Brahma is Self-sufficient

Prakriti and Purusha Constitute Everything — 1-3

Arjuna uvāca

prakṛtim purusam ca'iva ksetram ksetrajñaḥ eva ca
etad veditum icchāmi jñānam jñeyam ca keśava

Arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

Prakṛtim prakṛtim the Prakriti puṣṭam puruṣam the Purusha ca and eva even kṣetram the field kṣetrajñaḥ the knower of the field eva even ca and etat this veditum to know icchāmi what ought to be known ca and keśava O Kesava
Arjuna said:

Prakriti and Purusha, also the Kshetra and Kshetrajna, knowledge and that which ought to be known, these, O Kesava, I desire to learn.

This stanza is not found in all the editions of the Gita. Hence it is kept unnumbered.

Sri Bhagavān uvāca

idam sartram kaunteya kṣetram ity abhidhyate
etad yo vetti tam prāhuḥ kṣetrajña iti tadvidah

Sri Bhagavān uvāca Sri Bhagavan said:

Idam this sartram body kaunteya O Kaunteya kṣetram the field iti thus abhidhyate is called etat this yah who vetti knows tam him prāhuḥ (they) call kṣetrajña the knower of the field iti thus tadvidah the knowers of that

The Blessed Lord said:

This body, O Kaunteya, is called Kshetra, the field; he who knows it is called Kshetrajna by the sages.

The literal meaning of Kshetra is that which is protected from perishing. The body of beings is called Kshetra because it is saved from destruction
to which it is prone. The word *Kshetra* also means the field. It becomes increasingly productive to the extent it is improved. But its fertility provides scope both for the corn and the weed to thrive in it. Similarly in the field of his body, man reaps the fruits of his good and bad karma. The body is therefore the *dharma kshetra* of the *Jivatman*. There is an intelligent principle that not only resides in the body but also cognizes and governs it. The sages designate that discerning principle as *Kshetrajña*.

The human body may be compared to a pot. The mind, intellect and the senses are parallel to the water, rice and potato put into that pot placed on a hearth. Within a while the pot gets heated and the water boils the rice and potato. The contents then become too hot to be handled. This heat, however, belongs to the fire and not to the pot and its contents. Similarly it is the *Sakti* of Brahman that enlivens the body, mind, intellect and the senses.

— *Sri Ramakrishna*

Are the countless *Kshetrās* and *Kshetrajnās* in the universe linked in any way? The enlightenment comes —

क्षेत्रज्ञानं चापि मां विद्यः सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्रश्रेणियोऽविच दवज्ञानं मतं मस ॥ २॥

क्षेत्र जयं च अपि माम् विद्ययतः धीयते सदे-क्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्र-क्षेत्र श्रेष्ठं शानम् यत् तद्य शानम् संसार-तमो मम ॥ ३॥

*kṣetrajñām cā 'pi mām viddhi*
*sarva kṣetresu bhārata ॥
*kṣetra kṣetrajñayor jñānam*
*yat taj jñānam mām mām ॥

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रम् kṣetrajñām the knower of the field च ca
and अपि apī also मां mām me विद्यः viddhi know
sadbhitteṣu sarva kṣetreṣu in all fields भारतं bhārata O Bharata सेन्क्रेनकोऽऽऽ: kṣetra kṣetrajñayoh of the field and of the knower of the field ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge यत् yat which तत् tat that ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge मलम् matam is considered to be मम mama my

And know Me as the Kṣetrajna in all Kṣetras, O Bharata. The knowledge of Kṣetra and Kṣetrajña is deemed by Me as true knowledge.

Prakriti and Purusha are called respectively as Kṣetra and Kṣetrajña—the non-self and the self. The former is insentient and the latter sentient. The Purusha identifies himself with the Prakriti and fancies that its characteristics are all his own. It is like the colour of a flower which seems transposed to a crystal kept near it: That Purusha is called a Jīvatman who identifies himself with the Prakriti that he handles. The differentiation in Prakriti is infinite; for this reason the Jīvatmans are also infinite.

The Cosmic Intelligence is Iswara. While He appears to be imbued with the characteristics of the Prakriti, He is actually untouched by it. He is the Innermost Self in all beings. The individual souls and the universe have no existence independent of Iswara. He is therefore the Kṣetrajña in all the Kṣetrās. Though containing everything in Himself, He is eternally free, pure and blissful.

Jñāna or knowledge is the true understanding of both—the Kṣetra and the Kṣetrajña. The knowledge pertaining to the Kṣetra is classified as Apara
vidyā or the lower knowledge and that pertaining to the Kshetrajna as Parā vidyā or the Knowledge Superior. To be well-versed and versatile in the Vedas, the āgamas, grammar, rhetoric, and the branches of science and arts—all these come under the lower knowledge. Brahma jnāna or the Self-knowledge is the supreme knowledge. Enquiry commences with a diligent study of Nature and culminates in Brahma jnāna. Secular knowledge bereft of the sacred is therefore incomplete. The former is the stepping stone to the latter. True knowledge consists of wisdom pertaining to the phenomenon and the Noumenon.

A puranic story illustrates this point. Ganesa and Kartikeya are the sons of the Lord Siva. It was once put to these valiant sons that whoever returned first after surveying the entire Existence, would get as prize a celestial fruit brought by the Sage Narada. No sooner was this announcement made than Kartikeya dashed abroad on his speedy peacock. The plumpy Ganesa pondered over the terms imposed, moved slowly but surely on his tiny vehicle of a mouse, circumambulated his Father and Mother, and claimed the prize. But within a while came the younger brother also, successfully terminating his expedition. Both the brothers were wise in their own way. Kartikeya inquired into the manifest Prakriti and Ganesa into the Unmanifest Purusha. A harmonious combination of these two inquiries constitutes true knowledge. Knowing the one to the exclusion of the other is imperfect knowledge.

80-43
The scientific enquiry made by the modern man is a true search into the Prakriti. It has taken him very near the Purusha. As Kartikeya's survey terminated in his coming back to the Divine, the scientist will very soon come to know that the manifest universe has its origin and sustenance in the Cosmic Intelligence.

One is not termed as rich by one's merely owning money. There are signs of one's being rich. His house would be well lit in all the rooms. Whereas a poor man cannot afford to have many lights.

The human body is the tabernacle of the Lord. It should not be kept in the darkness of ignorance. It should be lit with the lamp of wisdom. When you illumine your heart with this lamp, you will behold the benign Lord there. Jnana can be gained by one and all. There are in the human temple two entities — the little Jivatman and the great Paramatman. The former is dependent on the latter. As the electricity from the same source illuminates all the houses, the Paramatman gives light to all the Jivatmans. The Divine Knowledge illumines your body, yourself and the Paramatman in you, all at once.

— Sri Ramakrishna

तत्क्रेयं यथ याहकं यदिकारि यत्थ यत् ।
स च यो यत्क्राभ्यत्त्वस्यस्य अन्यं ॥ ९ ॥

तद्भवेनम् यथा यास्कं दुर विदिकारि यतः च यत् ॥
स: च च: शुद्ध-स्र-भाग: च तद् समु-शास्त्रमेन श्रुतं ॥

तत्केत्रम् येच च याद्रक च यदिकारि यतस्च च यत् ।
सा च यो यत यत्वभावस्य तस्मासने मेष स्मृतं ॥

तत्तत् तत् तत्र केतरम् केत्रम् च याद्रक कृ च विदिकारि
यतस्य च यतस्य चायतनं स्मृतं समासेने कृतं

तत् तत् तत् केतीतम् केत्रम् च याद्रक कृ च यदिकारि
यतस्य च यतस्य चायतनं स्मृतं समासेने कृतं

तत् तत् तत् केतीतम् केत्रम् च याद्रक कृ च यदिकारि
यतस्य च यतस्य चायतनं स्मृतं समासेने कृतं

तत्तत् तत् तत् केतीतम् केत्रम् च याद्रक कृ च यदिकारि
यतस्य च यतस्य चायतनं स्मृतं समासेने कृतं

तत् तत् तत् केतीतम् केत्रम् च याद्रक कृ च यदिकारि
�तस्य च यतस्य चायतनं स्मृतं समासेने कृतं

तत् तत् तत् केतीतम् केत्रम् च याद्रक कृ च यदिकारि
�तस्य च यतस्य चायतनं स्मृतं समासेने कृतं

तत् तत् तत् केतीतम् केत्रम् च याद्रक कृ च यदिकारि
�तस्य च यतस्य चायतनं स्मृतं समासेने कृतं
Hear briefly from Me, what the Kshetra is, what its properties are, what its modifications are, whence is what; and who He is and what His powers are.

Naught exists and naught remains to be known outside the pale of the Kshetra and Kshetrajna. The Vedas and the Vedanta philosophy are all directed to the enquiry into these two ultimate Realities. All the branches of knowledge that are so far revealed and that are yet to be revealed, that are conventionally divided into the sacred and the secular—all of them are engaged in explaining either the Kshetra or the Kshetrajna or both.

The how of it is delineated in the following stanza:

The Vehicles of Revelation—4

ॐपिरिवधुः गीतं छन्दोमिनिविधं: प्रथक् ।
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदेशये हेतुमद्रिविनिर्विश्वतः || ॥ ८

ॐपिमः: बहु-धा गीतमेः छन्दोमिः: विविधमेः: प्रथक् ।
ब्रह्म(न-)सूत्र-पदेः: च एव व्रेष्टः मणिः: विनिश्चित-ते: ||

ṛṣibhir bahudhā gitāṁ chandobhīr vividhāiḥ prthak ā brahmaśūtṛapadaītī cai 'va hetumadbhīr viniscitaiḥ

ॐपिमः: ṛṣibhir by Rishis बहुधा bahudhā in many ways गीतम् gītāṁ sung छन्दोमि: chandobhīḥ in chants विविधाः: vividhāiḥ various प्रथक्ः prthak distinguished brahmaḥ sūtraḥ padaiḥ in the apt words indicative of Brahman च ca and एव eva even हेतुमद्रि: hetumadbhīḥ full of reasoning विनिश्चित: viniscitaiḥ decisive

This has been sung by Rishis in many ways, in various distinctive chants, in passages indicative of Brahman, full of reasoning and convincing.
The sages have fully utilized the sciences and arts for the revelation of Truth, which remains unaffected by the passage of time. The value of Truth does not go down for its being clothed in imperfect language. But the Rishis have taken care to expound it in the most refined and appropriate language. The precision of expression has been augmented by them with music. Accurate language is by itself appealing to the intellect. When music is combined with it, the joint appeal to the head and the heart becomes doubly effective. Music is by itself very powerful and fascinating to all beings. Wild and venomous beings are easily tamed by it. Emotion is awakened and refined by music. Bliss and sweetness are engendered by it. The Rishis have sanctified both of these instruments, literature and music, by utilizing them for conveying divine message.

Literature and music become lop-sided when harnessed exclusively for the cultivation of emotion. The sages have avoided that defect by balancing it with rigid reasoning which is another powerful instrument to arrive at Truth. Reason that is consistently followed, leads to clarification and conviction.

Emotion devoid of reason lands one in mere sentimentalism, in which many an unwary, credulous and mediocre devotee lands himself. Clarity of understanding and firmness of action cannot be expected of such a namby-pamby one. Again, there is the other one given to dry and dreary intellectualism, devoid of any sweet touch of life. But a
balanced personality is that in which love and understanding are well knit together.

Sage Narada was endowed with a penetrating intellect and an all absorbing divine love. Devotees ought to evolve after his pattern.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The Constituents of Kshetra—5:6

महाभूतान्यहाद्रारो वृद्धिरुपः च ॥
इन्द्रियाणि दृष्टेऽर्पं च पश्चा चेतन्यगोचरा: ॥ ५ ॥
इच्छा दैव: सुखं दुःखं सहात्सेतनना धृति: ॥
एततः समासेन सविकारायुदाह्तम् ॥ ६ ॥

(सहस्रं) महाभूतानि अहम्कारं वृद्धि सबे-सबकम्य एव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि दसा एकम् च पश्चा च इन्द्रिय-गोचरा ॥
इच्छा दैव दुःखं दुःखम् सम्पातिः चेतना धृति: ॥
एतत् सेतुम् समासेन सबे-सबकम्य उदाहार: ॥

mahābhūtānī ahampkāro buddhir avyaktam eva ca ॥
indrīyāni daśai 'kam ca pañca ca 'ndrīyagocaraḥ ॥
icchā dvesāḥ sukham duṣkham
samghātasya cetanā dhrītī ॥
etat ksetram samāsena
savikāram udāhṛtam ॥

महाभूतानि महाभूतानि the great elements अहम्कार
ahampkārāḥ egoism वृद्धिः buddhiḥ intellect अव्यक्तम् avya-
ktam the unmanifested एवं eva even एव ca and इन्द्रियाणि
indrīyāni the senses दसा daśa ten एकम् ekam one एव ca
and पञ्चa pañca five एव ca and इन्द्रिय-गोचरा, indrīyagocarāḥ
objects of the senses

इच्छाः icchā desire दैव दैव hatred सुखम् sukhām
pleasure दुःखम् duṣkham pain समासेन samghātah the
aggregate चेतना cetanā intelligence धृति dhrītī fortitude
The great elements, egoism, intellect, as also the unmanifested, the ten senses and the one mind, and the five objects of the senses; Desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, intelligence, firmness—the Kshetra has been thus briefly described with its modifications. 

The great elements. The ether, the air, the fire, the water and the earth—these are the elements constituting the infinite universe. In their gross form they are not equally distributed everywhere. But in their subtle state they permeate the whole universe. They are for this reason called the great elements.

Egoism. It is the cause of the five elements. The Self projects the non-Self and identifies Itself with it. This identification is egoism. When the Pure Consciousness thinks of Itself as the materialized consciousness, it is egoism. Intellect is the tattva or principle of determination. It is from this principle that egoism emanates. It is also known as the Mahat.

The Unmanifested is technically called avyaktam or mula prakriti. That which is in the unmodified state is the meaning of this term. This principle is the cause of buddhi or the intellect. These are all the powers of Iswara.

"Verily this divine illusion of Mine, made up of the Gunas is hard to surmount," said the Lord in
chapter seven, stanza fourteen. He also called them "My prakriti divided eightfold," in the fourth stanza of that chapter.

The Ten Senses are the eye, the ear, the skin, the tongue and the nose forming a group known as the senses of knowledge—the Jnāna indriyās. The external world is cognized and interpreted with the aid of these organs. The other group consists of five organs of action—karma indriyās. They are the hand, the foot, the mouth, the anus and the genital organ.

Mind is the principle that thinks and doubts. It is therefore held as the aggregate of sankalpa and vikalpa. It functions as the background of all the ten senses. The demon Ravana with his ten heads is the personification of the mind functioning through the ten senses.

The Sense-objects are five in number. They are the taste, form or colour, touch, sound and smell, on which the senses feed and thrive.

The Samkhya school of philosophy is based on these twenty-four categories or principles technically known as tattvās.

The Vaiseshika school of philosophy claims that desire, hatred, pleasure and pain mentioned here, to be the characteristics of Atman. But these are actually the modifications of the mind; they are the objects of experience; they are impermanent; they only reveal the nature of the Kshetra. As such they are classified with the Kshetra.
Desire is that form of mentation which seeks the repetition of the contact with the objects that seem agreeable to the senses.

Hatred is that mental state which seeks to avoid with revulsion those sense-objects which are disagreeable or painful.

Pleasure is an experience that pacifies the mind and promotes sattva guna.

Pain is a mentation that is disagreeable and disquieting.

The Aggregate is the assemblage of the various parts of the body. A machine is assembled by fixing all its parts in their proper places. The best and the most marvellous organic machine is the human body. Its functioning at all levels is equally marvellous.

Chetana is intelligence or the power to reveal and interpret. A piece of iron that comes into contact with fire reveals the fire in its own way. Similarly the capacity of the senses to imbibe and to reveal the characteristics of the Atma is the chetana or intelligence inherent in them. Since the body is being experienced and interpreted by this intelligence, it is classified as the Kshetra.

Dhrti or firmness is the stamina to keep the body and the senses fit and active. Left to themselves they get exhausted and drift into indolence. But the resolve that emanates from within infuses fresh energy and activity into them. This particular urge is called firmness. It gives longevity to the body. Since dhrti is also an object of experience it is classi-
fied as the *Kshetra*. The items from ‘desire’ to the ‘firmness’ mentioned here, are the qualities or the modifications of the mind stuff.

The body is classified as the *Kshetra* in the first stanza. And it is exhaustively dealt with in these two stanzas.

Why do the devotees look after this body so carefully when it is actually a combination of things perishable? Nobody pays heed to an empty package. But people preserve carefully a paper box containing precious gems and jewels. In that manner the devotees take care of the body due to its being the temple of the Lord. They cannot afford to neglect it. All human bodies are the treasure chests containing Iswara.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The knowledge of the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* is not acquired by mere book learning, which only supplies empty information. Intuitive knowledge is the outcome of the way of living It is delineated:—

_Self-culture—7-11_

अमानित्वम् दु:भित्वमहिः स्कान्तिरार्जुनम् ।
आचार्यवासनं शौचं स्तैर्यत्मत्वमविविधः ॥ ७ ॥

-मानित्वम् अ-दु:भित्वम् म-हिंसा श्यानिः कार्जुनम् ।
आचार्य-उप-काशानुपूर्व शौचम् स्तैर्यत्म लालनाम् रिनिवदः ॥

*amānītvam adambhitvam ahimsā ksāntiī ārjavam ।
ācāryopāsanam saucam sthairyam ātmaviniṣṭhāḥ ॥*

-मानित्वम् amānītvam humility अवभित्वम् adambhitvam unpretentiousness अहिंसा ahimsā non-injury क्षान्तिः forgiveness कार्जुनम् ārjavam uprightness आचार्य उपासनम् acārya upāsanam service of the teacher शौचम् saucam purity स्तैर्यम् sthairyam steadiness आत्मविनिष्ठः ātma vinirghaḥ self-control
Humility, modesty, non-injury, forbearance, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control;

*Humility* is in evidence when the *sadhaka* does not think of himself superior to the others. Superiority-complex engenders conceit and contaminates the mind.

*Modesty* marks that aspirant, as its own, who does not think or speak of the merits in his activities. All excellences emanate from the Lord. Man's laying claim to them is born of ignorance.

*Non-injury* is possible to him only who beholds all beings as the manifestations of the one Cosmic Being.

*Forbearance* is the act of not being affected by the wrong done to one by the others. An example illustrates this position. It happens that while a man speaks, his teeth hurt the lip inadvertently. For this reason the man does not think of knocking out the teeth, which are his own. He who seeks divine relationship with all, practises forbearance with those who wrong him knowingly or unknowingly.

*Uprightness* comes to him who harmonizes his thought, word and deed and who is intent on right conduct.

*Service of the teacher* is quite essential to the spiritual aspirant. An individual unconsciously imbibes the traits of the person whom he serves. By doing physical service to the teacher, the disciple gets into his holy dispositions.
Purity pertains both to the body and the mind. Bodily purity can be effected with the aid of the environment, air, water and sunlight. But purity of the mind which is more important and indispensable to spiritual life can only be effected by the mental discipline. That mind which eschews all sense-pleasures as poison gains steadily in purity.

Steadfastness is his who is not mindful of the time taken for self-culture. It may be that the sadhaka has to plod through a few births before he attains perfection in any one among the many virtues that remain to be acquired by him. Unswerving perseverance is needed to mould oneself in spirituality.

Self-control is the opposite of self-indulgence which dissipates the personality. Through rigid self-restraint, the sadhaka grows in godhood which is his original state.

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहद्वार एव च ||
जन्मस्वस्तुजरावृण्याथिदु:उदोषातुदर्शेनस् ॥ ५
इन्द्रिय-अर्थेषु वैराग्यम् अनन्व-भद्रम-कार: एव च ।
जन्म(न)ः-सुतु-जरा-वि-आथि दुः-श्रेय-भद्र-दर्शेनम् ॥

indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam anahamkāra eva ca ||
janma mṛtyu jara vyādhi duḥkha dosānadarsanam ॥

इन्द्रिय अर्थेषु indriya artheṣu of sense-objects वैराग्यम् vairāgyam dispassion अनहामकः anahamkāraḥ absence of egoism एव eva even च ca and स्वस्तुजरावृण्यāथिदुःस्वस्तु jana mṛtyu jara vyādhi duḥkha doṣa anudarśanam perception of evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain
Dispassion towards the objects of the senses, and also absence of egoism; perception of evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain;

Nature bears evidence to the truth that beings evolve surely, though slowly, from the low order of existence to the high. Evolution of the body is complete at the human level. But there are stages of mental evolution to be striven after. Man has to perfect his mind in ethical and spiritual discipline. He should not therefore stagnate at the physical plane. His ideal in life is to emerge from the earthly existence into the divine. This is best effected by detachment from the mundane and attachment to the supra-mundane. Craving for the objects of the senses gives place to holy hankering after the divine. It is egoism when man identifies himself with the body. Instead, he strives to feel himself as Atman. Bodily existence is necessarily associated with birth, death, old age, sickness and pain. This evil is transcended by him who rises above body-consciousness. It is in this wise that spiritual life commences for the aspirant.

Man grows in devotion to the Lord in direct proportion to his detachment from the objects of the senses.

—Sri Ramakrishna

असक्तिर अनाभिष्वांगः पुत्राः ग्रहादिः ।
नितं च समस्विचचत्वादिष्टवियपपतिः ॥ ९

अ-सतिः शन्त-असिष्ट: पुल-दार-गृह-आतिषयः ।
निलाम्बः च सम-विद्वतमः इष्ट-अन्तः इष्ट-पपतिः ॥

asaktir anabhisvangaḥ putra dara grhadiṣu
nityam ca samacittatvam isťaniśtopapattisu
असक्ति asaktiḥ non attachment अनाभिस्वांगah non identification of self पुत्रार्घानमिव putra
dāra grhādīṣu with son, wife, home and rest नित्यम् nītyam constant च ca and सामात्तत्त्त्वam
even-mindedness इत्य अनिष्ठितत्वम् ista anista upapattīṣu on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable

Unattachment, non-identification of self with son, wife, home, and the like, and constant equanimity in the occurrence of the desirable and the undesirable; 9

There are objects of senses to which man gets deeply attached if not to the enjoyment thereof. Such attachments require to be eliminated by discrimination. Inordinate identification with son, wife and home drives one to the position of holding them as one's own self. Ailment if any of a kith causes misery to one, due to imaginary ownership. The death of the wife or the son deals a greater blow than the death of oneself can possibly render. The loss of the earthly possessions of a miser brings complete frustration to him. Such are the effects of the baneful identification with people and property that are not actually one's own for ever. The right attitude therefore is to view all beings and all possessions as belonging to the Lord. Worldly events are prone to cause likes and dislikes in a worldly man. But the spiritual aspirant ought to practise even-mindedness in all eventualities

A person found it very difficult to meditate on God because of his inordinate attachment to a relative. "Behold your favour ite relative as God come in that form," was the advice given to him. On pursuing that attitude meditation on the Lord became easy to that person

— Sri Ramakrishna
Mayi ca 'nanyayogena bhaktir avyabhicārini
divikta desa sevitvam aratir janasamsādi

Mayi to me ca and ananyayogena by the yoga of non-separation bhaktiḥ devotion avyabhicārini unswerving vivikta desa sevitvam resort to solitary places aratīḥ distaste janasamsādi for the society of men.

Unswerving devotion to Me in yoga of non-separation, resort to sequestered places, distaste for the society of men;

Mind in its entirety must be dedicated to the Lord, with the strong conviction that there is nothing else worthy of interest. The way of the devotee is never to divide and distract his mind between the Real and the Unreal. His constant absorption is and ought to be in the Lord.

A place endowed with natural beauty, pleasing and elevating to the mind, quite healthy and free from disturbance by wild animals is to be selected by the sadhaka for his residence. Company of the holy ones at the initial stage and severance from them too, at the advanced stage is a spiritual necessity to the sadhaka progressing in the path to perfection.
The moth abandons darkness and rushes to the light of the lamp. The ant would rather give up its life than sever contact with juice. Even so the devotee is ever intent on the Lord and he has no other concern in life.

—Sri Ramakrishna

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्चज्ञानार्थं दर्शनम् ।
एततज्ञाननित्यत्वं प्रेक्षणं यद्तोऽर्थम् ॥ ११

adhyātma jñāna nityatvam tatva jñānartha darsanam ।
etaj jñānam iti proktam ajñānam yad ato 'nyathā ॥

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वम् adhyātma jñāna nityatvam constancy in self-knowledge तत्त्व ज्ञान अर्थः tattva jñāna artha darsanam perception of the end of true knowledge एतत् etat this ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge इति iti thus प्रेक्षणम् proktam declared अज्ञानम् ajñānam ignorance यत् yat which अतः atah to it अन्यथा anyathā opposed

Constancy in Self-knowledge, perception of the end of the knowledge of Truth; this is declared to be knowledge, and what is opposed to it is ignorance. 11

Sentimental devotion to the Maker is not sufficient. Divine love ought to be seasoned by diligent inquiry into the nature of the Self and the non-Self. Brahman is Truth. All endeavours ought to be directed to the realization of this verity. Pursuit of Brahma vidyā as provided in the Upanishads is the infallible means to this great end.

All the dispositions elaborated from the seventh stanza up to this, contribute jointly to the development of wisdom, the divine eye and the intuitive faculty leading to the realization of
Brahman. These dispositions are all called Jnāna because of their great and unfailing contribution to it.

Dispositions counter to them are vanity, self-esteem, injury, revengefulness, crookedness, indifference towards the teacher, dirty habits, fickleness, self-indulgence, longing for the objects of the senses, egoism, perception of pleasure in bodily life, earthy attachment, identification of self with son, wife, home and the like, restlessness due to occurrence of the desirable and the undesirable, lack of devotion to the Maker, longing for a social life and dislike for sacred studies. People inclined in these ways contaminate their minds; they do not grow in wisdom and Self-knowledge.

How is it that we are not able to contact Iswara who is all pervading? Standing by the side of a pond covered with moss and reeds, one feels inclined to think that there is no water in it. But the moss has to be pushed aside to see the water below. Similarly Maya with her concealing power has to be brushed aside from our mind before we are blessed with a vision of the all pervading Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does any good come from Brahma jnāna? The answer comes:

Brahman Defined — 12

इंद्रयं चत्तत्रम्बृव्यामि यज्ञातवाद्मुत्तमरसुते ।
अनादिमिर्परं श्रस्य न सत्त्वास्तुच्यते ॥ १२

इंद्रयं घातं तत्र ध-न-तज्ञ-च्छांिं वत् ज-न-म् अ-स्र-तमुः श्व-उ-न-से ।
शन-भादि-भूतं परमूण्ड श्रस्य न सतं तत्र न रासबद्धच्यते ॥

jnāyam yat tat pravakṣyāmi yaj jhātvā 'mrtam asnute ।
anādīmat param brahma na sat tan nā 'sād ucyate ॥
\textit{jñeyam} has to be known \textit{yat} which \textit{tat} that \textit{pravakṣyāmi} (I will declare \textit{yat} which \textit{jñātvā} knowing \textit{amṛtaṁ} immortality \textit{asnute} (one) attains to \textit{anādīmat} the beginningless \textit{param} supreme \textit{brahma} Brahman \textit{na} not \textit{sat} being \textit{tat} that \textit{na} not \textit{asat} non-being \textit{ucyate} is called

I shall describe that which has to be known, knowing which one attains to immortality. Beginningless is the Supreme Brahman. It is not said to be \textit{sat} or \textit{asat}.

In chapter nine stanza nineteen the Lord defined Himself as immortality and death. He also spoke of Himself as \textit{sat} and \textit{asat}—being and non-being. Saguna Brahman is immanent in Prakriti. In that state all contradictions and conflicts meet in Him. In the relative existence the immortality of the Devas and the death of the human beings emanated from Saguna Brahman. His manifest aspects with variation in the three Gunas is \textit{sat} and His unmanifest aspect in which the three Gunas disappear in equilibrium, is \textit{asat}.

But in the Nirguna Brahman there is no modification of any kind. The manifest state and the unmanifest state do not apply to Him. He is Pure Consciousness, having neither a beginning nor an end. While the Devas have a relative immortality, Nirguna Brahman is the Absolute Immortality. This Supreme State is to be realized in intuition or \textit{Nirvikalpa samādhi}. That \textit{Jivatman} who intuits this \textit{Brahma nirvāṇa} gets merged in Brahman. Absolute
Immortality then becomes his own. He is no more affected by the relative ‘sat’ and ‘asat’—being and non-being, the manifest state and the unmanifest state.

Akhanda Brahman can be experienced in Samadhi only. What follows is all silence. Enquiry into the nature of the Purusha and Prakriti, knowledge and ignorance—all these cogitations come to an end.

Beatitude alone persists. There, the position of the Jivatman is the same as that of a salt doll, incapable of surviving a sea-bath.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the plenitude that the sadhaka enjoys before his merging in Brahman—the Ocean of Immortality? The elucidation comes:

The Effect of Evolving in Wisdom—13-15

सर्वेऽः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिस्तिसिरोऽक्ष्यम् ।
सर्वेऽः भूतिमद्वृक्तेऽवर्मावृक्तं निश्चिति ॥ १३ ॥
सर्वेऽः पाणि-पादम् तत् सर्वेऽः अक्षिः-शिर: मुखम् ।
सर्वेऽः भूतिः सदृशेऽक्ष्यः लोके भर्मम् त्रृत्-य हिष्ठति ॥

sarvataḥ pāṇipādam tat sarvato 'kṣisirōmukham ।
sarvataḥ srūtimal loke sarvam ārtya tiṣṭhati ॥

सर्वेऽः sarvataḥ everywhere पाणिपादम् pāṇi pādam with hands and feet तत् tat that सर्वेऽः sarvataḥ everywhere अक्षिः-शिर: मुखम् akṣi sīraḥ mukham with eyes, head and mouth सर्वेऽः sarvataḥ everywhere भूतिमद्वृक्तेऽवर्मावृक्तं निश्चिति ॥

srūtimat with ears लोके loke in the world सर्वेऽः sarvam all अर्थ्यa ārtya having enveloped तिष्ठति tiṣṭhati exists

With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes and hands and mouths everywhere, with ears everywhere—He exists enveloping all.
A river assumes the characteristics of the sea as it flows to its proximity. Before the Jivatman merges into the Nirguna Brahman he gets a panoramic view and realization of Iswara. While the multitudinous beings seem to have their own individualities, they are actually part and parcel of the Cosmic Entity. There is nothing outside the pale of Iswara. Not an atom can move independent of Iswara. One Supreme Purusha puts on the role of the innumerable

As long as there is a trace of egoism in me I see Iswara as the Owner of the universe and all the beings in it

— Sri Ramakrishna

sarvendriya gunābhāsam sarvendriya vivarjītam
asaktam sarvabhīr cai 'va nirgunām gunabhoktr ca

sarva indriya guna ābhāsam shining by the functions of all senses sarva indriya vivarjitam without the senses asaktam unattached sarvaśye sarvabhīr supporting all ca and eva even nirgūnam devoid of Gunas gunabhoktr experiencer of the Gunas ca and

Shining by the functions of all the senses, yet without the senses; Absolute, yet sustaining all; devoid of Gunas, yet, He experiences them.

The sunlight enables us to see colourful forms in their true perspective. It may be said that the sunlight reveals itself as the interpreter of all forms.
and colours. While apparently assuming forms and hues, sunlight is not in itself with form and colour. It is unattached to all these modifications. Chaitanya or Consciousness which is the characteristic of Atman, plays a role similar to that of the sunlight. Consciousness lights up the senses and aids them function in their respective wont. Brahman or the Absolute Awareness is also known as the Chidākāsa. It is the substratum to everything sentient and insentient as the screen is the substratum to the cinema pictures projected on it. The pictures do not get their colours from the screen, nor is the screen affected by those colours. Still the screen helps the pictures appear in their true colours. Similarly the three Gunas are not in Brahman. All the same Brahman aids the Gunas shine in their colours and characteristics. The awareness of the Gunas is possible because of the background of Brahman, who is all Awareness.

Both the aspects, that with form and that without form, belong to the same God. Faith in the one implies faith in the other. The fire and its heating property cannot be separated one from the other. The sun and the sunbeams are inseparable. Milk and its whiteness are inseparable. Similarly Saguna Brahman and Nirguna Brahman are one and the same. It is not possible to conceive of the one to the exclusion of the other.

— Sri Ramakrishna

\[ \text{वहिरन्तुष्ट भूतानामचरं चरमेव च} \]
\[ \text{स्वर्मत्वात्वद्विशेषं दूरस्य चान्तिके च तद्} \]

\[ \text{इंद्रध्वजः} \quad \text{च भूतानाम} \quad \text{व्र-चरम, चरम, एव च} \]
\[ \text{सूक्ष्म-श्वात्, तत्, श-वि-हः-खः} \quad \text{दूर-श्वात् च चान्तिके च तद्} \]
bahir antaś ca bhūtānāṁ acaram caram eva ca
sūkṣmatvāt tad avijñeyam dūrastham ca 'nti ke ca tat

bahiḥ without antah within ca and bhūtānāṁ of beings acaram the unmoving caram the moving eva also ca and sūkṣmatvāt because of its subtlety tat that avijñeyam unknowable dūrastham is far ca and antike near ca and tat that

Without and within all beings; the unmoving and also the moving, because of His subtlety He is incomprehensible; He is far and near.

How the Cosmic Consciousness remains undivided has to be comprehended through a few similes. In a block of ice immersed in the sea, water is present within and without. Again akāsa remains undivided in and through all things with form or formless. Similarly Paramatman is all pervading and undivided by the manifest forms. There is movement on the surface of the sea while it is all stillness at the bottom. There is movement in Paramatman modified as the Prakriti. As Nirguna Brahman, He is all stillness. The sea water transformed into vapour becomes subtle and invisible. Nirguna Brahman who is all Awareness and all Intelligence remains incomprehensible to those who have not purified the mind. To the ignorant one, God is far away somewhere in heaven. But to the knowing one, none is nearer than God, He being the innermost Self.

The symptoms of egoism are found in the one come down from Samadhi to wakefulness. Such an enlightened one sees himself, all the beings and the universe as the various manifestations of Iswara. When there is egoism in you, there is no...
alternative to your holding Iswara as with form. The Nirguna Brahman cannot be comprehended by the embodied one. Again the Saguna Brahman is not a fiction of the mind. The body, mind and the world may be viewed as mere projections. But Iswara or the Saguna Brahman is as real as the Nirguna Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

One Appearing as the Many — 16-17

अविभक्तम् च भूतेषु विभक्तिमयं च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तु च तत्रौयं ग्रसिञ्चु प्रभविष्णु च ॥ १६
अ-वि-भूत-तंत्र च भूतेषु वि-भूत-तंत्र इव च स्था-तंत्र ।
भू-त-भर्त्तृ च तत् हा-हयम् प्रसिञ्चु प्र-प्रभविष्णु ॥

avibhaktam ca bhūtesu vibhaktam iva ca sthitam ।
bhūta bhartr ca taj jñeyam grasiṣṇu prabhavīṣṇu ca ॥

अविभक्तम् avibhaktam undivided च ca and भूतेषु bhūtesu in beings विभक्तम् vibhaktam divided इव iva as if च ca and स्थितम् sthitam existing भूतभर्तु bhūta bhartr the supporter of beings च ca and तत् tat that हैयम् jñeyam to be known प्रसिञ्चु grasiṣṇu devouring प्रभविष्णु prabhavīṣṇu generating च ca and

He is undivided and yet He seems to be divided in beings. He is to be known as the supporter of beings. He devours and He generates. 16

The ākāsa is all pervading. Yet it appears as if divided into the innumerable forms. The fact is that it expands undivided while seeming as if divided. Even such is the case with the Paramatman. As ākāsa is the support to the remaining four elements, Paramatman the universal Consciousness is the support to the Jagat and the Jivatman. In Pralaya they merge into the Paramatman. In crea-
tion they reappear in the Paramatman. They are not exterior to the Paramatman in creation, preservation and destruction. As the waves come up, stay and disappear in the sea, these manifest things and beings are either patent or latent in the Lord.

A holy man once saw clouds appearing suddenly in the clear sky and disappearing again, blown by the wind. This sight threw him into raptures. He exclaimed “Brahman is Contentless Consciousness like the clear sky. As clouds appear in the latter, the universe of beings appears in the former and then disappears too! Brahman remains ever Itsself.”

— Sri Ramakrishna

\[ jyotisam api taj jyotis tamasaḥ param ucyate \]
\[ jñānam jñeyam jñānagamyam hṛdi sarvasya viṣṭhitam \]

The Light of all lights, He is said to be beyond darkness; knowledge, the knowable, the goal of knowledge, seated in the heart of all.
but it also loses that borrowed faculty; whereas the Atman never loses Its Light. The physical light and darkness, characteristic of the inert matter, do not have any effect on or access to Atman. In pitch darkness, one is not able to see one’s own body and clothing. But that darkness is no hindrance to the self cognizing its own presence. This self-cognizance is not improved upon by the presence of sunlight. Self-awareness is self-evident. The sunlight and the darkness are perceived by the physical eye because of the light it has acquired from the Atman enshrined in the heart. The senses perceive, the mind feels and the intellect cogitates because of the light they get from the Atman.

He who realizes Iswara in his heart is able to realize Him outside too. He who has not known Him within himself, cannot cognize Him elsewhere. Therefore, he who sees God in his heart sees Him everywhere.

Sri Ramakrishna

Bhakti Evolves into Jnana — 18

इति क्षेत्रम् तथा ज्ञाने ज्ञेयं चोकं समासत्: ॥
मद्भक्ते न्यायदेव यो योपवरधैः ॥ १८

इति क्षेत्रम् तथा ज्ञाने ज्ञेयं चोकं समासत्: ॥
मद्भक्ते न्यायदेव यो योपवरधैः ॥

iti kṣetram tathā jñānam jñeyam ca 'uktam samāsataḥ ।
madbhaktā etad vijñāya madbhāvāyo 'papadyate ॥

इति iti thus kṣetram the field tathā as well as jñānam knowledge jñeyam the knowable ca and uktam have been stated समासत: ।

samāsataḥ briefly मद्भक्ति my devotee etat this विज्ञाय vijñāya knowing मद्धवाय madbhāvāya to my being उपपद्यते upapadyate enters.
Thus the Kshetra, knowledge and that which has to be known have been briefly described. My devotee, on knowing this, is fitted for My state.

On whatever object a man directs his entire attention, he is able to understand that object in its true state. He who is absorbed in devotion to Iswara is able to know Him. It is jñāna when man understands that God alone is revealing Himself as everything. This wisdom places him for ever in the presence of Iswara. Soaked as he is in the thought and feeling of God he dwells with God.

He alone is a Jnani who has realized Iswara. He becomes like a babe after God realization. The baby has no individuality of its own. Therefore divinity beams through it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Prakriti and Purusha are Eternal Verities

प्रकृति पुरुषं चैव विद्यनादी उभारिषि।

विकारांश्च गुणांश्चव चिद्द्र प्रकृतिसंभवान्।

Prakṛtim puruṣam caiva viddhy anādī ubhāv api।

vikārāṁs ca gunāṁs caiva viddhi prakṛtisambhavān।

Prakṛtim Prakṛti puṣṭam Purusha ca and eva even vidhi know anādi beginningless both api also viśkarāṁ modifications ca ca and gunāṁ Gunas ca ca and eva even vidhi know prakṛtisambhavān born of Prakṛti.

Know that Prakṛti and Purusha are both without beginning; and Know also that all modifications and Gunas are born of Prakṛti.
Prakriti and Purusha are not essentially two different entities. The same Reality enjoys two phases of self-assertion and self-expression. As *suddha chaitanya* or Pure Consciousness, It is ever Itself and there is no modification in It. This Changeless Reality puts on the appearance of changefulness and modifications. The former phase is Purusha and the latter phase, Prakriti.

Prakriti puts on the embodiment of time, space and causation. It is constituted of the three Gunas—*Sattva, Rajas* and *Tamas*. Because of its changeful nature, it is called *Māyā*. This substance being an eternal verity, it is termed as having no beginning, and therefore, no end too.

As the ocean is sometimes calm and placid and at other times boisterous and furious, Brahman is both actionless and active. When free from action, He is termed Brahman and when active, *Māya*.

—Sri Ramakrishna

पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तुं वेत्तरूपः || २०
कार्य-कारण-क्रिया-ति हेतुः प्राकृतिः उच्चः ||
पुरुष: सुख-दुःखानाम् भोक्तवे हेतुः उच्चः ||

कार्यः कारणः कार्यत्वे हेतुः प्राकृतिः उच्चः
purusah sukhaduhkhahnam bhoktrive hetur ucyate ||

कार्यकारणक्रियां कार्यः कारणः कार्यत्वे in the production of the body and the senses हेतुः hetuḥ the cause प्राकृतिः prakṛtī Prakriti is said (to be)
purusah Purusha सुखदुःखानाम् sukha duḥkhānām of pleasure and pain भोक्तवे bhoktrive in the experience हेतुः hetuḥ the cause उच्चः ucyate is said (to be)
In the production of the body and the senses, Prakriti is said to be the cause; in the experience of pleasure and pain, Purusha is said to be the cause. 20

It is the father who transforms himself into the son. Subsequently some of the doings of the son delight the father while some other activities pain him. It is the Purusha that poses to become the Prakriti. Modifications of the Prakriti are known as the body and the senses. The senses in their turn get themselves classified as the senses of perception and those of action. Both the forms of the senses are serviceable to the Jivatman to have contact and communication with Prakriti. The relationship created in this way begets pleasure and pain. The experience of pleasure and pain is the foremost factor in moulding the character of the Jivatman and in educating him for the life supramundane. Prakriti is the foster-mother leading the Jivatman from the unreal to the real, from ignorance to enlightenment and from death to immortality.

Plenitudes and blessings such as Brahma jnana and the Bliss of Brahman come to us mortals because of the gracious mediation of Maha maya. But for Her intervention none can have even a peep into the Beyond, what to speak of getting fixed into the Absolute! Experience of the transitory world also comes to man because of Her grace. The enjoyer and the enjoyment do not exist outside Her domain.

— Sri Ramakrishna

In what manner is the Jivatman educated by Prakriti, is the question that crops up next. The answer ensues.
The Seed of the Mundane Life — 21

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुक्ते प्रकृतिजान्यगुणाः ||
कारणः गुणसङ्गो सदस्त्रोभिनिजन्मसु || २१

पुरुषः प्रकृति-स्थः हि भुक्ते प्रकृति-जान्य गुणाः ||
कारणः गुण-सङ्गः अस्य रास्त्र-विनोि-जन्मसु ||

puruṣaḥ prakṛtisthō hi bhunīkte prakṛtijān guṇān |
kāraṇaṁ guṇasāngo 'sya sad asad yoni janmasu ||

पुरुषः puruṣaḥ Purusha प्रकृतिस्थः prakṛtisthāḥ seated in Prakriti हि hi indeed भुक्ते bhunīkte enjoys प्रकृतिजान्य prakṛtijān born of Prakriti गुणाः guṇān Gunas कारणः kāraṇaṁ the cause गुणसङ्गः guṇasāngo attachment to the Gunas अस्य asya of his सतः सस्तः yoni janmasu sat asat yoni janmasu of birth in good and evil wombs

Purusha seated in Prakriti, experiences the Gunas born of Prakriti; attachment to the Gunas is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs. 21

He who is exposed to the sun gets heat and he who is exposed to rain gets wet. Similarly the Jivatman gets identified with Prakriti and imagines that its qualities are all his own. The varying sensations such as happiness and misery and the modifications of the mind such as delusion and discrimination—these are all the outcome of clinging to the one or the other of the Gunas. It is this attachment again that prolongs the cycle of birth. By adhering to the superior Guna, the Jivatman is born as a celestial or fully evolved human being. By holding on to the inferior Guna, he is born as an animal or bird. Getting stuck in mingled Gunas, he is born as a mediocre man.
Is there then, no way to get out of this wheel of birth and death? The assurance comes:—

Brahma-juana Dispels the Delusion of Birth — 22-23

उपद्रास्ता अनुमता च भर्ती भोक्ता महेश्वरः ॥
परमात्मेति चाप्युक्ती देहलिंगिनुरः परः ॥ ॥ २२

उपद्रास्ता अनुमता च भर्ती भोक्ता महेश्वरः ॥
परमात्मा इति च भर्ती भोक्ता देहलिंगिनुरः परः ॥

upadrasțā 'numantā ca bhartā bhoktā mahesvarah ॥
paramatme 'ti ca 'py uktō dehe 'smin purusāh parah ॥

The Supreme Purusha in this body is also called the Spectator, the One who permits, the Supporter, the One who experiences, the Great Lord and the Supreme Self.

Manifold are the activities taking place in the human body. The Jivatman enshrOuded in ignorance imagines himself the author thereof. But the fact is that this Jivatman is merely a reflection of the Great Lord enshrined in the body. And His glories are as follows:

Upadrashțā — the Spectator. The person who witnesses the game or the person who acts as the
referee is able to see better into the orderliness and fouls in a game. The Lord resides in the human heart as witness to all that takes place in the body and the mind.

*Anumantā*—the One who permits. To one who has no ear for music a fine melody in classical music is no more than meaningless sound. His approval or permission for the musical performance to go on, counts for nothing. Whereas when an expert critic who enjoys that melody, pleads for its continuance, there is pleasure and purpose in that act. More seriously and effectively than this, the Lord witnesses the activities of the *Jivatman*, knows them in their true perspective and permits those of the activities which are conducive to the progress of the *Jivatman*. He is therefore the One that permits.

*Bhartā*—the Supporter. More important than witnessing a play and approving of it, is to materially aid and support it. In that way the Lord is the Supporter of the *Jagat* and the *Jivatman*.

*Bhoktā*—the One who experiences. A husband is not only the supporter of his wife, but he is also a partner, enjoyer and the one that experiences the family life. In this wise the Omniscient Lord is the One that experiences the insentient Prakriti.

*Maheswara*—the Great Lord. Gaining the devoted love of a chaste wife is more important in a family life than gathering variety of experiences in it. An ideal wife is never self-willed but subordinates her will to that of her husband. Prakriti is eternally spoused to Iswara; and she functions ever subser-
vient to her Lord. Because of His complete mastery over Prakriti, He is adored as the Great Lord.

In the midst of His comprehensive relationship with Prakriti, He is eternally established in His Entirety and is in no way affected by the modifications of the Prakriti. He is therefore Paramātmā—the Supreme Self, residing in the human tabernacle.

The universe has come into being as a result of the union of the Purusha and the Prakriti. And do you know how it functions? The master of the family is seated somewhere absorbed in some serious thought. The housewife busies herself running here and there and attending to all the details of the affairs of the household. Now and then she acquaints her husband with what is taking place here and there and seeks his counsel too, when necessary. The man approves of what has taken place already and suggests what ought to take place next. It is in this way that the Purusha and the Prakriti function.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Does any good accrue from the knowledge of Purusha and Prakriti? The answer comes—

ย _ends_ วิติ ผู้ร่วม ภรณริยา นุ่น: ผล
สระย่า วาระน้อยน้อย น ภูมิที่น้อยจิตใจ

ya evam vetti purusam prakrtim ca gunaita saha
sarvathā vartamāno 'pi na sa bhūyo 'bhujāyate

ya yah who evam thus วิติ vetti knows ผู้ร่วม
purusam Purushaภรณริยา prakrtim Prakriti ผู้ร่วม
gunaita Gunas ผล saha with sarvathā vartamāna
living วิติ 'pi also น น ot
s sah he ภูมิ bhūyo again ภูมิที่น้อยjāyate abhujāyate is

born
He who thus knows the Purusha and Prakriti together with the Gunas, is never born again, in whatever way he may live.

A perfect mirror exactly reflects the things placed before it. But on that account the mirror undergoes no modification whatsoever. Like that, Brahman is in no way affected by the presence of Prakriti in His proximity. That Jivatman who cognizes the Supreme Brahman in his heart, becomes Brahman; for, that is his real state. Thenceforth he is not affected by the Prarabdha karma that keeps the body going. This karma may produce good and bad effects on the body; but the Brahma jnāni is not affected by them. Like the reflections in a mirror, Prakriti is cognized in his pure heart. His eulogizing it or his ignoring it is all the same to him. His body floats on as long as the past momentum maintains it. Apparently he resides in it as a Jivan mukta. A burnt rope may retain its form, but it is no more useful for tying. The āgāmi karma and the Sanchita karma are all burnt out in the fire of wisdom. There is, therefore, no motive power to produce a new body. The Enlightened one merges in Brahman, never again to be reborn.

When the unburnt pots get damaged, the potter makes new pots out of them. But when a pot burnt in a kiln breaks, the broken pieces are rejected as useless. Similarly the man in ignorance is to be born and reborn. But that man whose karma is burnt out by the fire of knowledge is not reborn. He enters the Absolute.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What are the means to gain Brahma jnāna? The answer comes:
The Four Yogas — 24-25

ध्यात्मनाम सत्यंति केवलमानमात्मना ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चाप्रे ॥ २४

ध्यानं ध्यानं पद्यांति केवलभ्रिष्टाः भाषायमरू भाष्यम ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन सम्भववर्मणैः वाग अपरे ॥

dhyānena 'tmani pasyanti kecid atmānam atmanā ।
anye sāmkhyaṇa yogena karmayogena ca 'pāre ॥

ध्यात्मना dhyyānena by meditation ध्यात्मनात् atmani in
the self पद्यांति pasyanti behold केवलभ्रिष्टa lecit some भाषायमरू
atmānam the Self भाष्यम atmanā by the self अन्ये anye others
सांख्येन sāmkhyaṇa yogena by the yoga of
knowledge कर्मयोगेन karma yogena by karma yoga च ca
and अपरे apare others

By meditation some behold the Self in the self by
the self, others by the yoga of knowledge and yet
others by karma yoga.

24

Of the four universally accepted yogas, the Raja
Yoga, the Jñāna Yoga and the Karma Yoga are
mentioned in this stanza. Here the self refers to the
Jīvātman and the Self to Paramatman.

अन्ये त्वेसमवासवः श्रुतिहेतुः उपासते ।

tevy evaḥ saranāsaḥ sūtraḥ śrutiḥpārāyaṇaḥ: ॥ २५

anye tv evam ajānantaḥ sūtraḥ 'nyebhyāḥ upāsate ।
te 'pi cā 'titaranty eva mṛtyum śrutiparāyaṇāḥ ॥

anye anye others tu tu indeed evam thus
अज्ञानः not knowing शुर्वā srūtraḥ having
heard अन्येहिं anyaḥ from others उपासते upāsate

80–45
worship they also cross beyond even death regarding what they have heard as the supreme refuge.

Still others, not knowing thus, worship as they have heard from others; they too go beyond death by their devotion to what they have heard. 25

Among the four Yogas, Bhakti Yoga is the easiest. Scriptural knowledge and keen discrimination are not necessarily auxiliaries to this all absorbing path. The Gopis of Brindavan were uneducated and devoid of intellectual equipment. Still, through pure devotion they made the Lord of the universe their own. But if learning and wisdom can be properly utilized and if pure devotion is also side by side developed, progress in spirituality becomes easier still.

Devotion to the Lord may be compared to a ferocious tiger. As the latter destroys the cattle, the former destroys lust, greed and such like enemies to man. If Bhakti comes up but once, there is no more fear of being disturbed by lust and anger which will be all exterminated from the mind. The Gopis of Brindavan were free from these taints because of their extraordinary love of the boy Krishna.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The Karma Yoga, the Raja Yoga, the Bhakti Yoga and the Jnana Yoga—all these four yogas are given equal status and importance in the Bhagavad Gita. Any one of these four great paths is sufficient to lead the sadhaka to perfection. Still the salutary course is to harmonize all the four paths. The Karma Yoga provides man with efficiency. The Raja Yoga adds to the stamina of the mind. The
Bhakti Yoga unifies beings in sweet relationship. The Jnana Yoga sharpens the intellect and makes it luminous. All these great qualities and divine elements require to be perfectly blended to evolve an all absorbing divinity out of humanity.

The enlightenment that ensues from a balanced spiritual life is enumerated now:—

Gaining in Unity is Mukti—26-28

यावत सम्यक्षते किंचित सत्त्वं स्थावर जंगमम्।
क्षेत्रश्रवणसंयोगाचिदं भरतर्यम्॥ २६।

यावत ज्ञाता विद्य-विचि गत-साध्य विश्वव-जंगमम्।
क्षेत्र-क्षेत्र-हस्त-योगात् तृतीये भरत-श्रापम्॥

yāvat samjāyate kimcit sattvam sthāvara jangamam ।
kṣetra-kṣetrajña samyogat tad viddhi bharatarsabha ॥

yāvat whatever संजाता samjāyate is born किंचित् kimcit any sattvam being स्थावर jangamam the unmoving क्षेत्र kṣetra kṣetrajña samyogat from the union between the Kshetra and Kshetrajna तत् tat that विद्धि viddhi भरतर्यम् bharatarsabha O best of the Bharatas

Whatever being is born, the unmoving or the moving, O best of the Bharatas, know it to be from the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna.

An analogy from the cinematograph facilitates the understanding of the relationship between Kshetra and Kshetrajna. The moving light and shadow projected on the stationary screen, produce the required effect. The picture of an active man is
possible because of the combined contribution of
the kinetic light and shadow and the static screen. A
blazing fire is seen on the screen, which in fact
remains unaffected. Parallel to this are the contri-
butions made by the Kshetra and Kshetrajna in pro-
ducing the phenomenal universe and the beings in it.
The insentient Kshetra appears sentient due to its
being super-imposed on Kshetrajna. The immovable
Kshetrajna in his turn appears to be born, to grow and
to die, due to his identification with Kshetra. The man
in ignorance misreads the characteristics of the
Kshetra in the Kshetrajna and vice versa. It is
knowledge to understand these two entities as they
are in themselves, and not as they seem to be
because of their mutual intermingling.

The stuff called milk gets itself divided into two stuffs
called butter and butter-milk. Similar to this is Brahman the
Reality in its absolute and relative states. When you lose your
individuality in samadhi, you are one with the Nirguna Brahman
the Absolute Reality. But when you assume your Jiva vyakti
or egoistic individuality, you cognize Iswara and His Prakriti
with its twenty-four categories.

—Sri Ramakrishna

How does the Jnâni behold the Paramatman?
The answer comes:—

सम्म सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्ति परमेश्वरम् ।
विनायतृचिन्तयतेऽस्य: पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ २७
समस: सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तम् परम-इश्वरम् ।
वि-नक्ष-यस्तु व्य-वि-नक्ष-समस्यम्: यः पश्यति स: पश्यति ॥

samat sarvesu bhutesu tişthantham paramesvaram ।
vinaśyatsv avinaśyantarim yah pasyati sa pasyati ॥
He sees, who sees the Supreme Lord, remaining the same in all beings, the undying in the dying. 27

Parameswara is the Chit-ākāsa or Chidambaram or the Screen of Consciousness. It is the persisting Substratum. On this screen the perishing pictures of the Jagat and Jivatman—the universe and the beings—appear and disappear. As the cinema screen remains ever itself while the projected pictures on it come and go, the Paramatman is ever Himself unaffected and unmodified by the appearance and disappearance of the phenomenon. The Jñāni takes note of the background, Parameswara who provides apparent life and consciousness to the Prakriti clinging on to Him. In his vision the universe is not independent of the Paramatman. Whereas to the ignorant man the phantom of the universe seems real while the Paramatman remains unknown.

The sun is spreading his light equally everywhere and he is visible in all parts of the extensive world. Still, a small patch of cloud hides him from our sight. Similarly, Maya hides the all pervading Brahman from our cognition. When the veil of Maya is removed the Sat-chit-ananda Brahman is cognized everywhere and in all beings and things.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does any change take place in the life of the sadhaka who realizes Iswara? The answer comes:—
समम पद्यलिङ सर्वं सर्ववस्तिकात्मभासम्।
न हिनस्त्यात्मनानात्मानं ततो याति परं गतिम्॥ २८

समम पद्यलिङ हि सर्वत्र सर्ववस्तितम सत्तम ।
न हिनस्त्यात्मनानात्मानस्तत: याति परां गतिम्॥

$samam\ pa\mathring{a}yan\ hi\ sar\mathring{a}tra\ samavasthitam\ is\mathring{a}ram\ |
na\ hinast\mathring{y}\ atman\mathring{a}\ 'tmanam\ tato\ y\mathring{a}ti\ par\mathring{a}m\ gatim\ ||$

समम समम equally पद्यति pas\mathring{a}yan seeing हि hi
indeed सर्वत्र sar\mathring{a}tra everywhere सर्ववस्तितम samavasthitam
equally dwelling इस\mathring{a}ram is\mathring{a}ram the Lord न na not
हिनस्त्य hinasti destroys बालना atman by the self बालनम् atmanam the self ततः tat\mathring{a}h then याति y\mathring{a}ti goes पराम par\mathring{a}m the highest गतिम gatim the goal

Because he who sees the Lord, seated the same everywhere, destroys not the self by the self, therefore he reaches the Supreme Goal.

Ignorance is the cause of all the evils committed by man. And the worst of all evils is the belief that man is the body and not the Atman. For, the continuity of the births is kept up by this belief. As long as he wallows in this delusion, he cannot help meeting with death repeatedly. The indestructible Atman is held by him as being destroyed by death. Due to ignorance man further believes that beings are separate, one from another. That they are all mere modifications of the one Cosmic Entity remains denied by him. Injury is done to the others because of the belief that they are separate. Whereas the knower of Brahman cognizes nothing alien to Brahman. His beholding Brahman in and through all.
the manifestations is the Supreme Goal that he attains while yet in body.

When the nest is dismantled the bird flies away in the sky. Similarly when the body consciousness is negated and attachment to the world annihilated, the Jivatman flies away into the sky of the Paramatman, only to be merged into Him.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does karma drop out from a Brahma jñāni? The answer comes.

Karma Pertains to Prakriti — 29-30

प्रकृत्यानि कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वेऽः।
यं पश्यति तथात्माननमकर्तारे स पश्यति ॥ २९।

प्रकृत्यां प्रकृत्यां by Prakriti eva alone च ca and कर्माणि actions क्रियमाणानि kriyamanani being performed सर्वेऽः sarvah all य य a who पश्यति pasyati sees तथा tatha so also आत्मानं atmanam the self अकर्तारसं akartaram actionless स sah he पश्यति pasyati sees

He verily sees, who sees that all actions are done by Prakriti alone and that the Atman is actionless. 29

Heat and light are inherent in the sun. Even so Prakriti is inherent in Brahman. But on this account Brahman undergoes no modification or pollution Prakriti or Sakti is full of activities. The body of the Jñāni belongs to Prakriti. Activities therefore may go on to any extent in it. The supreme state of the Jñāni is in no way affected by it. He,
the Atman is actionless, while the body which is seemingly his, is full of activities. He who intuits this is the enlightened one.

I adore Him as Brahman, who is all Awareness unaffected by activities such as creation, preservation and destruction. I adore Her as Sakti, or Maya or Prakriti who carries on all these activities regularly in the proximity of the actionless Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The relationship between the Kshetra and Kshetrajna is further clarified in the next stanza:

यदा भूतपूर्वभावसेक्षमप्रस्थयति ।
तत् एवं च विस्तारं नहं संपद्धते तदा ॥ ३०

यदा भूत-पूर्वकं-भावम् एक-स्थम् अनु-परस्यति ।
ततः एवं च वि-स्तारम् नम्भ पद-नगे तदा ॥

yadā bhūtapṛthagbhāvam ekastham anupasyati ।
tata eva ca vistāram brahma sampadyate tadā ॥

yadā when bhūta prthag bhāvam the whole variety of beings ekastham resting in the one anupasyatī sees tataḥ from that eva alone ca and vistāram the spreading brahma Brahman becomes tadā then

When he realizes the whole variety of beings as resting in the One, and is an evolution from that One alone, then he becomes Brahman.

30

The wave, the billow, the ripple, the tide, the breakers, the froth—all these modifications belong to the sea. The potentiality of the sea expresses itself in all these forms, which have no existence independent of the sea. In this manner, the inscrutable
Mājā Sakti inherent in Brahman manifests itself as the multitudinous beings resting on Brahman. Neither the beings nor the Sakti who is their root, is extraneous to Brahman. The knower of this truth becomes a Brahmana Jñāni.

The static Brahman and the kinetic Sakti are in fact one and the same. The Absolute Sat chit ananda Brahman is also the omnipotent, omniscient and all blissful Cosmic Mother. As fire and heat are one and the same, Brahman and Sakti are the same.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Do the activities of Prakriti affect Brahman? The elucidation comes:—

Brahman is Self-sufficient—31-34

अनादित्वातः मृगमात्वाः तर्मात्माः अयमात्माः अवयात्माः।
गृहीतश्चैव कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते॥ ३१

anāditvān nirguṇatvāt paramātmā 'yam avyayāḥ
sarstrastho 'pi kaunteya na karoti na lipyate

अनादित्वातः anāditvāt being without beginning निर्गुण-त्वातः nirguṇatvāt being devoid of Gunas परमात्मा paramātmā the Supreme Self अयमात्माः this अवयात्माः imperishable शरस्थरо sarstrasthaḥ dwelling in this body वर्णो api though कौन्तेय kaunteya O Kaunteya न not करोति karoti acts न na not लिप्यते lipyate is tainted.

Having no beginning and possessing no Gunas, this Supreme Self, imperishable, though dwelling in the body, O Kaunteya, neither acts nor is tainted. 31

A thing that is created has a beginning. But Brahman is the one Reality that is not created. He is
therefore having no beginning. All productions of Mayā are the components of the three Gunas which are subject to transformation. For this reason, the things made up of the Gunas are perishable. Brahmān being Nirguna or beyond the Gunas, is imperishable. In His equanimity vibration is impossible. In other words no karma takes place in Him. He being the One without a second, there is nothing to taint Him.

That destruction to which the Brahma jñāni's body is exposed, does not affect him. The karma taking place in his body is not his. While the surface of the sea is all activity, its depth is all poise and peace. While the body of the Jñāni is active, he is supremely above action.

What are the characteristics of Brahmān? He is untarnished by the Gunas. There is no action or movement in Him. The question of going and coming does not arise in His case. He is stationary like the Mount Meru.

--- Sri Ramakrishna

Brahman’s actionlessness and taintlessness are further defined:—

\[
yathā sarvagatam saukṣmyād ākāśam no ’palipyate \|
sarvatrā 'vasthito dehe tathā ‘tmā no ’palipyate II\]
\[
yathā sarvagatam saukṣmyād ākāśam no ’palipyate \\
sarvatrā 'vasthito dehe tathā ‘tmā no ’palipyate II
\]

Yatha yathā as sarvagatam sarvagatam the all-pervading saukṣmyāt because of its subtlety ākāśam
ākāśam ether n na not upalipyeṣe upalipyaṇe is tainted sarvatra everywhere avasthitah seated dehe in the body tathā so ātmā the Self n na not upalipyeṣe upalipyaṇe is tainted

As the all-pervading Akasa is not tainted, by reason of its subtlety, so the Self seated in the body everywhere, is not tainted.

Solidity, liquidity, gaseity — water is in all these three states. Among them its vapour state defies being dirtied because of its subtlety ākāśa is the subtlest among the five elements. It therefore remains untainted by the others. Finally there is nothing subtler than the Atman. He being the subtlest of all, there is nothing to taint Him.

ākāśa is all-pervading. Bodies such as the planets are not able to cut and cleave it in parts. Parallel to it the Chit ākāśa or Brahman is all pervading. The physical forms of beings do not and cannot cleave Him. He is neither attached to the bodies nor is tainted by them.

jnana and ajnana, good and evil dharma and adharma — dualities such as these do not gain access to Brahman who is beyond them and unaffected by them.

— Sri RamaKrishna

Further.

yatha prakāṣayaṇeṇa kṛtalā lokesvāṁ raviḥ ||
ksetraṃ ksetriḥ tathā kṛtalā prakāṣayati bharati || 33
yatha prakāṣayati ekā dharmaḥ lokeṣu śagam raviḥ |
ksetram ksetriḥ tathā dharmaḥ prakāṣayati bharata ||

yathā prakāṣayati ekaḥ kṛsnam lokam imam raviḥ
kṣetrakṣetra tathā kṛsnam prakāṣayati bhārata
The sun that illumines the world is one without a second. Even so, the Paramatman who gives spiritual luminosity to the entire universe is one without a second. All beings great and small, high and low, get their consciousness from the same Source. While the sunlight falls equally on all things, the merits and demerits of those things do not affect the sun in any manner. In the same way the presence of the Paramatman in the hearts of the multitudinous beings ever shines in its original glory. The purity of the heart of the saint does not increase the profundity of the glory of the Paramatman. Neither does the impurity in the heart of the wicked diminish or tarnish the luminosity of the Lord. He remains ever in His glory while providing life, light and love to all beings.

Brahman is like a luminous lamp. One may utilize the light of the lamp for reading holy books while another may make use of it for preparing false documents. It is from Brahman that all get their power of understanding. The various uses to which the intellects of the beings are put do not affect Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The conclusion is
The doctor has to understand first the nature of the disease and the peculiarities of the patient before he could effect a radical cure. If either the ailment or the ailing person be not properly known, the treatment becomes ineffective to that extent. More earnest and more accurate ought to be the study of the Kshetra and Kshetrajna by the spiritual aspirant. The distinction between these two has to be clearly understood. Above all, the development of the intuitive faculty by means of a co-ordinated and devotionally tuned spiritual life is most imperative. For, the divine eye alone opens up the vista to Truth.
Whereas the intuitive knowledge makes him consonant with the Reality. The dream and the delusion of the earth-bound life is transcended. That Brahman is the Eternal Verity is realized in samādhi. The Prakriti appears and disappears on the substratum of the Purusha. The goal of the Jīvatman is not to get entangled in Prakriti, but to make use of it with an attitude of detachment and gain reunion with the Paramatman.

It is easy to say that the world is Maya—a delusion. But do you know the implication of this statement? It is like burning the camphor which leaves no residue. It is not like burning the fuel which leaves the ash behind. True spiritual pursuit leads the sadhaka into Samadhi in which the Jagat and the Jīva are eliminated. All relative existences vanish leaving behind Brahman, the Absolute.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासपानिषत्सु नम्नविधायां गोगठाते श्रीकृष्णादुःसंवादादेः शेषस्त्रेत्रभविभाषायामो नाम न्योदयोध्वमयम्: ॥

iti srtmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām, yogasāstre sri kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde kṣetra kṣetrajña vibhāga yogo nāma trayodasō ’dhyāyāḥ ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the thirteenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF THE DISCRIMINATION OF THE KŚETRA AND THE KŚETRAJNA
GUNATRAYA VIBHAGA YOGA
THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION OF THE THREE GUNAS

CHAPTER XIV

Jnana aids Mukti—The Process of Birth—The Functions of the
Gunas—The Symptoms of the Gunas—Transcending the Gunas is
Mukti—The Definition of the one who has Transcended the Gunas

Jnana aids Mukti—1-2

Sri Bhagavatanuvach

परं भूय: प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानयुक्तमसृ।
यज्ञात्त्वा मुनय: सर्वे परां सिद्धिमिति गता: || 1

परम् भूय: प्र-(दृ)क्ष्यामि ज्ञानानाम ज्ञानम् उत्तमम्।
यज्ञात्त्वा मुनय: सर्वे परां चिन्तितं इत्। ग (य)ः-तः: ||

Sri Bhagavān uvāca

param bhūyah pravakṣyāmi jñānānām jñānam uttamam|
yaj jñātvā munayah sarve parām siddhim ito gataḥ ||

Sri Bhagavatanuvach Sri Bhagavan said:

परम् param supreme भूय: bhūyah again प्रवक्ष्यामि pravakṣyāmi (I) will declare ज्ञानानाम jñānānām of all knowledges ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge उत्तमम् uttamam the best yat yat which ज्ञात्त्वा jñātvā having known मुनय: munayah the sages सर्वे sarve all परां param supreme सिद्धिम् siddhum to perfection इत: it after this life गता gataḥ gone

The Blessed Lord's said:

I shall again declare that supreme knowledge, the
best of all forms of knowledge; by knowing which,
all the sages have passed from this world to the
highest perfection.
The sages who have been blessed with Self-knowledge have nothing else to gain. And this supreme knowledge has already been explained. Still, it is again delineated from another angle. While Brahma jñāna is the easiest to acquire for those who have purified their minds, it is the hardest and the least understood for those whose minds are steeped in worldliness. It therefore requires to be presented in as many ways as possible. The votaries of Brahma jñāna are designated as Munis. Perfection is theirs to the extent they make progress in this knowledge. While the advanced Brahma jñānis are ever perfect in themselves, their bodily existence often puts on apparent defects. The limits of the Kṣetra ought not however to be imputed to the Kṣetrajña or the self. But since this error is committed frequently, Self-knowledge requires to be expounded repeatedly and in a variety of ways.

Knowledge pertaining to Iswara is the real knowledge. Branches of arts and sciences, logic, grammar—learning such as these usually confuse the understanding instead of clarifying it. Sacred books often function as shackles that prevent free thinking. All learning is good if it can ever guide man Godward.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The benefits of Brahma jñāna are:

इदं ज्ञानप्राप्तिः मम साध्यग्यािमतः ।।
सत्यैव नोपजागते प्रलये न व्यथति च ॥ २

इदं ज्ञानम् उप-वा-त्रिलक्षण सम साध्यायं का-म्-तः ।।
सत्य सत्य न उप-वरीया-त्रिलक्षण प्रलये न व्यथ-वाहति च ॥

idam jñānam upāsritya mama sādharmyam āgatāḥ ।
'sarge 'pi no 'pajāyante pralaye na vyathanti ca ॥
This idam this jñānam knowledge upāśritya having taken refuge in mama my sādharmyam sadharmyam unity agaṭah having attained to sarge at the time of creation api also na not upajāyante upayāyante are born pralaye at the time of dissolution na not vyathanti are (they) disturbed ca and

They who, having devoted themselves to this knowledge, have attained to unity with Me, are neither born at the time of creation, nor are they disturbed at the time of dissolution.

The doll of salt consigned to the sea loses its assumed individuality and regains its natural state. Even such is the case with the Jñānti. He gets himself identified with Brahman, who is beyond the modifications of Prakṛti. Transmigrations involving him in births and deaths do not trouble and tarnish him.

Boiled paddy does not sprout when sowed in the field. But the unboiled grain keeps on propagating. The man bathed in the fire of Brahman Jñāna is no more troubled with births and deaths. But the ignorant one cannot escape from that ordeal.

—Sri Ramakrishna

How is the cycle of birth kept up? The answer comes —

The Process of Birth—3-4

भम योगिन्यहऽध्रव वसिन्नवें दयस्मध्यस् ।
संभनः सर्वभूतानां विवे भवति भारत ॥ ३ ॥

मम योगिः सहित श्रद्धा तलिस्मूः सर्वमूः दयामि भद्रम ।
विम्भावसः चरित्य-भूतानाम् तत्त भवति भारत ॥

80-46
mama yonir mahad brahma
tasmin garbham dadhāmy aham
sambhayāḥ sarvabhūtānām
tato bhavati bhrārata

Soma mama my yoniḥ womb mahat mahāt brahma the great Brahma tasmin in that garbham germ daḍhāmi place aham I sambhayā the birth sarvabhūtānām of all beings tataḥ thence bhavati is Bhārata O Bharata

My womb is the Mahat Brahma (Prakriti); in that I place the germ; thence, O Bharata, is the birth of all beings.

The Prakriti is called Mahat Brahma, the four-faced entity. He is constituted of the three Gunas. He is the material cause of everything movable and immovable. Whatever is manifest as the universe with its multitudinous beings is He; and his unmanifest state is immensely more. For this reason he is known as the Mahat Brahma—the great entity. All-pervasiveness is his.

A seed is sown in the soil. In this act, the seed is the germ and the soil, the womb. In a baby’s coming into being, its mother and father function as the Prakriti and the Purusha respectively. This act takes place in a macrocosmic scale too. In the great womb of the Prakriti the germ of aṭma chaitanya is embedded. The blissful union of the Kṣetra and the Kṣetrajña takes place in this way, leading to the coming forth of Hiranyagarbha, the cosmic embodied being. And the countless Jīvātmās are
none other than the rays radiating from this cosmic being. The Jivatman is also called the Kshetrajna because of his being endowed with the faculty of understanding. Variations and grades in the Jivatmās are all due to the limiting adjuncts (Upādhis) caused by desires which are all born of ignorance. Consequently the Jivatmans are all of infinite aptitudes and temperaments.

The next stanza further clarifies this fact.

सर्वेऽयोनिश् कौन्तेय सूर्तेयः सम्बन्धिता याः ।
तासां भव महयोनिणिन्द्र वीजङ्ग्रहः पिता ॥ ४ ॥

सर्वेऽयोनिश् कौन्तेयः सूर्तेयः सम्बन्धिता याः ।
तासाम् भवं महत् योनिः बह्मप्र वीजङ्ग्रहः पिता ॥

sarva yoniṣu kauntenya mūrtayah saṁbhavanti yāḥ ।
tāsāṁ brahma mahad yonir aham bijapradāḥ pitā ॥

sarva yoniṣu in all the wombs कौन्तेय O Kaunteya सूर्तेयः mūrtayah forms सम्बन्धित saṁbhavanti are produced याः yāḥ which तासाम् tāsām their भवं brahma Bhāma सहन mahat great योनिः yonih womb बह्मप्र aham I वीजङ्ग्रहः bijapradāḥ seed-giving पिताः pitā father

Whatever forms are produced, O Kaunteya, in any wombs whatsoever, the great Brahma (Prakriti) is their womb, I the seed-giving Father.

The wombs of the Prakriti are infinitely graded providing scope for all types of beings to sprout forth. The celestials, the human beings, the beasts, the birds, the insects, the vegetable kingdom, the bacteria—all these have their suitable wombs to take
birth and thrive. The Prakriti is the Cosmic Mother for the entire creation. And Iswara is the Father.

How does the Prakriti bind the Jīvas? The process is explained:—

The Functions of the Gunas — 5-10

सत्यं रजस्तम इति गुणा: प्रकृतिसंभवा: ।
निबद्धर भवति महावाहो देहे देहिनमव्यथम: ॥ ५

sattvaṁ rajas tama iti gunaḥ prakṛtisambhavaḥ ।
nibadhnanti mahābāho dehe dehinam avyayam ॥

सत्यम् sattvaṁ Sattva रज: rajah Rajas तम: tamaḥ Tamas इति iti these गुणा: guṇaḥ Gunas प्रकृतिसंभवा: prakṛti sambhavāḥ born of Prakriti निबद्धर nibadhnanti bind महावाहो mahāvāho O mighty-armed देहे dehe in the body देहिनम् dehinam the embodied अव्ययम् avyayam the indestructible

Sattva, Rajas, Tamas — these Gunas, O mighty-armed, born of Prakriti, bind the indestructible embodied one fast in the body.

The Prakriti is made up of the three Gunas. It should not be construed that just as forms are superimposed on substances like gold, the Gunas are superimposed on the Prakriti. Verily just as fire and its heat are one and the same, Prakriti and the Gunas are identical. In tricolour printing, all the various hues and shades required for a colourful picture can be very effectively brought out. Even so the entire Prakriti consists of the three Gunas.
In substance they are one while in expression they are three.

Prakriti or the Kshetra is dependent on the Kshetrajna. How can the Gunas bind him who is the owner thereof? The fact is that the unfettered Atman seems as if fettered due to ignorance. Wavelets in the water cause the reflection of the sun in it to quiver. It is the reflection of the sun that trembles, but not the real sun. In this manner the reflected Atman seems to be in the shackles of the Gunas, while actually neither the reflected Atman nor the original Atman in any way gets bound.

The characteristics of the three Gunas are now delineated:

तत्र सत्त्व निर्मलत्वात् क्राशकमनामयं ।
सुखस्तेन बधाति ज्ञानस्तेन ज्ञान ॥ ६

तत्र सत्त्व सुख-स्तर निर-पर-स्वातः
प्र-काशकम् बध-प्रामयं ।
सुख-स्तेन (बल्मु) बध-ना-ति
ज्ञान-स्तेन च बध-व्रह ॥

tatra sattvam nirmalatvāt prakāsakam anāmayam ।
sukha saṅgena badhnāti jñānasāngena ca 'nagha ॥

तत्र tatra of these सत्त्वम् sattvam Sattva निर्मलत्वात्
nirmalatvāt from its stainlessness प्रकाशकम् prakāsakam
luminous ज्ञानस्तर्यं anāmayam healthy सुखस्तेन sukha
saṅgena by attachment to happiness बधाति badhnāti
binds ज्ञानस्तेन jñāna saṅgena by attachment to know-
ledge च ca and अनाघ anagha O sinless one

Of these, Sattva, being stainless, is luminous and
unobstructive. It binds, O sinless one, by creating
attachment to happiness and attachment to knowledge.
The *Sattva Guna* may be compared to an evenly made clear glass. Light passes through it unobstructed and undiminished. Things seen through that glass are as vividly visible as to a normal naked eye. The *Sattva* is similarly transparent to the brilliance of Atman. Seeing the things objectively in their true perspective is the secular knowledge. Seeing the Atman as He is, is the sacred knowledge.

The enjoyment of a pleasure is with a greater gusto in the highly developed ones than in the ordinary beings. This is due to the predominance of *Sattva* in the former beings. A hearty enjoyment of a pleasure in its turn breeds an inordinate attachment to it. The one who enjoys pleasure greatly next tries to increase his knowledge of the object of enjoyment. Pleasure derived from an object and the knowledge of that object are interrelated. Therefore there grows as much attachment to the knowledge as there is attachment to the pleasure. The scope for the cultivation of pleasure and the knowledge pertaining to it is ever on the increase in *Sattva*. The subtler a force the more powerful is it in effect. Attachment to emotional pleasure and the intellectual pleasure is almost akin to *ānandam* which is Brahman. To outgrow and transcend this transient pleasure is hardly ever possible to a *sadhaka*.

रत्नौ रागात्मकः विचित्रः तुष्णः रक्षसोऽङ्गः चर्मः।
तत्त्वः भास्योऽङ्गः कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनः॥ ७

रजः सृष्टः-अभास्यभः विद्यूः-(हि) बि
तुष्णः-रक्षः-ङ्गः-उद्ध-भविः
तत्र निर्याह्व(म्भ)म-नाति कौऽन्तः
कर्मम्(नू)ः सङ्गेन देहिनः॥
Know Rajas to be of the nature of passion, the
source of thirst and attachment; it binds fast, O
Kaunteya, the embodied one by attachment to action. 7

The way of the Rajas is to instil desire and goad
one into undertaking new projects. As a dye colours
the white cloth, this Guna colours the Jivatman red.
Trishna or thirst is the hankering of the mind
after things not yet acquired, while sanga or attach-
ment is the act of clinging on to the objects already
acquired. Rajas engenders greed for sense-objects
visible and invisible. As fuel feeds fire, Rajas fosters
attachment to action. It creates the sense of agency
in the Jivatman, although his ideal is to rid himself
of that feeling.
But know Tamas to be born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings; it binds fast, O Bharata, by heedlessness, indolence and sleep.

Tamas is inertia born of ignorance. It enshrouds the discrimination of man. While Rajas despoils Sattva, Tamas despoils both Rajas and Sattva. It delivers man into heedlessness, indolence and sleep, rendering him inert. By nature it is destructive.

All the three Gunas are collectively described again:—

sattvāṁ sukhe sañjāyati rajah karmāṇi bhārata ।
 jiñānam āvṛtya tu tamāḥ pramāde sañjāyatya uta ॥

sattvāṁ Sattva sukhe to happiness सक्षमति sañjāyati attaches रजः rajah । Rajas कर्मिणि karma-

ni to action भारत O Bharata ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge आक्षेप āvṛtya shrouding tu tu verily तस्
tamāḥ Tamas अवश्ये pramāde to heedlessness सक्षमति sañjāyati attaches तत uta but
Sattva binds one to happiness, and Rajas to action, O Bharata, while Tamas verily veils knowledge and binds one to heedlessness.

The temperament predominant in a man is the indicator of the Guna in which he has moulded himself. Sattva is in ascendance in the man given to pleasures ranging from the physical to the intellectual and ethical. Rajas dominates in him who is ever active and engages himself in all sorts of enterprises. The man who is callous about his duty, who wastes his time without compunction, who squanders his money foolishly—such a man is immersed in Tamas.

How do these Gunas act one over the other? It is delineated:

रजस्म्यामिनियुप सर्वं भवति भारत
रजः सर्वं तमस्य तमः सर्वं रजस्तथा ॥ १०॥

रजः तमः न अति-भू-य सत्त्वम् भवति भारत ।
रजः सदृ-समृ तमः न एव तमः सत्त्वम् रजः तथा ॥

rajas tamas ca 'bhibhūya sattvam bhavati bhārata ।
rajaḥ sattvam tamas cai 'va tamah sattvam rajas tathā॥

रजः rajaḥ Rajas तमः tamah Tamas च ca and आभिभूय abbibhūya having overpowered सत्त्वम् sattvam Sattva भवति bhavati arises भारत bhārata O Bharata रजः rajaḥ Rajas सत्त्वम् sattvam Sattva तमः tamah Tamas च ca and एव eva even तमः tamah Tamas सत्त्वम् sattvam Sattva रजः rajaḥ Rajas तथा tathā also

Sattva asserts itself, O Bharata, by predominating over Rajas and Tamas; and Rajas, over Sattva and Tamas; and Tamas, over Sattva and Rajas. ॥ १०॥
All the three Gunas are inherent in the Jivatman. These Gunas again are interrelated like the three sides of a triangle. When any one side of a triangle is placed in the forefront, the other two get behind perforce. Even so is the case with the three Gunas inborn in man. In his calm and serene wakeful state, man stays in Sattva which nourishes him in joy and wisdom. The preponderance of Rajas drives him into activity. But when overwhelmed with Tamas, man can neither learn nor work. He yields to lethargy and sleep. In the course of a day, all the three Gunas dominate by turns, over all beings.

The ways of the Gunas are further elucidated:

The Symptoms of the Gunas — 11-18

सर्वदारेयुः देहेण्यासिन्न्याकाशः उपजायते ।

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याहिणिः सत्स्मित्युतः ॥ ११ ॥

सर्व-दारेयुः देहेण्यासिन्न्याकाशः उप-(जन्म)ज्ञाते ।

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याम्यात् विविश्व-तामसोऽवस्था इति उतः ॥

sarvadvāreṣu dehe 'smin prakāsa upajāyate ।

jñānam yadā tadā vidyād vivṛddham sattvam ity uta ॥

सर्वदारेयुः sarva dvāreṣu through every gate (sense)

देहेण dehe in the body असिन asmin in this प्रकाश prakāsa

wisdom-light upajāyate उपजायate shines ज्ञानम् jñānam

knowledge यत्र yadā when तदा tadā then विद्यात् vidyāt

(it) may be known विविश्व-तामसोऽवस्था vivṛddham (is) predominant

सत्त्वसं sattvam Sattva इति iti thus उत्त uta indeed

When the light of knowledge beams through all the gateways of the body, then it may be known that Sattva is predominant.

When the light of knowledge beams through all the gateways of the body, then it may be known that Sattva is predominant.
If a lamp is placed within a box fitted with glasses of various hues, its light shines through all the glasses. The intensity of the light adds to the brilliance pouring out. Man’s body is very much like that box. The sense organs are the gateways for the light of the self within to beam into view. While in Sattva, the effulgence of the self is at its height. And this is evinced by the functioning of the senses. In the act of seeing there is sharpness, in hearing there is alertness, in performing an action there is precision accompanied by deliberation and accuracy. All the senses function pleasantly at their best. These are the marks of the predominance of Sattva.

lobhaḥ pravṛttir ārambhah karmanāṁ asamāḥ spr̥hāḥ rajasy etāṁ jāyante vivṛddhe bharatārsabhaḥ

Greed, activity, the undertaking of actions, unrest, longing — these arise, O best of the Bharatas, when Rajas is predominant.

Attempt at making the property of others, one’s own is greed. Officiously engaging oneself in matters
not one’s own is what is meant by activity here.
Increasing one’s activities unnecessarily and out of proportion is not the way of the wise. Any little success in a new undertaking brings in elation and any little set back in another undertaking brings in dejection. Oscillation of the mind in these ways is called unrest. A prosperous undertaking of a neighbour goads a greedy man into a similar venture. His impatience to have it done immediately is known as longing. These traits are all born of Rajas.

अप्रकाशोप्रवृत्तिः प्रमादः मोहः एव च ।
तमस्वेताति जायन्ते विब्रद्धे कुरुनन्दनः ॥ १२ ॥

अप्रकािश: अप्रवृत्ति: च प्रमाद: मोह: एव च।
तमसि एतानि (जान्) जायन्ते विब्रद्धे कुह-नन्दन॥

aprakāśo pravṛttiḥ ca pramādo moha eva ca ।
tamasya etāni āyante vivṛddhe kurunandana ॥

अप्रकाशः aprakāśaḥ darkness अप्रवृत्ति: apravṛttik
inertness च ca and प्रमादः pramādoḥ heedlessness मोहः
mohāḥ delusion एव eva even च ca and तमसि tamasi
in inertia एतानि etāni these जायन्ते āyante arise विब्रद्धे
vivṛddhe have become predominant कुह-नन्दन kurunandana O descendant of Kuru

Indiscrimination, inertness, heedlessness and
delusion—these arise, O joy of the Kurus, when Tamas
is predominant.

The literal meaning of the word aprakāśa is
darkness. But the darkness of the mind lands one
into indiscrimination. There is no initiative in the
one lacking in discrimination. Lethargy overtakes
such a dullard. He becomes heedless or indifferent
to progress and prosperity in life. He is so much deluded that he mistakes stagnation for self-sufficiency. That man becomes depraved. These are all due to the predominance of Tamas.

Is there any connection between the ascendency of the Guna and the reincarnation of the Jivatman? The answer comes —

यदा सच्चे प्रश्नेद्व तु प्रलय याति देहभूतः।
तदेशचविद्वं लोकानमलान्यतिप्रच्छते॥ १४॥

यदा वद्धे प्र-श्यु-वे तु प्र-श्यु-म् याति देह मूर्तः।
तदा चक्षु विद्रास् शोकानुः अमलानु शति-पद-वे॥

yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu pralayam yāti dehabhṛt
tado 'ttamavidām lokān amalān pratipadyate
tyādā when sattve in Sattva pravṛddhe having become predominant tu verily pralayam death yāti yāti meets dehabhṛt the embodied one tada tadā then uttama vidām of the knowers of the highest lokān to the worlds amalān of the spotless pratipadyate (he) attains.

If the embodied one meets with death when Sattva is predominant, then he goes to the pure worlds of those who know the highest.

The thought uppermost in the mind at the time of departing from the body, is the deciding factor of the next birth of that Jivatman. Because of the prevalence of Sattva at that juncture, godly thoughts are inevitable. And Brahma loka is the highest among the regions obtained by the embodied.
highest deity known to them is the Creator Brahma or the Hiranyagarbha. But this knowledge is not to be equated with Brahma jñāna, which is the finale.

रजसि प्रलघ्य गत्वा कर्मसंक्रिय जायते ।
तथा प्रलीनस्तम्भि मृत्युश्रेष्ठिनिषु जायते ॥ १५
रजसि प्र-ज्वसु ग(स)-वा कर्मणि-तक्षिण जायते ।
तथा प्र-देवा प्रमति मृत्यु-श्रेष्ठिनि जन-मण्यि ॥

rajas pralayaṁ gatvā karmasaṅgīsu jāyate ।
tathā pralīnas tamasi mūḍhayoniṣu jāyate ॥

रजसि rajas in Rajas pralayaṁ death gatvā meeting karma saṅgīsu among those attached to action jāyate (he) is born तथा tathā so pralīnaḥ dying तस्माति tamasi in inertia मृत्युश्रेष्ठिनि mūḍhayoniṣu in the wombs of the senseless jāyate jāyate (he) is born

Meeting with death in Rajas, he is born among those attached to action; and, dying in Tamas, he is born in the wombs of the deluded.

The already mentioned Sāttvika man casts off the body in all calmness and in full consciousness. The Rajasika man leaves the body with excitement, desire and sorrow. So he is born again as the one given to excessive activities. The Tamasika man dies in an unconscious state. Such a one is born again as an animal or a sub-human being.

A Tamasika man ought to endeavour to become a Rajasika man, and a Rajasika man, a Sāttvika one. Because:—
karmanah sukṛtasya 'huh sattvikam nirmalam phalam
rajasas tu phalam duḥkham ajñānam tamasah phalam

The fruit of good action, they say, is Sattvika
and pure; verily the fruit of Rajas is pain, and
ignorance is the fruit of Tamas.

Tamas engulfs man either in inertia or in wicked
deeds which prevent him from making upward
progress. Rajas is the one instrument to save man
from stagnation and lead him to prosperity. It
drives him on to incessant action; but the nature of
karma is to bring misery in its train. And this
misery is no ill luck. It has a great purpose to serve.
Nothing else equals misery for inducing man to soar
high. In the training ground of misery he gets his
character shaped. Consequently dharma emanates
from him. Ultimately dharma or good conduct
lifts him to Sattva which is all purity and brilliance.

In what other respects do the Gunas get them-
sewels distinguished one from the other? The answer
comes:—
From Sattva arises wisdom and greed from Rajas; heedlessness and error arise from Tamas, and also ignorance.

What is mentioned in this stanza is the truth about the Gunas. Man should therefore ever endeavour to subdue the base Gunas in him and rise high. Moreover:

ऊँची गच्छति सच्चासा मध्ये तितिण्ति राजसः।
जचन्त्यमुग्धं वृत्तिं अधी गच्छति तामसः। ॥ १८ ॥

उर्ध्वम् गच्छति सत्वस्त्था मध्ये तितिण्ति राजसः।
जचन्त्यमुग्धं वृत्तिं राजसः। ॥

Urdhvaṁ gacchanti sattvasthā madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ,
jaghanya guṇa vṛttisthā adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ. ॥

Urdhvaṁ upwards गच्छति gacchanti go सत्वस्त्था:
sattvasthāḥ in Sattva seated मध्ये madhye in the middle तितिण्ति tiṣṭhanti dwell राजसः rājasāḥ the Rajasika जचन्त्यमुग्धं वृत्तिं: jaghanya guṇa vṛttisthāḥ abiding.
the function of the lowest Guna अधिष्ठ adhāś downwards गच्छन्ति gacchanti go तामसा tāmasāḥ the Tamasika

Those who are fixed in Sattva go upwards; the Rajasikas remain in the middle; and the Tamasikas, abiding in the functions of the lowest Guna, go downwards.

There is an inviolable relationship between the change of the Gunas in the Jīvatman and his being born high or low. The one fixed in Sattva may be born a celestial if he is inclined towards enjoyment of pleasures. But if his bent is towards knowledge and wisdom he takes a suitable human birth and strives for further progress in that direction. The man of Rajas is ever active in all of his births. For want of proper discrimination he does not head for higher births, nor does he deteriorate to lower births. He maintains the position he has gained and waits for the dawn of discrimination to guide him upwards. But the man steeped in Tamas wallows in the nether regions.

Is it sufficient if man aspires to Sattva and gets established there? The answer comes —

Transcending the Gunas is Mukti — 19 20

नान्यं गुणेयं: कतरूं यदाद्र्यादुपस्थति ।
सुन्दरस्य परं वेति महानू सोपिगच्छति॥ १९

न बन्यं गुणेयं कर्तं यदाह्र्य अनु-प्रस्तु-अव्याति ।
सुन्दरस्य च परस् वेदू ति मदू मात्रम् स अव्यगच्छति॥

nā 'nyam gunebhhyah kartāram yadā draṣṭā 'nupasyati
gunebhyas ca param vetti mad bhāvam sa 'dhyacchati
When the seer perceives no agent other than the Gunas, and knows Him who is higher than the Gunas, he enters into My Being.

The Prakriti is the agent for all karmas. The Gunas being none other than the Prakriti, they are equated with it. The Gunas are therefore held as agents for all the activities, no matter where they take place. The senses and the objects of the senses are all nothing but the modifications of the Gunas. To outgrow the inferior Gunas and ascend to the superior Gunas is the plan and purpose of the mundane life. Is the goal of life reached when one gets at the pure Sattva? Gaining the pure Sattva is the climax of the earthly life; but even that state has to be transcended. Nirguna Brahman is beyond the three Gunas. Getting into that Absolute State is the goal of life. There is neither karma nor agency in that State. It is the Highest Goal to be attained, though it cannot be defined in words.

What are the indications of Iswara revealing Himself in the heart of the devotee? The dawn is the harbinger of the sunrise. Similarly, selflessness, absence of agency, purity and such like divine qualities precede the spiritual vision of Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the benefit that befalls the one that transcends the Gunas? The blessing is portrayed:
The plenitude of Brahma jnana is explained here. The Jivatman resides in the body which is made up of the three Gunas, but his ideal is not to identify himself with his residence. Pain due to birth, decay and death is to that Jivatman only who identifies himself with the body. A Jivanmukta is he who is free from body consciousness even while dwelling in the body. Fixed as he is in the Bliss of Brahman, he has virtually transcended the three Gunas.

The body has its birth and death. But the Atman is free from these modifications. He is like the areca nut in its shell. When still tender, this nut and its shell hold fast to each other but when ripe the nut separates itself from the shell. In Brahma jnana the body consciousness drops away.

— Sri Ramakrishna
An occasion now arises for Arjuna to raise a doubt; and he avails himself of it.

The Definition of the One who has Transcended the Gunas—21-27

अर्जुन उवाच
cardinal-noun in the-ganadesa-upto-bhavati-pbho
finsvarah: katho vatsasvam-anantaranitvate
ke: tathas: trim gnana-etalan atri-iva: bhavati-pbho
kimaacarah katham caiva: trim gnana atifactate

arjuna uvaca

kair lingais trim gunan etan attato bhavati prabho
kimacarah katham ca tams trim gunan atifactate

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvaca Arjuna said:

ke: kait by what kins: lingais by marks trim three gnana gunan Gunas etan these atri crossed bhavati becomes prabho O Lord
kinaacarah kim acarah what (is his) conduct katham how ca and etan etan these trim three gnana gunan Gunas advaitate atifactate goes beyond

Arjuna said:

What are the marks, O Lord, of him who has crossed over the three Gunas? What is his conduct? And how does he rise above the Gunas? 21

Here are three questions linked together. They are being severally answered.

श्री भगवानीवाच
prakarai ch prakriti ch moghech ch padvan
na evastu santaritani na niruttanani kahriti

26
Sri Bhagavan uvaca

prakāsāṁ ca pravrttim ca moham eva ca pāndava
na dveṣṭi sampravruttāni na nivṛttāni kānḳṣati

Śrī Bhagavatāca Śrī Bhagavan said:

prakāsāṁ prakāsāṁ light ca and pravrttim pravrttim
activity ca and moham moham delusion eva eva even ca
ca and pāndava pāndava O Pandava n na not dveṣṭi dveṣṭi
hates samsāra samsāra (when) gone forth na not
nivṛttāni nivṛttāni when absent kānḳṣati longs

The Blessed Lord said:

He, O Pandava, who hates not light, activity and
delusion, when present, nor longs after them when absent;

The man immersed in Sattva has his intellectual
pursuits and refined pleasures in which he is deeply
absorbed. Scriptural learning has a remarkable hold
on the devotee. Pious discourse, rapturous Bhajana,
deep meditation—all these are meticulously practised
by the man of Sattvika disposition. If these doings
are interrupted or dropped out for a day, the aspirant
feels as if a great spiritual loss has been inflicted on
him. This feeling is the sign of his being attached
to Sattva Guna. But the man who has transcended
the Gunas has nothing to gain by adhering to these
observances and nothing to lose by abandoning
them. With or without these good occupations the
Brahma jñāna ever rests in Brahman.
The man caught up in _Rajas_ is always up and doing. What seems good to him, he executes devotedly; and what other is held bad by him, is abhorred and avoided. Going to the temple regularly and doing ritualistic worship elaborately are all aspects of his life, too holy to be given up. But the man who has gone beyond the Gunas holds all these observances as mere schooling. Nothing is gained by him by sticking on to them and nothing is lost by relinquishing them. Any and every good action is devotedly done by him, and he is equally superb when nothing at all is done. But it is impossible for any bad deed to emanate from him.

To the man adhering to _Tamas_, lethargy and sleep are most welcome. He is very much annoyed if his sleep is disturbed. But that man who has crossed over the Gunas treats sleep and wakefulness alike. His body is given the required repose which automatically gets reduced to its bare minimum in the enlightened man.

The _Brahma jñāni_ who has soared beyond the three Gunas evinces merits found in a mirror. It truly reflects the objects placed before it. When nothing is presented before it, it remains in its own state. The mirror is in no way affected by the appearance and disappearance of things in its proximity. Similar to this is the place gained by the three Gunas in the mind of the _Muni_ who has transcended them. While they come and go, he remains unaffected by them.

How do the _Jivan muktas_, the liberated souls, live in the world? They live like the kingfisher that dives deep into the water
to catch fish, but does not get wet. The few drops that happen to be on its feathers are shaken off with ease. The liberated souls are unaffected by the happenings in the world.

— Sri Ramakrishna

This is in answer to the first question put by Arjuna.

उदासीनवदासीनों गुणेयों न विचाल्यते।
गुणा वर्तन्त हस्तेन योजकतीमति नेहलते॥ २३
उद्द भास्व यस्मि वासीनु हृद न विचाल्यते।
गुणा वर्तन्त इति एव य अव तत्क्षिति न इत्यत॥

udāsināvat āsino gunair yo na vicālyate
gunā varanta ity eva yo 'vatisthati ne 'ṅgate॥

उदासीनवतु udāsinavat like one unconcerned भासी
āsinaḥ seated गुणे गुणात्म by the Gunas य याह who न
na not विचाल्यते vicālyate is moved गुणा गुणात्म the
Gunas वर्तन्ते vartante operate इति iti thus एव eva even
य याह who अवतिष्ठति avatisthati is self-centred न na not
इत्यते िगते moves

He who, sitting like one unconcerned, is moved not by the Gunas, who, knowing that the Gunas operate, is firm and moves not; 23

A hill does not shake while the trees, plants and creepers on it shake when the wind blows. The Gunas move in the Brahma jñāmi but he remains calm, steady and unconcerned with the happenings in the world.

समदुःःस्रुः स्तस्य: समलोप्यार्मकाश्च:॥
तुल्यश्रिप्रमी: पौरसतुल्यनिन्दत्मसस्तुति:॥ २४
सम दु सम-सुस्त सम-स्थ सम-लोह अधिक-राघवः।
तुल्य प्रयों महिम चीरु तुल्य नित्य आलम-सम्य द्विती॥
sama duḥkha sukhaḥ svasthaḥ sama loṣṭaśma kāñcanaḥ
tulyapriyaṃpriyo dhīras tulyanindātmasamāstutiḥ

Balanced in pleasure and pain, Self-abiding, viewing a clod of earth, a stone and gold alike; the same to agreeable and disagreeable, firm, the same in censure and praise;

The Gunas have assumed the form of the human body; they have also assumed the forms of various objects. And these forms interact on one another. The Atman is no party to these interactions. The knower of the Atman remains as Atman, unconcerned with the workings of the Gunas.

mānapamānayos tulyas tulyo mitrāripakṣayoh
sarvārambhaparityāgi guṇāttāḥ sa ucyate
undertakings गुण अतित् guna atitaḥ crossed beyond the Gunas स saḥ he उच्यते ucyate is said

The same in honour and dishonour, the same to friend and foe, abandoning all undertakings—he is said to have risen above the Gunas.

Honour and dishonour, friendship and enmity—dualities such as these exist for him who is bound by the Gunas and for him who is ignorant. Because of the persistence of the Jivāhood, the engaging of oneself in personal undertakings becomes possible. But these limitations are not for him who has gone beyond the three Gunas.

These three stanzas are in reply to the second question raised by Arjuna.

The third and the last question is being answered now —

मां च योद्धयमिचारण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।
स गुणानसमतीत्वैतान्त्रब्रह्मायण कल्पते ॥ २६

माये च य अ-वि-अमि-चारण भक्ति-श्रेयोऽचेते ।
स गुणान सम-अति-स त-ग पूर्वानु ब्रह्म-भूयाय कल्पति ॥

mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa bhaktiyogena sevate ।
sa gunān samatītyai 'tān brahma bhūyāya kalpate ॥

mām me ca and य याः who अययभिचारण avyabhicāreṇa unswerving bhakti yogena with devotion सेवते sevate serves स saḥ he गुणाद् gunan Gunas समतीत्वा samatītya crossing beyond पूर्वानु etān these प्रहस्याय brahma bhūyāya for becoming Brahma कल्पते kalpate is fitted
And he who serves Me with an unswerving devotion, he, going beyond the Gunas, is fitted for becoming Brahman.

Extreme devotion surges in the heart of the devotee who has made himself over to the Lord. He has nothing but Narayana to cognize both within and without. This intense fervour ends with his becoming Brahman. As darkness disappears when light comes, the three Gunas disappear when the dawn of the Brahman jnāna takes place.

The devotee sees Iswara in many forms. But when he gets into Samadhi this very Iswara is realized by him as the formless Infinite Nirguna Brahman. It is in this realization that Bhakti and Jnana get harmonized.

—Sri Ramakrishna

Is Bhakti the only means to go beyond the Gunas? The elucidation comes:

ग्रहणो हि प्रतिष्ठा अमृतमयो अवयययो च ।
शास्त्रस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्य एकान्तिकस्य च ॥ २७

brahmano hi pratiṣṭhā ’ham amṛtasya ’vyayasya ca ।
sāsvatasya ca dharmaśya sukhashyai ’kāntikasya ca ॥

नमः: brahmanah of Brahman हि hi indeed प्रतिष्ठा pratiṣṭhā the abode अहम् aham I अमृतस्य amṛtasya the immortal अवययस्य avayasya (of) the immutable च ca and शास्त्रस्य sāsvatasya (of) everlasting च ca and धर्मस्य dharmaśya of dharma सुखस्य sukhashyai of bliss एकान्तिकस्य ekāntikasya absolute च ca and
For I am the Abode of Brahman, the Immortal, and the Immutable, the Eternal Dharma and Absolute Bliss.

All the four Yogas are herein harmonized. Bhakti and the attainment of the Saguna Brahman through it have been explained in the previous stanza. The Immortal and the Immutable Brahman or the Nirguna Brahman is reached by Jnana yoga. By serving the Lord through Karma yoga, the Eternal Dharma or the Sanātana Dharma which is another name for Brahman is made one's own. The practice of Raja yoga culminates in the creation of Amrita dhāra, the Divine Nectar which provides Absolute Bliss which is another name for Brahman. Thus all the four yogas are paths by pursuing which the sadhaka gets beyond the three Gunas. The right course is to adopt all these four yogas simultaneously. He who does so traverses the three Gunas and gets into Brahman who is supremely beyond them.

This is the answer to the last question.

Mythology has it that the Lord Siva made elaborate preparations to invade and lay siege to the iron, silver and golden citadels of three mighty Asuras who were invincible. Finally, the great Lord's opening His divine eye resulted in the total destruction of the Demons and their domains. This is a mythological presentation of the transcendence of the three Gunas with the aid of Self-knowledge.

A wayfarer was passing through a dense forest. Three thieves sprang on him and overpowered him. Forthwith he was
relieved of all of his possessions. The first highwayman then drew out his dagger to do away with the victim. The second bandit pleaded against such a drastic measure and voted for binding the fellow fast and leaving him to his fate. This counsel was acted upon and the thieves quitted the scene. But in a short while, the soft-hearted third robber reappeared, released the victimized man and kindly showed him his way back home. The grateful wayfarer requested this unexpected saviour to go along with him and accept his gratitude and hospitality. But the stranger politely expressed his inability to go beyond his bounds and disappeared into the forest.

This world is the forest. The three Gunas are the three thieves. The Jivatman is the wayfarer. The divine qualities are his possessions. Of the three Gunas, Tamas tries to destroy him. Rajas binds him with lust, greed and anger. Sattva saves him from these fetters and shows him the way Godward. But Guna as it is, Sattva cannot have access to the proximity of Brahman.

--- Sri Ramakrishna

हि श्रीमश्रुण्यद्रहस्ताद्वानिवित्भ्र श्रवणविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीकृष्णाद्वितीयसंवादे गुणतिथिविद्यायोगो नाम
चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ॥

iti srimad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām
yogasāstre sri krśnārjuna saṁvāde guṇatraya
vibhāgayogyo nāma caturdaso 'dhyāyah ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fourteenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF THE DIVISION OF THE THREE GUNAS
The Tree of Life — 1-2

श्री भगवानुवाच
उर्ध्वमूलम: शाखांं अश्चत्त्म प्राकृतपरम्
छद्मांति यस्य प्रणानि यस्ते वेद सं वेदवित॥ १
उर्ध्व-मूलम् अथ शाखाम् अवत्तमप्रा-आतु अ-विभ-अयम्
छद्मांति यस्य प्रणानि य तस्मि वेद स: वेद-वित॥

śrī bhagavān uvāca
urdhvamūlam adhaḥsākham asvattham prāhur avayayam
chandāmsi yasya parnāṃ yas tam veda sa vedaвит॥

श्री भगवानुवाच śrī bhagavān uvāca Śrī Bhagavān said:

उर्ध्वमूलम् उर्ध्व मूलम् rooted above अथ शाखाम्
adhaḥ sākham branches below अवत्तमप्रा the
Asvattham अवत्तम the
prāhur they speak of अवत्तम the
indestructible छद्मांति chandāmsi metres of hymns यस्य
yasya of which प्रणानि parnāṃ leaves य यह who तम्
tam that वेद वेदa knows स sah he वेदवित vedaвит (is)
Veda-knower

The Blessed Lord said

They speak of an imperishable Asvatthama tree with
its root above and branches below. Its leaves are the
Vedas; he who knows it is the knower of the Vedas. 1
The word *Asvattha* means that which is not today as it was yesterday. This word refers to *Samsāra* or phenomenal existence. It is imperishable but not constant and steady. This *Samsāra* has its origin in Brahman and as it branches down, it gets more and more materialized. *Asvattha* also means the peepul tree which belongs to the banyan family. The speciality of the banyan tree is that it supplies sap from above and sends the branches down into the earth. In this respect the functioning of the *Samsāra* resembles that of this tree. Both of them receive their sustenance from above and come down to earthly existence. In the unmanifest state Brahman and *Sakti* are the same. Therefore the latter is as imperishable as the former. *Sakti* is the inexhaustible source of the *Samsāra* or the Prakriti, with its innumerable modifications.

The tree is both a symbol and an entity revealing life. It aids the study of life in all its aspects all over the Prakriti. That life is self-expressive is made known to us by the leaves of the tree. *The varieties of life* are also indicated by the leaves; they enable us to distinguish one tree from another. Parallel to this are the *chandāmsi* or the hymns in the Vedas. Through these hymns the expression of life all over Nature is suggested to the seeker of knowledge. Hymns in the Vedas are the general term used for all the branches of knowledge. Organic chemistry, biology, botany, physiology, natural science, human history—all these and more are all revelations of life at various levels. The positive expression of life is upheld as virtue and the negative expression
discarded as vice. The Vedas show the ways of employing life both for good and bad. This transitory life transforms itself into the Life Absolute when Brahma-jnana is obtained. Short of that Enlightenment, this mundane existence drags on painfully without beginning and without end. It is therefore called avyayam — the imperishable.

He who reads and understands the compiled books called the Vedas is not the real Vedavit — the knower of the Vedas. These books are mere aids and guides. He alone is a Vedavit who truly sees into the marvellous working of Nature. Prakriti is the true imperishable Veda, projected by the Maker.

A man standing outside a market-place hears a general buzz, nothing is distinct. But his perspective changes as soon as he enters into the market. The transactions are all clearly heard and understood. Similarly when a man is away from Iswara, his inquiry is all in confusion. There is no end to his search into the cause and effect, to his cogitating over the why and how of the things, to his debates, to his arguments and counter-arguments and to his theorizing. But on the realization of Iswara all these speculations and conjectures come to an end. The mystery of Nature becomes an open book to him.

— Sri Ramakrishna

That the Prakriti is constituted of the three Gunas and that the Paramatman is supremely above the Prakriti was presented in chapter fourteen. This chapter deals with the fact that the Prakriti branches down from its Source which is the Paramatman. The symbol of the Cosmic Mother Durga expounds these facts very graphically. She is
vigorously engaged in vanquishing the Demon known as Mahishasura. Like a buffalo as his name indicates, he is pervert and adamant. This Demon is the embodiment of Tamas, the lowest of the three Gunas. The energy spent in putting him down is a landmark in the process of the evolution of life. It is an indication of the sentient emerging from the insentient. Philosophically Rajas gets the upper hand over Tamas. The gold colour of Mother Durga with Her red raiment symbolizes Rajas with its capacity to enrich the phenomenal life. Sarasvati the goddess of learning, Lakshmi the goddess of wealth, Subrahmanya the god of valour and Ganesa the god of wisdom, all attending on the Cosmic Mother indicate the ways and means for enriching the earthly life. Just above the head of Durga, the snow white Lord Siva is seated absorbed in deep meditation. This is the symbol of Sattva which transforms all earthly activities into spiritual activities. Ultimately the Gunas are transcended and the Absolute is attained. All turmoils are down below in the physical life. But as one progresses towards the Atman, life gets refined. Ultimately life in the Prakriti is transcended and Godhood is reached.

How the earthly life is to be enriched is explained in the following stanza:—

अष्टवैधो भवनुविषयचतुर्व्यायबाल्याः ।
अष्ठव मूलान्युपसंत्वपार्छ नरुरुपायी लक्ष्यायोऽके ॥ ॥

�ष्ठ: च अष्ठोपमं श्र-व-तात: तस्य ताल्याः
गुणगुरुन्यः विषय-प्राप्तमः ।
अष्ठ: च भूरानि सह-समुद्र-न ताल्य कर्म-कत्वाचन्यार्थिनि मनुष्य-रूपे ॥
ador co 'irdhvan prasrōta tasya sākha
gunapravṛddhā-viśayapraavālāḥ |
adhaḥ ca mūlāny anusamtatāni
karmānubandhīni manusyaloke ||

अधः adhaḥ below च ca and औरवम् ūrdhvan above प्रस्रोता: prasrōta spread तस्य tasya its ज्ञात in sākha branches गुṇप्रविद्धः guna pravṛddhāḥ nourished by the Guna विच्छेदिन्त ज्ञात viṣaya pravālāḥ sense-objects are its buds अधः adhaḥ below च ca and मूलानि mūlāni the roots अनुसरततानि anusamtatāni are stretched forth कर्म अनुसयन्ति karma anubandhīni originating action मनुष्यलोके manusya loke in the world of men

Below and above spread its branches, nourished by the Guna; sense-objects are its buds; and below in the world of men stretch forth the roots, engendering action.

2

The analogy between the peepul tree and the Samsāra comprising of the phenomenal existence continues to be kept up. The branches of the tree spread profusely above and below. To the tree of the Samsāra, Brahma-loka and such like regions are the branches growing above and the regions of men and other inferior beings are the branches coming down. The enlightened ones assume superior births and those others devoid of understanding take inferior births. Buds and twigs are put forth only by those branches which are full of sap. The functioning of the three Guna supplies the required sap and the feasting of the senses on the sense-objects puts forth the buds and twigs. The sprouting, leafing
and thriving of the tree of Samsāra is inevitable as long as the Gunas supply the sap.

The tap-root and the subsidiary roots are the two types of roots functioning in a tree. The tap-root together with the trunk is the seat of life to the tree. Since Iswara is the source of the Jagat which has materialized from Him, He is regarded as the tap-root sustaining it from above. The multifarious activities on the earth are the branching subsidiary roots nourishing this tree of Samsāra. By pruning and treating the slender branch roots occasionally, the growth of the tree is augmented. Parallel to this, man improves his lot by reforming and readjusting his activities. Karma aids him reconstitute his nature. It is karma again that binds man to varying tendencies and provides momentum to prolong the wheel of birth. Made of karma as the Jīvātmās are, the root that represents it is said to be all-pervading in the universe. In other words, karma and Prakṛiti are inseparable.

Cut the Tree to get Moksha — 3-4

न रूपस्येव तथोपलम्यते नान्तो न चार्दिनि च संप्रतिष्ठा ।
अब्दत्थेन सुविन्दुमूलयमसंहर्ष्येन हृदेन छिद्वा ॥ 3

न रूपः कस्य इत्यतः कप-लभः शते । न शन्तः न न आदिः न न रम्प्रतिष्ठा ।
अवश्यम् सुति-हठमूलम् व-रह-शक्ये हृदेन छिद्व-श्या ॥

na rūpani asye 'ha tatho 'palabhyate'
na 'nto na cā 'dir na ca sampratīṣṭhā
asvattham enam suvirūghaṁ
asangaśastreṇa śṛdhena chittvā
Its form is not here perceived as such, neither its end, nor its origin, nor its existence. Having cut asunder this firm-rooted Asvattha with the strong axe of non-attachment;
mind. This is the allegorical meaning of cutting asunder the firm-rooted Asvattha tree.

The silkworm gets encaged in the cocoon spun by itself. Similarly the worldly man gets entangled in the meshes of his own desires. But when the silkworm develops into a butterfly, it breaks open its nest and comes out to enjoy the light and air outside. Similarly when the man in bondage cuts asunder his attachment to Maya, he is able to behold Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

तत: पद्म ततपरिमार्गितव्यं गसिन्यता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।
तमेव चाभु पुरुषं अपणे यत: प्रवृत्तिः प्रस्तुता पुराणी ॥ ५
तत: पद्म तत्परिमार्गितव्यां चेतिन्या व (अि) तां न निवर्तते भूय: ।
तत: एवं च अर्थम् पुरुषम् प्र-पणि यत: प्र-कृत-लिः प्र-स्र-ना पुराणी ॥

tataḥ padāṁ tat parimārgitavyam
yasmin gatā na nivartan i bhūyah ।
tam eva ca 'dyam puruṣaṁ prapadye
yataḥ pravṛttih prasṛtā purāṇī ॥

तत: tataḥ then padāṁ goal तनू tat that
परिसारितव्यम् parimārgitavyam should be sought for
यसिंग whither गता: gataḥ gone न na not निवर्तति
nivartanti return भूयः bhūyah again tamू tam in that
eva even ू ca and अर्थम्ं adyam primeval पुरुषम्
puruṣaṁ Purusha प्र-पणि prapadye I seek refuge यतः
yataḥ whence प्रवृत्तिः pravṛttih activity प्रस्तुता prasṛtā
streamed forth पुराणी purāṇī ancient

Then that Goal should be sought for, going whither, they do not return again. I seek refuge in that Primeval Purusha whence streamed forth the Eternal Activity.

Recoiling from the attachment to the world is a negative act, producing no far-reaching effect. It
has therefore to be made to take a positive turn. Aspiring ardently for the Brahmāvastha is what is wanted. Giving oneself over to the Prakriti and giving oneself over to the Supreme Purusha—these acts are opposed to each other and produce opposite results. The former breeds ignorance and promotes bondage of the Jīvatman to the wheel of birth and death, while the latter liberates and leads him into the plenitude of Brahman. The intensity and the completeness of the dedication to Brahman hastens the spiritual enlightenment of the sadhaka.

As clouds come forth from the sea, the Prakriti of the Eternal Activity ever streams forth from Brahman, the Primeval Purusha. The eternal process of the appearance and disappearance of Prakriti does not in any way affect the Supreme Purusha. The detachment from the Prakriti and the staunch attachment to the Supreme Purusha are the potent means for the destruction of the tree of Samsāra of the Jīvatman.

On detection the thief takes to his heels. Similarly when you see into the nature of Maya it disappears from you.

—Sri Ramakrishna

The weaning of the Jīvatman from the Prakriti and his being wedded to the Paramatman are expatiated upon as follows:—

Who gains Mukti?

The Competent Ones — 5

निर्मानमोहा जित्तात्मादेवा अध्यात्मतनित्या बिनिष्ठाचस्तामा: ।
द्वस्त्रविनिश्चुका: सुखद्:खस्तैरैर्चन्त्यमूहा: पदमण्यं तत् ॥ ५
nirmānamohā jitasangadosā
adhīyatmanityā vinivṛttakāmāḥ
dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukhaduḥkhasamijñāir
gacchanty amūḍhāḥ padam avyayam tat

nirōṇa mohāḥ free from pride and
delusion jītasāntroṣaḥ: jīta saṅga doṣāḥ victorious over
the evil of attachment abhājātaniyā: adhīyatma nityāḥ
dwelling constantly in the self vinivṛttakāmāḥ desire having completely turned away dvandvaiḥ:
dvandvaiḥ from the pairs of opposites vinivṛttakāmāḥ
vimuktāḥ freed sukhāḥ: sukha duḥkha samijñaiḥ known
as pleasure and pain gacchanti reach amūḍhāḥ the undeluded
padam goal avyayam eternal tat that

Free from pride and delusion, with the evil of
attachment conquered, ever dwelling in the Self, their
desires being completely stilled, liberated from the
pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the
undeluded reach that Goal Eternal.

Ridding the mind of all impurities and fixing it
on Atman — these are the twofold intents on which
the sadhaka engages himself. The mind becomes
all-powerful as it gains in purity. Because of its
purity it gains access to Atman. The greatest
and the holiest of its achievements lies in its getting
fixed in the Atman. Man becomes god through this
benign act of the mind.

The bound soul is man; the freed soul is Iswara.

— Sri Ramakrishna
The Supreme Abode — 6

न तद्भासयते चूर्यं न शशांकं न पावकः ।
यद्यत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परसं मम ॥ ६ ॥
न तद्भासयते चूर्यं न शशांकं न पावकः ।
यत् ग(्य)स्यम् न नि वर्तन्ते तत्त्वां भाष परमाय मम ॥

na tad bhāsayate sūryaṁ na sasāṅkaṁ na pāvakāḥ ।
yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama ॥

That the sun illumines not, nor the moon, nor fire;
that is My Supreme Abode, going whither they return
not.

On entering the sea, a river gets merged in it.
In this wise, when realization comes, the Jivatman
merges his individuality in the Paramatman. A man
in a pitch dark room does not cognize his body, but
he retains the feeling, 'I am.' Neither the sun, nor the
moon nor fire is required by him to point out his
awareness, 'I am.' It is self-evident and self-sufficient.
This awareness is Prajñānam. It is the eternal factor
in man. While seeming to be sullied, or while playing
hide and seek, It is actually ever Itself. This Aware-
ness as Pure Consciousness is eulogized as the
Supreme State. It is infinite and immovable. It
neither dies nor is it born. It is unaffected by time,
space and causation. The Jivatman who identifies
himself with this Absolute Consciousness gains _Mukti_. He does not individualize himself any more.

When pure camphor is lit, it leaves no residue. When meditation is absolved in _Samadhi_, the distinctions such as ‘I,’ ‘You’ and the objective world vanish. _Brahman_, the _Suddha Chaitanya_ or Pure Consciousness alone remains.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Does the _Jivatman_ first remain alien to the Paramatman and then get subsequently unified with Him? The answer comes:—

_Jivatman Defined — 7-9_

समैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूत: सनातन: ।
मन: पश्चानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षणि ॥ ७

सम एव अंश: जीव-लोके जीव-भूत: सनातन: ।
मन-पश्चानिन्द्रियाणि प्र-कृतिस्थानि कर्षणि ॥

_mamai 'vā 'msa jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ ।
manah śaṣṭhāṇi 'ndriyāṇi prakṛtisthāṇi karṣati ॥_

_Sam mama my eva even aṁsah portion_

_जीवलोके jīva-loke in the world of life_ जीवभूत: _jīva bhūtaḥ_ having become a soul नातन: _sanātanaḥ eternal_

_मन:पश्चानि manah śaṣṭhāṇi with mind as the sixth इंद्रियाणि indriyāṇi the indriyas प्रकृतिस्थानि prakṛtisthāṇi abiding_

_in Prakriti कर्षणि karṣati draws (to itself)_

An eternal portion of Myself having become the Jiva in the world of Jivas, attracts the senses, with mind as the sixth, abiding in Prakriti.

A drop of rain water is alien to the sea before falling into it. But the _Jivatman_ is never an entity separate or independent of the Paramatman. As a wave is ever part of the sea, the individual soul
is eternally part and parcel of Ishvara. A Jivatman is one who thinks through ignorance that he is bound in Prakriti. It is by identification with Prakriti that he evolves the five senses and the mind. These instruments develop in him because of his ceaseless desire for self-expression and contact with the external world. He is called a Bhokta or a Bhogin due to his indulgence in the external world through the senses. He is said to be in the world of Jivās as long as he delights in sense-pleasures. But he becomes a yogi when he chooses to refrain from the activities of the senses. His preparation for identification with the Paramatman is in direct proportion to the control of the senses that he exercises.

The relationship between the Jivatman and the Paramatman is analogous to the relationship between the ākāsa in a pot and the ākāsa outside. These two ākāsas are designated the Ghaṭa ākāsa and Mahā ākāsa respectively. The former ākāsa has a seeming individuality when the pot is in existence. But actually the Mahā ākāsa alone is irrespective of the existence or otherwise of the pot. Even so, the Paramatman alone is the eternal verity putting on now and then the appearance of the Jivatman.

Because of his identification with the Prakriti, the Jivatman is termed Kartā—the agent and Bhogin—the one who enjoys. When these limiting adjuncts are eliminated, the Atman is in his original state. As the Jivatman he seems to be a part of the Paramatman. When the Jivāhood goes, he is one with the Paramatman.
The real nature of the Jivatman is Sat-chit-ananda. But through egoism he has assumed several upadhis-limiting adjuncts and has forgotten his real nature.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How does the Jivatman assume the upadhis? The answer comes:—

शरीरं यद्वामोर्त्तति यथाध्युताकामतीश्वरः ||
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुगृहन्यानिवाशयात || 8
शरीरम् यथं वत् ब्रह्मनौति यथं च श्रीम प्रकृति इश्वरः ||
गृहीत्वा एतानि समु-श्राणि वायुः गन्धान्व द्रव आशयात ||
sariram yad avānapoti yac cā 'py utkramati 'śvarah ||
gṛhitvai 'tiṇi samyāti vāyur gandhān ivā 'sayāt ||

शरीरम् sariram a body यथं yat when अवामोर्त्तति avānapoti obtains यथं yat when च ca and श्राणि api also उत्क्रमति utkramatī leaves इश्वर: 'śvarah the lord गृहीत्वा gṛhitvā taking एतानि etāni these संयाति samyāti goes वायुः vāyuh the wind गन्धान्व gandhān the scents इव ivā as आशयात āsayāt from seats

When the lord obtains a body and when he leaves it, he takes these and goes, as the wind carries the scents from their sources.

The Jivatman is called the lord here because of his suzerainty over the body and the senses. The wind is smell-less by itself, but it acquires the scent inherent in the flowers. It is also capable of relinquishing those scents by and by. The Jivatman assumes the upadhis due to his attachment to the Prakriti; but as he detaches himself from it, he resumes his contentless consciousness. However, as long as he keeps up his concern with the Prakriti,
he behaves like a magician with his equipment. Somewhere he spreads out his few things and shows his magic performance. Then he bundles up his belongings and goes to another place intent on the same show. Similarly, the Jivatman spreads out his senses, mind and his upādhīs when he takes birth in one place. He withdraws them at death, only to project them again in another birth.

What does the Jivatman do with his senses? His action is explained:—

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसं धारणेच च।
अधिष्ठाय नमनायं विषयानुपसेवते॥ ९॥
श्रोत्रम् चक्षुः स्पर्शनम् च रसम् प्राणमेव च।
अधिष्ठायं मनं च अयम् विषयानु उपवेषते॥

śrotram caksuḥ sparsanam ca rasanaṁ ghrānam eva ca
adhīṣṭhāya manas ca 'yam visayān upasevate ॥

śrotram the ear चक्षुः the eye स्पर्शनम् the (organ of) touch च ca and रसनम् the (organ of) taste धारणम् the (organ of) smell एव eva even च ca and अधिष्ठाय adhīṣṭhāya presiding over मन: the mind च ca and अयम् ayan he विषयान् objects of the senses उपवेषते upasevate enjoys

Presiding over the ear, the eye, the touch, the taste, and the smell, as also the mind, he experiences objects.

All the five senses serve as five different messengers to the indweller in the body. If a man be shut up in a cell with no outlet whatsoever he would perish deprived of air, water, food and light.
But the *Jivatman* residing in the form of his body gets all his requirements through the five senses. Sound the adjunct of ākāsa comes to him through the ear. The eye functions to bring the message of light and form, the adjunct of fire. The sense of touch which is the adjunct of air pervades all over his body intimating him of heat and cold in the environment. Taste is the adjunct of water and the tongue serves him in this respect. The nose conveys to him the sense of smell, it being the adjunct of earth. And mind is the interpreter of the data brought in by all these senses. The *Jivatman* is cherished by all these six instruments, keeping him in contact with the external world.

The Divine Eye — 10-11

उत्क्रांमन्ते स्थितं वापि युक्तानं वा गुणान्विततः।
विसूर्दा नासुपर्ययन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुः॥ १०॥

उत्क्रांमन्तरं स्थितम् वा 'पि भुन्भानम् वा गुणान्वितम्
विसूर्दा: न अनु-पश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञान-चक्षुः॥

The deluded do not see him who departs, stays and enjoys, who is conjoined with the Ganas, but they see, who possess the eye of wisdom.
They are designated as the deluded—*Vimūḍhāḥ*, because of their ignorance in regard to the Self, the foremost factor in themselves. Not knowing their own supreme worth and the profound possibilities in their existence, they merely give themselves over to the functioning of the senses which only aid their good and bad contact with the perishable objects outside. Limited and defective as the senses are, they are incapable of cognizing and contacting the self who stays in the body, enjoys the objects presented and departs from the body when it becomes unfit for occupation. Cognition of the Self alone is real cognition. And that is possible to only those who have the intuitive faculty or the eye of wisdom.

The human beings are all like pillows varying in their external appearances. One is red, another blue and a third yellow or black. But the stuff inside all of them is the same silk-cotton. Similarly some men are fair in colour while others are ugly, some are good tempered and others are bad tempered. Still the same Iswara resides in the hearts of all of them.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How to obtain the eye of wisdom? The process is explained:

\[
\text{yatanto yoginas cai 'nam pasyanty ātmāny avasthitam yatanto 'py akṛtātmāno nai 'nam pasyanty acetasaḥ} \]

Those who strive, endued with yoga, cognize him dwelling in the self; though striving, the unrefined and unintelligent see him not.

The act of striving is common both to the yogi and the non-yogi. Nothing can be achieved without working for it. But the unrefined and unintelligent man labours the wrong way. He is not well established in self-control. Spiritual egoism lurks in his heart. Pride and conceit alienate him from others. Such a man, though endeavouring in the spiritual line all through life, does not develop the eye of wisdom. But the yogi is engaged in all humility in the welfare of all. He does his earthly duties to perfection viewing them as service to the Lord. He is exemplary in his practice of austerity and self-control. And in subordinating the individual will to the Will of the Lord he is unreserved. Purity of the mind marks him for its own. He therefore develops the eye of wisdom as a matter of course.

All water leaks away even if there be a minute hole in a water pot. In that manner, even if there be a trace of earthly attachment in the mind of a Sadhaka, all his spiritual practices come to naught.

— Sri Ramakrishna
What is it that the intuitive knowers of Paramatman behold? The answer comes:

The Immanence of the Paramatman—12-15

यदादित्यगतः तेजौ जगद्भासयतेऽक्षिलम् \\
यज्ञन्द्रमसि यज्ञायो वचेत्जी विद्धै मामकम् ॥ १२

यत्व आदित्य-गतम् तेज जगद्भासयं अक्षिलम् \\
यत् चन्द्रमसि यत् च अपनी तत्व तेजः विद्धि मामकम् ॥

yad ādityagatam tejo jagad bhāsayate 'khilam ।
yac candramasi yac ca 'agnau tat tejo viddhi māmakam

yat yat which ādityagatam āditya gatam residing in 
the sun तेजः tejah light जगद्भासयते the world भासयते 
bhāsayate illumines अक्षिलम् akhilam whole यत् yat which 
chandramaśi in the moon यत् yat which 
ca and अपनी 'agnau in the fire तत् tat that तेजः tejah 
light विद्धि viddhi know मामकम् māmakam mine

The light which residing in the sun illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in the fire—
know that light to be Mine.

The existence of a thing can be seen with the aid of light. The lights known to us come from the sun, the moon and the fire. And this light is the outcome of Sattva. As a mirror reflects the face, the Sattva Guna reflects Consciousness which is Atman. This Sattva comes from the Paramatman. As the sunlight reveals the insentient substance, ātma chaitanya reveals awareness such as ‘I am.’ What the sun gives is merely the insentient light; whereas what is in the Atman is sentient light or sentience to be more precise. The insentient light has no existence independent of the Light or Aware-
ness of the Atman. The how of it is as follows: There are two rooms lit by the sun. One of them happens to be vacant; there is none to cognize the existence of the sunlight in it. The feeling ‘I am’ is not in that light as well. The existence or the non-existence of the sunlight in that room makes no difference. There is the sunlight in the next room as well. In addition to it, a man is present in that room. He witnesses his own existence and the existence of the sunlight in that room. The insentient light that comes from the sun, the moon and the fire is cognized by the Sentient Light or the Cosmic Consciousness which is Iswara. The Light known as the Intelligence of the Knower reveals the existence of the object known. The sun, the moon and the fire are all objects known and revealed by Atman, the Knower.

Further, the atma chaitanya is the Life of lives. The how of it is as follows:—

गामाविद्या च भूतानि भार्यामेवहामोजसा ।
पुण्यमि चौघी: सर्व: सोमेऽ भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ १३

गाम् शा-विद्या च भूतानि भार्यामेवहामोजसा ।
पुण्यमि चोधाणी: चर्भ: सोमः: भूत्वा रस-आस्म(न.)-कः ॥

gām āvisya ca bhūtāni dhārayāmy aham ojasā ।
pūṣnāmi cau 'ṣadhiti sarvāḥ soma bhūtvā rasātmakah ॥

गाम् gām the earth आविद्या āvisya permeating ् ca and भूतानि bhūtāni all beings धार्यायमि dhārayāmi (I) support अहम् aham I ओजसा ojasā by (my) energy पुष्नामी puṣnāmi (I) nourish ् ca and ओध्यी oṣadhiti the
herbs सर्वाः sarvāḥ all सोम somāḥ moon भूत्वा bhūtvā having become रसात्मक rasātmakaḥ watery

Entering the earth I support all beings by My energy; and having become the sapid moon I nourish all herbs.

It is evident all over Nature that one form of energy transforms itself into another. Modern science takes advantage of this fact and turns the resources of nature to man’s advantage. On a close investigation it is found that no demarcation can be made between matters organic and inorganic, between forms of energy sentient and insentient. Life on earth, for instance, thrives by converting light and heat of the sun into sentient energy.

The manifest energy in its original form, as it emanates from Iswara, is known as Ojas. It pervades the entire universe and holds it intact. The movable and the immovable do all get their sustenance from it. The life energy comes in one form from the sun and in quite another form from the moon. The sapidity of the vegetable kingdom on earth is obtained from the moon. While being converted into suitable forms, all energy in fact comes from the Paramatman.

The third stage of the life energy that comes from Iswara is next explained —

अहं वैवानरो भूत्वा ग्राहिनां देहमालितः।
प्राणायानसमायूकः पचाम्यत्रं चतुर्विषधम्॥ ११

वहम् वैवानर मूर्त्त्वा प्र-अतिनाम देहम् तः धित।
प्राण भोगान-गतः वा-युज्व-त पञ्च आम्ल अस्मि चढूर-विधम्॥ ॥
aham vaisvānaro bhūtvā prāṇināṁ deham āśritaḥ
prāṇāpānasamāyuktah pacāmy annam caturvidham

Abiding in the body of living beings as Vaisvanara, associated with Prana and Apana, I digest the four kinds of food.

That energy is known as Vaisvānara which remains in the bodies of beings as warmth and aids the digestion of food. This energy is also known as Jatarāgni, the gastric fire. It is tended by the breathing that is going on incessantly. Food is partaken of in four different ways—masticating, sucking, licking and swallowing—basing on the nature and form of food. Excluding the ākasā, the other four elements, earth, water, fire and air constitute the food in four different ways.

There are the other benign ways in which the Lord is present in beings. They are recounted:

sarvasya ca 'ham hṛdi samanvīṣto
mattah smṛtir jñānam apohanam ca
Aham eva vedyo
vedantah samadhi
aham eva ca
sarvasya sarvah ca
aham eva ca
aham iva
aham iva
aham iva
aham iva
aham iva
aham iva

And I am seated in the hearts of all; from Me are memory, knowledge, as well as their loss; I am verily that which has to be known by all the Vedas; I am indeed the author of the Vedanta as well as the knower of the Vedas.

The Lord resides as consciousness in the hearts of all. Memory of what has been done before is possible because of this consciousness. Knowledge or the faculty of understanding as to how to react to the changing circumstances — this power also comes from consciousness. As the unwanted old records are destroyed, the purposeless retention in memory and the aimless fostering of unwanted knowledge— these are all done away with because of the proximity of consciousness.

The various cosmic functions and the knowledge pertaining to them put together, are called the Vedas. It is the Paramatman revealing himself as Nature. Everything in Nature is in its own way expressing the glory of Iswara. Through the things imperma-
nent His permanency is posited. His omniscience is evinced everywhere in Nature by things sentient and insentient. *Anandam Brahman*—that He is Bliss, is testified by the entire Nature. His omnipotence is also attested by the Cosmos. Beauty is all His, is borne testimony to by anything and everything in the universe. To know all these verities is to know the Vedas. Iswara is the knower of the Vedas. But He does not exhaust Himself in the manifest universe. A speck in Him has become all these. The truth of His being infinitely beyond Nature is Vedanta.

The Paramatman in all His forms is being explained now:

The Facets of Brahman—16-20

dvāv imau puruṣau loke kṣaras ca 'kṣara eva ca |
kṣarah sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭasthan 'kṣara ucyate ||

dvāv dvau two इमौ imau these पुरुषाव puṣau (two) Purushas लोके loke in the world धर: kṣarah the perishable च ca and धर: aksarah the imperishable एव eva even च ca and धर: kṣarah the perishable सर्वाणि sarvāni all भूतानि bhūtāni beings छुट्सः kūṭasthan the immutable धर: aksarah the imperishable उच्यते ucyate is called

There are two Purushas in the world—the Perishable and the Imperishable. All beings are the Perishable, and the Kutastha is called the Imperishable,
The Jivatman is the individualized consciousness. Since there is a beginning and an end to the process of individualization, he is classified as Kshara or the Perishable. The Jivatman being an Upadhhi or limiting adjunct to Iswara, the Upadhhi is also called the Purusha. The Jagat or the sentient universe is also an Upadhhi to Iswara. But there is a fundamental difference between the Jivās being associated with the Prakriti or Māyā and Iswara doing the same. The Jivās are all slaves to Māyā while Iswara is eternally the Lord of it. Wielding power over Māyā, He assumes various forms as if in sport. He is therefore called the Kūtaṣṭha. Facets of this Iswara assume theological names such as Siva, Narayana and Bhagavati. From the Vedic times up till now, this Cosmic Purusha has undergone changes of names, forms and attributes according to the attitudes and attainments of the worshippers. The same Purusha provides scope for His being adored in a variety of ways by the different religionists.

The skin, the pulp, the nut and everything else in a fruit have all come from the same seed. Similarly, the sentient, the insentient and all forms of existence have come from the same Iswara

—Sri Ramakrishna

The Paramatman is being portrayed:

उत्तमः पुरुस्त्वतः परमात्मेत्युदाहतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्व्य निमत्यैन्यं ईश्वरः ॥ १७॥

उत्तमः पुरुः यु मन्यः परमाभ्याम इति उद्देश्य हेतुः ।
यः लोक-नरम् आ-विश्वः निषिद्धे क्रमेऽपि ईश्वरः ॥

uttamaḥ puruṣas tv anyah paramātme 'ty udāhṛtaḥ ।
yo lokatrayam āvisya bibharty avyaya isvarah ॥
उत्तमः uttamaḥ the supreme पुरुषः puruṣaḥ Purusha तु tu but अन्यः anyaḥ another परमात्मा paramātmā the Highest Self इति iti thus उदाहरतः udāhṛtaḥ called यः yah who लोकयोगः loka trayāṁ the three worlds आविष्कारः avisya pervading विभार्ति bibharti sustains अन्यः anyaḥ the indestructible हिंसकः tisvaraḥ Lord

But distinct is the Supreme Purusha called the Highest Self, the indestructible Lord, who pervades and sustains the three worlds.

Iswara is also called Saguna Brahman. He is the Lord of Māyā. The Jīvatmās and the Jagat are His attributes. Whatever glory, whatever divine manifestations, whatever arresting attributes we are able to cognize with our purified intellect—all these sublimities belong to Iswara. Purushottama is He who is beyond even these celestial grandeurs. Modifications find no place in Him. He is the Nīrguna Brahman. Prajñānam, Contentless Consciousness, Pure Consciousness, Awareness—these are some of the epithets by which He is indicated. He is Indeterminate but Intense Consciousness. Limitations such as time, space and causation gain no access to Him. Mahanarayana, Sadasiva, Parasakti—these are some of the theological names attributed to Him.

How does Brahman stay in the human body? He is like the piston in a syringe. While being in the body, He remains untouched and unaffected by it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

यस्मात्तःश्रमतीतोष्ट्यक्षराद्यमः चोचबः ।
अतोज्जिन लोके वेदेः न प्रविष्टः पुरुषोऽच्छसः ॥ १८
yasmāt ksaram atito 'ham aksarād api co'ttamaḥ ||
atō 'smi loke vede ca prathitaḥ puruṣottamaḥ ||

yasmāt as ksaram the perishable jñātīst
atītaḥ transcend aham 1 aksarāt than the
imperishable ātīt aham api also in ca and uttamaḥ best
atītaḥ therefore ātīt asmi (I) am loke in the
world vede in the Veda in ca and prathitaḥ
declared puruṣottamaḥ the Highest Purusha

As I transcend the Perishable and am even above
the Imperishable, therefore am I known in the world
and in the Veda as 'Puruṣottama,' the Highest
Purusha.

18

Kshara is that which is perishable The Prakṛiti
is perishable and it is compared with the peepul tree
in the beginning of this chapter The Jīvaḥood of
the Jīva is also perishable while the Pure Conscious-

What becomes of the Jīvatman who realizes the
Paramatman? The pronouncement comes —

Yo māmevaṁsasūdhaḥ jānātā puruṣottamasu |
s tattvibhūjitaṁ māṁ sarvēbhāven bārata || 19, |

Maṁ paramaṁ bāsū-syaya jā(h)ā नाती पृथ्व-उपसनम |
sat provindu bhū-ātī माम my sarv-भावे भारत ||

स स भृज भृज भृज भृज भृज भृज भृज भृज भृज भृज |
yo mām evaṃ asaṃmūḍho jānāti puruṣottamaṃ
sa sarvavid bhajati mām sarva bhāvena bhārata

च: yah who साम् माम me एवम् evam thus असंमूढः asaṃmūḍhah undeluded जानाति jānāti knows पुरुषोत्तमम् puruṣottamaṃ the Supreme Purusha स: saḥ he सर्वविद्ध sarvavid all-knowing भजति bhajati worships साम् माम me सर्वभावेन sarva bhāvena with his whole being भारत O Bharata

He who, undeluded, knows Me as the Highest Self—he knows all, O Bharata, and he worships Me with all his heart.

There is only one Reality. The deluded one sees plurality and not unity. Plurality is necessarily the spectacle of the phenomenal universe, constituted of the sentient and the insentient. As a sadhaka advances in spiritual discipline he realizes divinity permeating the entire universe of plurality. Because of this benign vision his attitude towards the world gets divinized. His devotion to the Maker is then on the increase. That Iswara is the owner and supporter of everything, becomes evident subsequently. The best thing that the Jivatman can do is to develop all his faculties not for self-aggrandizement, but for the service of the Lord. That the Jivatman and the Jagat are all part and parcel of Iswara, is next realized. The self-importance to which man is habitually addicted is shorn of its poignancy. With or without the multitudes participating in the Lord’s grand sport of the creation, the preservation and the destruction, His sport goes on in perfect symphony. The blessed privilege of the Jivatman is to be a dedic-
ated instrument in the hands of the Lord and thus terminate the delusion of his individualized existence. The goal in life of the Jivatman is to make himself over to the Paramatman. The Prakriti aspect in him is surrendered to Iswara or the Saguna Brahman. The Purusha aspect in him merges in Nirguna Brahman in the manner in which the space in a pot merges in the cosmic space when the pot is broken.

When the steamer on the Ganges touches the sea, it sails to the yonder regions, unknown to people this side. Even so, when the Jivatman merges in Brahman, he does not return to the relative existence.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What is the benefit that the sadhaka derives in being tuned in Brahmāvastha? The treat is delineated:—

इति गुह्यतमम शास्त्रमिद्युक्तं मयाकनय ।
एतहवृद्ध्या बुद्धिमान्यात्कविकृत्यथ भारत ॥ २०
इति गुह्यात्मम शास्त्रम इद्य उक्तं मया मन्मया ।
एति बुध्द-वा बुद्धिमान्य (अ)स्थाय सुत-सिद्धं च भारत ॥

िति guhyatamam sāstram idam uktam mayā 'nagha ।
etad buddhivā buddhimān syāt kṛtakṛtyas ca bhārata ॥

इति iti thus guhyatamam guhya tamam most secret śāstraṁ sāstram science idāṁ idam this vādā uktam has been taught maya mayā by me abhāply anagha O sinless one etat this buddhiva buddhivā knowing buddhiṁān wise svāt syāt becomes ātstraḥ: kṛta kṛtyah (who has) accomplished all the duties ca and bhārata O Bharata
Thus, O sinless one, has this most profound teaching been imparted by Me. Knowing this a man becomes enlightened, O Bharata, and all his duties are accomplished.

Though the whole of the Bhagavad Gita is a profound teaching, this chapter in particular is pronounced as profound, because of the quintessence of Vedanta being enshrined in it. He who has realized Brahman is the Jñāni. All his duties and obligations terminate in the realization of Brahman. And there is no duty superior to the enlightenment in Brahman. There is no ideal superior to Brahmavidyā. There is no attainment superior to that of Brahman. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman; and that is Mukti.

The human birth is rare to obtain. After having obtained it, if man does not aspire for the realization of Iswara, he is born in vain.

— Sri Ramakrishna

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the fifteenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF THE SUPREME SELF
DAIVASURA SAMPAD VIBHAGA YOGA—THE YOGA OF DIVISION BETWEEN THE DIVINE AND THE DEMONICAL

CHAPTER XVI

The Divine Traits—The Demonic Traits—The Effects of the Two Traits—The Demonical Ways—The Fall of the Asuras—Liberation from the Asura Fetters—Scripture is the Guide

The Divine Traits—1-3

Śrī Bhagavān uvāca

abhayam satvaeśamuddhi jñānayoga vyavasthitih ।
dānam damas ca yajñaḥ ca svādhīyāyasya tapa ārjavam ॥

Śrī Bhagavān uvāca Śrī Bhagavan said:

abhayam fearlessness satva samsuddhiḥ purity of heart jñāna yoga vyavasthitih steadfastness in knowledge and yoga dānam almsgiving yajñaḥ control of the senses ca and yajñaḥ sacrifice ca and svādhīyāyasya svādhīyāyasya study of Sastras tapaḥ austerity ārjavam straightforwardness

The Blessed Lord said:

Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in knowledge and yoga, almsgiving, control of the senses, Yajña, study of the scriptures, austerity and straightforwardness.
Fear in all of its forms resolves itself into the fear of being hurt or killed. It is based on the ignorance that one is the body and not the Atman. The one given to fear is good for nothing. But all merits are born of fearlessness. The symbolic pose of abhaya or fearlessness is characteristic of all the Deities that represent Iswara. The idea is that Godhood and fear are incompatible. As a sadhaka draws near God, he rids himself of all fears.

One is said to be established in the purity of heart when one makes no difference whatsoever between the welfare of oneself and the welfare of others.

He who is able to distinguish between the things that are lasting and those that are evanescent, is gifted with jñāna or knowledge. It is yoga when one seeks that which is permanent and shuns that which is impermanent. Great is the result when there is steadfastness in the pursuit of both knowledge and yoga.

Benefaction extended on right lines is almsgiving. The heart expands when one shares the things good and useful with deserving people. Genuine gifts are those which are offered with love, kindness and humility.

The senses are prone to indulgence thereby causing harm to the enjoyer. They are the gateways to hell when they run riot. Curbing them is the first step in the path of discipline. Mastery over the senses brings in its train all blessings leading to the Divine.
Yajna means sacrifice. Any act that brings the maximum public good and that cures the performer of his selfishness, is Yajna. It need not necessarily be a traditional ritual associated with the sacrificial fire, the priest and the oblation Self-effacement, glorifying God and the benefaction to people—these are the marks of a well performed Yajna.

The study of the scriptures is the prerogative of man. The seers, sages and saints have left them as an invaluable legacy. It is open to man to pursue those sacred books devotedly and critically too if he is so inclined. This study is the healthiest of all. It rids man of superstition and guides him Godward.

It is possible for man to recast his mind, to improve upon his mode of life and to give himself over to spirituality. When all these acts are undertaken deliberately, it is austerity—tapas.

Straightforwardness is just the opposite of crookedness. It is the act of harmonizing the thought, word and deed on noble purposes frankly and openly.

abhíṣa satyam akrodhas tyāgah sāntih apaisunam ।
dayā bhūtesv aloluptvam mārdavam hrir acāpalam ॥

abhíṣa ahimsā harmlessness satyam truth
akrodha absence of anger tyāgah renunciation sāntih peacefulness
apaisunam absence of crookedness dayā compassion
dayā compassion
bhūteṣu to beings अलोलुप्तवम् aloluptvam uncovetousness सार्ववम् mārdaram gentleness ह्रीḥ modesty अचापलम् acāpalam absence of fickleness

Non-injury, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, absence of calumny, compassion to beings, uncovetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness.

All lives at all levels are the manifestations of the one Cosmic Life – the Lord. Recognizing sacredness in them and not choosing to hurt them for sport, is non-injury — ahimṣa.

God is truth and the phenomenon a mere appearance. Directing one’s mind, speech and action to postulating and glorifying God is truth. Whatever is done, said or countenanced to esteem earthly life is the negation of truth or satyam.

Anger makes its appearance in one when one feels that others do not come up to one’s expectations. In other words, when one’s desires are obstructed, one rises in anger. But when one remains unaffected by the behaviour of others, one does not fall a victim to anger — this is akroḍhaḥ.

All things sentient and insentient belong to Iswara and not to man. To be fixed in this fundamental is renunciation — tyāgaḥ.

Every time mind gets disturbed it loses its stamina. But as it gains in poise and equilibrium it is progressing towards serenity — sānti.

Calumny is disrespect for others and misrepresenting them on flimsy or false grounds; it is born of,
a low mentality. But a *sadhaka* imbued with divine traits is genuinely free from calumny – *apaisunam*.

When the sight of other beings in distress draws out sympathy and fellow feeling, it is a mark of compassion to being – *bhūtesu dayā*.

No thought of appropriating the properties of others should rise in the mind of one at whose disposal they happen to be placed. That individual is then said to be established in uncovetousness – *aloluptam*.

*Mārdavam* means gentleness. It is found in those who are refined in character.

Praise tickles the vanity of an ordinary man. But a cultured person feels bashful when praised. It is the sign of modesty – *hīth*.

Shaking the body and the limbs unnecessarily and fidgeting on flimsy grounds are the symptoms of crudity. *Achāpalam* or the absence of fickleness is seen in one endowed with a divine element.

\[ \text{तेजः क्षमा धृति: शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।} \\
\text{भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ ३} \]

\[ \text{तेजः क्षमा धृति: क्षमा धृति: सूचमुद्रोह न हति-मानिता ।} \\
\text{भवन्ति संपदं रामु-पदमु दैवीमु धृति-जातस्य भारत ॥} \]

\[ \text{tejah kṣamā dhṛtiḥ saucam adroho nā ’timānītā ।} \\
\text{bharanti sampadām daunm abhyātasaḥ bharata ॥} \]

*tejah vigour kṣamā forgiveness fortitude saucam purity adroha absence of hatred nā not atilmānītā too much of pride bharanti belong sampadām state*
Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride, these belong to one born for a divine state, O Bharata.

To be imbued with _tejas_ or vigour is a divine quality. This energy is always utilized for putting down evil and for upholding virtue.

_Kshama_ means forgiveness. It is the ornament of a hero who has the capacity and the opportunity to avenge the wrongs done to him, but who does not exercise his power for self-assertion. Instead, he aims at self-effacement by forgiving the offender and forgetting the wrong.

_Dhrtiḥ_ means fortitude. It is an attitude of mind which serves both as a tonic to and antidote against the weariness of, the body and mind. It wards off slackness.

_Saucham_ means purity both within and without. External cleanliness is easy of observance. But keeping the mind clean is more important. When the mind is pure, speech and action become naturally wholesome.

In the process of the evolution of beings hatred has its part to play; and so it gets ingrained in them. But it is a blemish in a highly evolved state. Therefore it has to be erased from the mind. _Adroha_ means absence of hatred.

The natural tendency of man is to appear important in the eyes of others. His self-assumed impor-
tance expresses itself as pride – *atimāṇita*. But a true inquiry into the glory of God compels man to relinquish pride as a disease of the mind.

All the virtues enumerated in the above three stanzas bring man’s divine nature into relief. The demoniacal nature which is the opposite is next delineated —

The Demoniac Traits — 4

Dūnmho dvarṣāṇādimaṇaḥ kroṣho: pāruṣyam ca I
Adhānaḥ chaḥmijātaśya paryṣam śaṇḍmsaṃśāriṁ II ५
Dūm deṣaḥ abhiśaṇaḥ ca kroṣho pāruṣyam eva ca I
Ab-haṣāmuḥ ca abhi-vaśaḥ paryṣam śaṇḍm daśāmiṁ II
dambha darpabhbāmanas ca krodhaḥ pāruṣyam eva ca I
ajñānam ca bhūjātasya pārthasya sampadam āśurim II

Dūm dambhah hypocrisy dṛṣṭa darpas arrogance
Abhimānaḥ self-conceit ca and kroṣha krodhaḥ
Wrath pāruṣyam harshness eva even ca and
Aṣṭānaḥ ignorance ca and Abhājātasya of the born
Partha O Partha Sāṃśaṃ sampadam state Āśurim demoniacal

Ostentation, arrogance and self-conceit, anger and also harshness and ignorance belong to one who is born, O Partha, for a demoniacal state.

Putting up a show of good behaviour and donning oneself in pompous garments is ostentation. Presuming oneself as superior to others is arrogance. Priding oneself on being educated, moneyed and high-born is conceit. As a dog greets another strange dog with a snarl, the demoniac man asserts his individuality with anger. He exhibits his
harshness by caricaturing a weak man as strong, a blind man as having beautiful eyes and a poor man as rich. He evinces ignorance by holding unrighteousness as righteousness.

Rice cakes have their exterior coating made of rice flour. But their inner contents are of different edibles. Similarly in external appearance all are human beings. But in their mental make up they vary from the divine to the devilish.

—Sri Ramakrishna

What is the outcome of the variation in temperaments? The answer comes:

The Effects of the Two Traits — 5-6

दैवी संप्रदीशक्षाय निवन्धायासूरी मताः ।
मां शुचः संपदः दैवीमित्ततोकसिपाण्डवः ॥ ५ ॥

daevi sampad vimokshaya nibandhayasurt matat ।
mä sacakah sampadam daivim abhijato si pândava ॥

daevi daivi divine सम्पत्ति sampat state विशेषाय vimo-
kṣaya for liberation निवन्धायाय nibandhayay for bondage असुरih the demoniacal सता matat is deemed मां not शुचः sucah grief समपदम sampadam state dæviym
daivim the divine abhijatah born for asi asi (thou) art pândva pândava O Pandava

The divine nature is deemed for liberation, the demoniacal for bondage; grieve not, O Pandava, you are born for a divine state.

The tendencies acquired by a soul during a lifetime do not get lost with it. They are carried in a potential form for further development in births
yet to come. The divine traits assimilated in successive transmigrations contribute for liberation from Samsāra or the trail of births and deaths. The demonic traits on the other hand forge the bondage of phenomenal existence and perpetuate the cycle of births and deaths. There is a possibility of Arjuna’s doubting about the state into which he is born. The Lord who is the knower of the past, present and future of the Jīvatman allays this doubt, by assuring him of his divine state and of his being quite fit for emancipation.

What are the classifications of the Jīvatmans and how are they made? The answer comes—

** dış bhūtasaṁgaṁ lokaṁ satīmināṁ deva āsuram eva ca**

**dēvāni vistaraśah śrīcā āsurams pārthā me śrūṇa**

**dva bhūtasargau loke śmin daiva āsura eva ca dāvā vistarāsah prokta āsuram pārthā me śrūṇa**

**dīvāv two bhūtasaṁgā bhūta sargau types of beings loken loke in world abhinā āsmin (in) this dēvā daivaḥ the divine āsurā āsura demonicā āsura eva even ca and dēvā daivaḥ the divine vistaraśah vistarāsah at length proktah has been described āsuram āsuram demonicā āsura demonic āsura pārtha O Partha me me from me śrūṇa śrūṇa hear**

There are two types of beings in this world, the divine and the demonic; the divine has been described at length; hear from Me, O Partha, of the demonic.
Beings mobile and immobile all possess countless characteristics. But they may be all easily brought under two broad types — the divine and the demoniacal. The former is pleasing and the latter disquieting. The one aids evolution and the other retards it. The divine elements have already been elaborated upon; the Asura elements yet remain to be explained. Negative ideas and ideals which are detrimental to the spiritual growth of man, find no place in a dissertation like the Bhagavad Gita. Still, when the potential harm in them is pointed out, the sadhaka is able to guard himself against those evils. For this reason the Lord dilates on them to the extent necessary.

The Demoniacaal Ways — 7-18

प्रश्निष्ठि च निर्वर्तिष्ठि च जनक न विदुरासुरा: ।
न शौचम् नापि ज्ञातवो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥ ७

प्रवृत्तिम च निवृत्तिम च जनक: न विदु: आसुरा: ।
न शौचम् न अधिच च शाखार: न सत्यम् तेषु विद्यते ॥

pravṛttim ca nivṛttim ca janē na vidur āsuraḥ ।
na saucam nā 'pi cā 'cāro na satyam teṣu vidyate ॥

प्रश्निष्ठि pravṛttim action च ca and निर्वर्तिष्ठि nivṛttim inaction च ca and जनक: janēḥ men न na not विदु: viddh know आसुरा: āsuraḥ the demoniac न na not शौचम् saucam purity न na not अधि api also च ca and ज्ञात: ācāraḥ right conduct न na not सत्यम् satyam truth तेषु teṣu in them viṣcantevidyate is

The demoniac know not what to do and what to refrain from; neither purity, nor right conduct nor truth is found in them.
Commendable acts are those which are conducive to the general welfare of man. They are designated as dharma. Prohibited acts are those which deprave man and ruin his career. They are condemned as adharma. The good always conform to dharma. Animals are not altogether ignorant of dharma and adharma. Instinctively they understand what to do and what to refrain from. But men of the Asura type are devoid of discrimination in this respect. Impure thoughts alone sprout in their minds. Their physical habits and doings are anything but clean. Utterances coming out from them are distorted, diabolical and devoid of truth. Pollution of the entire personality is what is found in them.

If the demoniac be asked as to why they behave malignantly, the justification they make betrays their disposition.

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठाः ते जगदाद्विरोब्धर्मः ।
अपरस्परसंबंधूते किमन्यत्कामहृतकः ॥ ८ ॥

अ-सत्यम् अ-प्रति-स्थम् ते संगठ वाहु अनु-रक्षेत ।
अ-परस्पर-समु-भूतम् किमं वन्यं काम-हृतकः ॥

asatyam apratishtam te jagad ahur antavaram ।
aparasparasambhutam kum anyat kamahaitukam ॥

असत्यम् asatyam without truth अप्रतिष्ठाम apratishtam without moral basis ते te they जगत jagat the world वाहु: ahuh say अनीवरस् antavaram without a God अपरस्परसंबंधूतम् aparasparsambhutam brought about by mutual union किम kim what अन्यत् anyat else वन्यमहृतकम् kamahaitukam with lust for its cause
They say, "the universe is unreal, without a moral basis, without a God, born of mutual union, brought about by lust; what else?" 8

Truth, dharma and God are the different expressions of the Reality which governs the universe. The knowers, the believers, the moralists and the theists are those who live in tune with God’s Law. The infidels, the profligates, the atheists and the nihilists are those who deny or defy the Law. Whatever is, is the outcome of lust and it may therefore be lustfully indulged in — is the creed of this type of people.

A worldling can easily be known from the way in which he dislikes matters religious. He objects to the chanting of the name of the Lord and to listening to the singing of His glory. He prevents the others from taking to the path of religion. Religious institutions are condemned by him. He openly ridicules the holy men and the holy orders. Such behaviour is the mark of the man steeped in worldliness.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What kind of life do the men of this creed live? The answer comes:

एतां दृष्टिमेतरस्य नयंत्रात्मानोऽवास्ताभ्यः ।
प्रभवतःकर्मकर्मण: ध्याय जयऽज्ञेद्विता: ॥ ९
एताम् दृष्टिम् क्रम-व-सत्यम् नक्षत्र-त-वाचमन: अल्प-हुःः ।
प्र-प्रभवित जग-कर्मण: क्र्याय जगत: भ-हिताः ॥

etāṁ dṛṣṭiṁ avastābhya naṣṭātmāno 'lpabuddhayaḥ ।
prabhavanty ugrakarmāṇaḥ kṣayāya jagato 'hitāḥ ॥

एताम् etāṁ this दृष्टिम् dṛṣṭiṁ view अवरोधः avastābhya holding नयङ्गमानः naṣṭātmānaḥ ruined souls अल्प-हुःः: alpa buddhayāḥ of small intellect समस्यानि prabhavanti
come forth उग्र karmāṇaḥ of fierce deeds वस्त्रया for the destruction जगात jagataḥ of the world अहिताह ahitāh enemies

Holding this view, these ruined souls of small intellect, of fierce deeds, rise as the enemies of the world for its destruction.

Man’s intellect dwindles away as he becomes slave to the senses Inordinate sense indulgence ends in self-annihilation Adharma or wickedness is the outcome of it This vicious act contaminates the world and causes the greatest harm Still, they have a negative purpose to serve That falsehood and wickedness are not the paths to self-emancipation, is made evident by the base life of the demoniac

The evil ways of the diabolical are further illustrated —

काममात्तित्वं हुष्परं दम्भमानमदान्विता!
मोहातुद्वात्तित्वासद्भास्वर्त्ततदेशावित्ता।

kāmam āśritya dusprāram dambhamānānāmandāntāḥ
mohad gṛttvā 'sadgrāhān pravartante 'sucivratāh

kāmam kāmam desire आश्रि त्यावित्य abiding in dusprāram insatiable दम्भ मान मद्य लिष्टितa dambha māna mada anvitāḥ full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance mohāt mohat through delusion ग्रहितव्यa gṛttvā having held असद्भास्वर्ता asadgrāhān evil ideas pravartante they work अशुचित्ताता asuci vratāh with impure resolves
Filled with insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding evil ideas through delusion, they work with impure resolve;

.fill

their desires are unmeasurable and only with death they are satisfied. The earth-bound people do not learn a lesson even when overcome with acute pain, disappointments, failures and misfortunes in life. They are like the camels which go on biting off thorny shrubs unmindful of the bleeding caused to their lips.

Beset with immense cares ending only with death, regarding gratification of lust as the highest, and feeling sure that that is all.

Their base and boisterous passions seem to the others to have come to an end with death. But actually those passions get buried in their inner core, only to remanifest themselves in the next birth. Tendencies become latent at death as they do in sleep.

A dearly loved wife dies or deserts; the man forgets all about it and remarries. The sudden passing away of a beloved child brings in desolation. But in a few days he brushes it aside and gets absorbed in life. The mother weeps and wails over the
death of her baby. The next moment she is busy arranging her jewels and costly clothings, scrupulously attending to her toilet as well. The parents are driven into penury because of the marriages of two or three daughters. Still the begetting continues as usual. In litigation the property is drained away, but on that ground further litigation does not stop. Though there is no wherewithal to maintain the existing brood of children, new additions do not fail to come in year after year. How strange!

—Sri Ramakrishna

Bound by a hundred ties of hope, given over to lust and anger, they strive to secure by unjust means boards of wealth for sensual enjoyment.
Men are of two kinds. Those of mere man’s mould only are base and vulgar. Lust and greed for wealth govern them. But the superior kind of men strive for spiritual eminence.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इदम् मया लब्धयिदं ग्रास्ये मनोरथम् I
इदमस्मीदमपि में सर्विष्यति पुनर्यस्मां I १३
इदम् श्रद्धा मया लभ्य-तमुः इदम् प्र-अपि रघु मनोरथम् I
इदम् राज्य-तिरि इदम् श्रापि में सर्व-रा-स्मां पुनः पनम् I I

idam adya maya labdham idam prapysye manoratham I
idam asti ’dam api me bhaviyati punar dhanam I I

इदम् idam this तथा adya today मया maya by me लब्धयिदं labdham has been gained इदम् idam this ग्रास्ये prapysye (I) shall obtain मनोरथम् manoratham desire इदम् idam this अति asti is इदम् idam this अथि api also में me to me सर्विष्यति bhaviyati shall be पुनः punah again पनम् dhanam wealth

“This today has been gained by me; this desire I shall fulfil; this is mine, and this wealth also shall be mine in future.”

असैं मया हृतं श्रुहेरिष्येत् चापरान्ययमि I
ईदारेहि मं सोयी सिद्धोर्हसि चलवा-चलुख्यि I १४
असैं मया हृतं श्रुहेरिष्येत् चापरान्ययमि I
ईदारेहि अहम् श्रुहेरिष्येत् सिद्धोर्हसि चापरान्ययमि I

asau maya hatah satrur haniisye ca 'paran api I
isvaro 'ham aham bhogi siddho 'ham balavan sukhi I I

असैं asau that मया maya by me हृतं hatah slain श्रुहेरिष्येत् satrur enemy इदारेहि haniisye (I) shall slay च ca and अपरान्य aparān others अथि api also ईदारेहि isvaro lord अहम् aham I अहम् aham I सोयी bhogi the enjoyer सिद्धोः
siddhay perfect abhuma aham I balavan balavān powerful sukhi happy

“That enemy has been slain by me, and others also shall I slay. I am a lord, I enjoy, I am successful, powerful and happy.”

आद्योमिजज्ञानवानसिस्मा कोस्मोश्चति सद्भो मया।
यथे दास्यामि मोदिष्य हत्यज्ञानविविमोहिता ॥ १५॥
शाक्त्र असिज्ञान-वानः असु-सि क अन्य असु-सि सद्भो मया।
यथा-रथे दा-सामि मोदिष्ये इति अ-शान-वि-मोहिता ॥

ādhyo 'bhyanavan asmi ko 'nyo 'sti sadrśo mayā|
yakṣye dāsyāmī modisyā ity ajñānavimohitā ॥

धात्र धात्री धात्री धात्री धात्री धात्री धात्री धात्री धात्री

अद्या रथे अस्मि अस्मि अस्मि अस्मि अस्मि अस्मि अस्मि अस्मि

ashvre asmi (I) am kah who anah anyah else

astī is sādh aśād sānāśi equal me by

yakṣye (I) will sacrifice dāsyāmī (I) will give

modisyā (I) will rejoice itī itī thus ajñānavimohitā

ayāna vimohitā deluded by ignorance

“I am rich and well-born. Who else is equal to me? I will sacrifice, I will give alms, I will rejoice.”

Thus deluded by ignorance;

अनेकिचित्विविवान्ता मोहज्ञासमाश्रयताः।
प्रसक्तः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेश्चै।। १६॥

aneka citta vibhāntā moha jāla samāvṛtāh|
pisasaktāḥ kāma bhogesa patanti narake 'sucau।।

अनेकिचित्विविवान्ता aneka citta vibhrāntāh bewildered

by many a fancy mohavādaksamāyata moha jāla samāvṛtāh
entangled in the snare of delusion प्रसक्तकः addicted श्रामोपेयं कामभोगेशु to the gratification of lust पतन्ति patanti (they) fall नरके narakë into hell बासुच्छं asucau foul

Bewildered by many a fancy, enmeshed in the snare of delusion, addicted to the gratification of lust, they fall into a foul hell. 16

Whatever one has in one’s mind is projected by that one on the world outside and fancied as an external reality. To the one good at heart the external world is a heaven. But to another vile at heart, the same world offers a spectacle of a foul hell.

The Asuras also resort to the performance of Yajna. The mode of it is as follows:—

आत्मसंभाविता: स्वतः धनशानमदाननिविति: ।
यजन्ते नामयःस्ते दश्नेनाविविधविपुर्वकम् ॥ १७

आत्म(म)-सम-भाविता: स्वतः: । धन-मान-मद-अन्न-इ-ता: ।
यजन्ते नामयः ते दश्नेन विविध-पुर्व-कम् ॥

atmasanibhavicah stabdhah dhanamanaamadananvivitah
yajante namayajnais te dambhena 'vidhipurvakam ॥

आत्मसंभाविता: atma samdhavivitah self-conceited
स्वतः: stabdhah stubborn धनशानमदाननिविति: dhana mava
mada anvitaḥ filled with the pride and intoxication
of wealth यजन्ते yajante (they) perform नामयः: nam
yajna sacrifices in name ते they दश्नेन dambhena
out of ostentation अविविधविपुर्वकम् avidhi purvakam
contrary to scriptural ordinances
Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with the pride and intoxication of wealth, they perform sacrifice in name for ostentation, disregarding ordinance.

The performance of rituals has undergone change with the passage of time. The performance of Yajna has become scarce in these days, the temple worship having taken up its place. There are people today who build temples for self-advertisement, who conduct religious celebrations for pomp and show and who arrange for elaborate and costly worship in temples not for devotion but for name and fame.

अहंकारं वर्तन दर्पं कामं कोषं च संशितता: ।
गामात्मपरदेशेः प्रदिप्तंतोऽस्मख्यकः ॥ १८

अहंकारः कः महत् दर्पम् कामः कोषम् च मम् धिति-ता ।
गामृ आवन(०) पर-देशेः प्र-द्वियु अन्त धर्मं बास्यकः ॥

ahamkāram balam darpam
kāmam krodham ca samśritāḥ ।
mām ātmapi paradehesu
pradvisanto 'ḥhyasāyakāḥ ॥

अहंकारस्वः ahāmkāra egoism बलम् balam power दर्पम् darpam haughtiness कामम् kāmam lust कोषम् krodham anger च so and संशित samśritāḥ refused स म म me जातमपरदेशेः atma para dehesu in their own bodies and in those of others प्रदिप्तं pradīptam hating अभ्यसुयकः abhyasāyakāḥ these malicious people

Given over to egoism, power, insolence, lust and wrath, these malicious people hate Me in their own bodies and those of others.
Men of demoniacal disposition magnify whatever little merit that is found in them and claim for themselves qualifications to which they are utter strangers. It is impossible to rid them of conceit born of ignorance. The power that is theirs is utilized for humiliating others. The insolence inherent in them goads them ever into the wrong path. That the Lord's benign presence is in the hearts of all is denied by them. By sense-indulgence they despoil their bodies which are all the temples of God; by hurting others they commit the same offence against God. The downfall of the demoniac is in this way sealed.

The Fall of the Asuras — 19-21

तानं द्विषतः कृत्रां सारंशु नराधमानं ।
क्षिपाय जनसामुत्तानासुरीवेव योनिषु ॥ १९ ॥

tan ahaṁ dviṣataḥ krūrān sāṁśāreṣu narādhamān ।
kṣipāmi ajasram asubhān āsuriṣu eva yoniṣu ॥

तानं तान those अहम् ahaṁ I द्विषतः dviṣataḥ (the) hating (ones) krūrān cruel सारंशु sāṁśāreṣu in the worlds नराधमानं narādhamān worst among men kṣipāmi (I) hurl अजस्रम् ajasram for ever अशुभानं asubhān impure आसुरीं āsuriṣu of demons एव eva only योनिषु yoniṣu in wombs

Those cruel haters, worst among men in the world, I hurl these evil-doers for ever into the wombs of the demons only.
Transmigration into the high or the low is according to karma. And its continuity is kept up by the force of karma which persists until the dawn of knowledge. The Lord therefore makes this statement:

आसुरी योनिमापना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
मामास्त्रयेऽवै कौन्तेय तलो यान्त्यथमां गतिम्॥ २०

आसुरीम् योनिम् आ पदा-तता। मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
माम् च प्र आपेव एवं सेनायेन तत यान्ति अधमाम् गतिम्॥

āsurim yonim āpanāh mūdhā janmani janmani.
mām aprāpyai 'va kaunteya tato yānty adhamām gatim

āsurim demoniacal yonim womb āpanāh entering into mūdhā deluded
janmani janmani in birth after birth mām me aprāpya not attaining eva still
kaunteya O Kaunteya tataḥ than that yānti they fall into adhamām lower gatim.

Entering into demoniac wombs, the deluded ones, in birth after birth, without ever reaching Me, they thus fall, O Kaunteya, into a condition still lower. 20

The base nature in a man hurls him into states baser and yet baser. Like a stone rolled down the slope of a hill, he falls into the abyss of depravity.

What is the root cause of the depravity of man? The answer comes —

श्रीसव नरकस्थेष द्वार नाशन्यात्मनः।
काम: कौधस्वया लोभस्तात्स्वेतत्तत्र्य यज्ञेऽ।॥ २१
trividham narakasye 'dam dvāram nāśanam ātmanah |
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas tasmād etat trayam tyajet

trividham triple narakasya of hell īdāṃ dvāraṁ gate nāśanam destructive ātmanah of the self kāmaḥ lust kōpaḥ |
krodhaḥ anger tathā also lōbhaḥ greed tasmāt therefore etat this trayasāḥ | trayam three tyajet (one) should abandon |

Triple is this gate of hell, destructive of the self—lust, anger and greed; therefore should one abandon these three.

The origin of the demoniacal disposition is pointed out here. It is fostered by these three evils. The nature of greed is to appropriate all objects of sense-enjoyment exclusively to oneself. Any one of the three vices mentioned here is sufficient to bind man to abomination. Woe unto man when all the three make an alliance and rule his mind. They do not allow him to emerge from wickedness.

Is there then no hope of emancipation to the man caught in the whirlpool of this three-faced hell? The answer comes:

Liberation from the Asura Fetters — 22

 jusqu'au: kōntēṣha tasaṅghāraṇimśeṣe: |
ādārṣṭātman: ēvaṅgatō yāti paraṁ gatiṁ. || 22

ēvaḥ bhū-puṣā-va: kōntēṣha tamaḥ: drāv: śini: na: ||
ā-ṛṣaṁ ātman: ēvaḥ: tuḥ: varṣaṁ g(ā)ṁ-bhū: ||

Hindustani script
etair vimuktaḥ kaunteya tamodvāraṁ tribhir narah |
ācaraty ātmanāḥ sreyas tato yāti parām gatim ||

The man who is liberated from these three gates to darkness, O Kaunteya, practises what is good and then yāti goes to parām the supreme gatim goal.

Misery is another name for hell. Whenever man is afflicted and unhappy he is for the time being in hell. And why should there be this unwanted hellishness for him? It is all due to his want of insight. Ignorance is the root of all misery. It is again the originator of lust, anger and greed. The Satan of ignorance is the instigator inducing man to indulge in lust, anger and greed. When these three evils are eliminated, the path of enlightenment opens. The darkness of ignorance vanishes of its own accord. Man progresses in Sreyas. When the demoniacal man takes to the divine way his progress is very rapid. A zealous convert that he is, he hastens quickly Godward.

Which is the unerring guidance that helps man go Godward? The guidance comes :—

Scripture is the Guide—23-24

यः शास्त्रविद्धपरस्मृत्य चतुष्टिः कामकारतः ।
न स तद्धित्रमामृति न सुखं न परं गतिम् ॥ २३
Who casting aside the ordinances of the scriptures, acts on the impulse of desire, attains not perfection, nor happiness nor the Supreme Goal.

The function of the scriptures is to guide man to perfection. The injunction from them comes both positively and negatively. Exhortation to do the good and auspicious is the positive injunction; and admonition against doing the bad and harmful deeds is the negative injunction. But the way of the Asuras is to behave counter to the teachings of the scriptures. They indulge in the prohibited acts and refrain from the sanctioned ones. Whereas by obeying and faithfully following the ordinances of the scriptures, man progresses towards perfection. Its immediate result is that he gains in happiness in the life here and he prepares himself for the Supreme Goal that is to be gained ultimately.
Therefore, let the scriptures be your authority in deciding what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having known what is said in the ordinance of the scriptures you should act here.

The purpose of the scriptures is to guide man in living a perfect life on earth and to remind him repeatedly of the Supreme Goal which is supremely laden and which ought to be sought after earnestly. This being the case, bound as man is both to karma and to earth, whatever he does here on earth ought to get the sanction of the scriptures. And those that are divinely disposed involuntarily do acts that are quite in tune with the teachings of the scriptures. In fact their doings and the injunctions of the scriptures are in corroboration of one another.

“What particular Sastra do you follow?” was the question put to Sri Ramakrishna by a devotee. “I follow no Sastra whatever. I plead with the Deity residing in my heart for directions,
and I act and live as I am guided by that Being. Therefore, I have not made any mistake in my life. What I am made to do and to utter by the Deity within, would not come into conflict with the Sastras.” This was the answer given by

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्रीमज्जनमद्वीताद्वनिषत्सु ब्रह्माविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे
श्रीद्रौणाजीनसंवादे दैवासुरसंपदिभागयोगो नाम
पेदश्रौध्याय: ॥

iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpanisatsu brahmāvidyāyām
yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna samvāde daiśurasampad
vibhāgayogo nāma śoḍasa 'dhyāyāḥ ॥

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the sixteenth discourse designated:

THE YOGA OF DIVISION BETWEEN
THE DIVINE AND THE DEMONIACAL.
Sraddhatraya Vibhaga Yoga
The Yoga of the Threefold Sraddha

Chapter XVII

Confidence Graded—The Three Kinds of Food—The Three Types of Worship—The Threefold Austerity—The Threefold Gift—Demerits Turned into Merits

Confidence Graded—1-7

Arjuna uvāca

Ye śāstravidhiṁ utsṛjya yajante śraddhayā 'nītiḥ
teṣām nisīdha tu kā kṛṣṇa sattvam āho rajas tamaḥ

Arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said

Ye ye who śāstravidhiṁ śāstra vidhiṁ the ordinances of the scriptures ātisyāya setting aside yajante perform sacrifice śraddhayā with faith anītattva endowed tēpāṁ teṣām their nisīhā condition tu tu verily sa kā what kṛṣṇa O Kṛṣṇa sattvam Sattva ahaṁ āho or rajas rajas Tamas

Arjuna said

What is the nature of the devotion of those, O Kṛṣṇa, who though disregarding the ordinance of the Sastras, perform sacrifice with Sraddha? Is it one of Sattva, Rajas or Tamas?
Arjuna is obliged to raise this question for obvious reasons. There are people who are very earnest about pursuing the path of self-perfection. To that extent, therefore, they are free from lust, anger and greed. They are definitely not of the demoniac type. Their knowledge of the scriptural ordinances is very meagre, though they are not antipathic to it. Circumstances do not permit their acquiring accurate and elaborate knowledge of the scriptures. They pursue the right path being prompted by their pure motive. Is their earnestness to be regarded as Sattvika which takes them upward, or as Rajasika which keeps them where they are, or as Tamasika which pushes them downward?

Sri Bhagavadvach

विविधा भवति अहं देहिनां सा विभावजा ।
सात्विकी राजसी चेत तामसी चेति तां भृगु ॥

विविधा भवति अहं देहिनाम् सा विभावजा ।
सात्विकी राजसी च एव तामसी च इति तामसु यत (उ) ी ॥

sri bhagavān uvāca
tridhā bhavati sraddhā dehinām sā svabhāvajā ।
sāttviki rājast caiva tāmasti ce 'ti tām srnu ॥

Sri Bhagavan said:

विविधा tridhā threefold सहस्वति bhavati is अहं sraddhā faith देहिनाम् dehinām of the embodied सा sā which विभावजा svabhāvajā inherent in nature सात्विकी sāttviki Sattvika राजसी rājast Rajasika च ca and एव eva even तामसी tāmasti Tamasika च ca and इति iti thus तामसम् tām of it भृगु srnu hear (thou)
The Blessed Lord said:

The Sraddha of the embodied is of three kinds, born of their nature — the Sattvika, the Rajasika and the Tamasika. Hear now about it.

The doings of a Jivatman get imbedded in his mind as impressions, which do not perish along with the death of the gross body. They are latent in the mind stuff to remanifest themselves as tendencies in the next birth. The continuity of his disposition is kept up in this way. By observing his inclinations and doings from birth onwards, the Guna predominant in him can be detected. The intrinsic make up of a Jivatman reveals itself in the following manner:—

सत्त्वानुरूपम् सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत \\
अद्वादमयोऽपि पुरुषो यो वच्छः स एव सः \| 2
अद्वाद्-अनुरूपम् सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत \\
श्रद्धा-नय अयम् पुरुषः सः सदृशः सः एव सः \|

sattvānurūpā sarvasya śraddhā bhavati bhārata \\
śraddhāmayo 'yam puruṣo yo yaçchāra'bhah sa eva saḥ

सत्त्व अनुरूप सत्त्वa anurūpā in accordance with his nature sarvasya of each Shraṭṭhā faith bhavati bhavati is bharat bhārata O Bharata adhayaḥ: śraddhā mayāḥ consists of faith atyam āyam this puṣṭap: pruṣaḥ man v: yaḥ who yat. aṭṇ: yat śraddhaḥ what (his) faith is s: saḥ he eva verily s: saḥ that (is)

The Sraddha of every man, O Bharata, is in accordance with his natural disposition. Man is of the nature of his Sraddha; what his Sraddha is, that verily he is.

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The doings of a Jivatman get imbedded in his mind as impressions, which do not perish along with the death of the gross body. They are latent in the mind stuff to remanifest themselves as tendencies in the next birth. The continuity of his disposition is kept up in this way. By observing his inclinations and doings from birth onwards, the Guna predominant in him can be detected. The intrinsic make up of a Jivatman reveals itself in the following manner:—

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अद्वाद्-अनुरूपम् सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत \\
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śraddhāmayo 'yam puruṣo yo yaçchāra'bhah sa eva saḥ

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The Sraddha of every man, O Bharata, is in accordance with his natural disposition. Man is of the nature of his Sraddha; what his Sraddha is, that verily he is.
Free-will comes increasingly into play as beings evolve in existence. The higher the being, the more its free-will is in evidence. At the human level it comes into bold relief. The destiny of man is shaped by the use to which this faculty is put. We call it sraddhā when the free-will is all directed to self-emulation. This endeavour in particular is the prerogative of man. The attitude assumed by the mind characterizes its sraddhā. It is awake to the reality of things and alert to play its part efficiently. In the discharge of duty, it is given to zeal and not sloth and ease. The man of sraddhā has confidence in himself, faith in the ideal he has chosen and reverence for the person who guides him. The means that he adopts is always pure and praiseworthy. He is ever calm and composed while translating his ideal into practice.

The youth Nachiketas of the Kathopanishad fame is a model for sraddhā. The Visvajit Yajna performed by his father Gautama was found by him to be defective and devoid of the required earnestness. The faithful son therefore offered himself to be given away as gift to somebody, hoping that this act would be at least a partial atonement for the parsimonious way of the father. But the unwilling father became annoyed and blurted out that he would hand the lad over to Yama, the god of death. The dutiful son wedded to truth felt that no word of his father should ever pass off as empty utterance devoid of intent. He not only made the parent’s pronouncement meaningful but also gained in karma and jñāna by his duty-bound departure to the domains of
Yama The all-inclusiveness of his sraddhā is evinced by his choice of the three boons bestowed on him by the lord of death. For the first boon, he sought the pacification of his father, as a loving and dutiful son. For the second boon, he sought the ways and means of earning all earthly prosperity and enjoyment. As the third boon he obtained Supreme Knowledge from Yama. The selection of the boons indicates the lad’s exemplary character and awareness to the ideals in life.

A stone soars up in the sky to the extent momentum is imparted to it. A tree grows up in tune with its inherent vitality. A lotus shoots up along with the rise in the level of the water in the pond. Similarly, man rises in his worth and attainments corresponding to the sraddhā with which he is endowed. He is nothing more and nothing less than what his sraddhā is.

The sraddhā in a man manifests itself in various channels. One among them is in the adoration that he makes of the Almighty. Its worth is as follows:—

यजन्ते सात्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।
प्रेतांभूतगणाःथाने यजन्ते तामसा जना: ॥ ८
यजन्ते सात्विका देवान्यः यक्ष-रक्षानि राजसाः ।
प्र-दत्तां धृत गणाः च अन्ये यजन्ते तामसा जना ॥

yajante sattvikā devān yaksaraksāmsi rajasāḥ ।
pretān bhūtaganāms cā 'nye yajante tāmasā janāḥ ॥

Yajante worship चात्विका sattvikā the Sāttvikā men देवान्य devān the gods यक्षरक्षांसि yaksaraksāmsi the Yakshas and the Rakshasas राजसा rajasāḥ the
Rajasikas प्रेतां गृहस्थ भूतमण्डल भूता गणन the hosts of Bhutas or the nature-spirits च ca and अन्ये anye the others यजन्ते yajante worship तामसाः tāmasāḥ the Tamasika जना: janāḥ people

Sattvika men worship the Devas; Rajasika, the Yakshas and the Rakshasas; the others—the Tamasika यजन्ते men—the Pretas and the hosts of Bhutas.

Men commingle with men in accordance with their temperament and disposition. It is but natural that the good associate with the good, and the bad with the bad. This classification goes on in the realm of worship as well. The Sāttvika group takes to the adoration of the Paramatman whose facets are Siva, Vishnu, Ambika, Ganesa and Subrahmanya. The Rajasika type attributes to the deity or deities characteristics which are their own. Revenge, wrath, vandalism—these are the traits attributed by the Rajasika men to their gods whom they worship ardently. The Tamasika men are lazy and ignorant. Their conception of godhood is in tune with their disposition. The god they worship is a wild deity that delights in hurting and teasing people.

The Sāttvika men are few in number. The others are in majority. Their ways are as follows:-

अम्बासिद्धिजतां घोरं तप्यते वे तथो जना: ।
दम्बाह्यारसंयुक्तः कामरागलाभितः ॥ ५
कर्मयन्त: शरीरस्य भूतात्मासम्बेदतः ।
मां जैवान्त: शरीरस्य वात्तिद्रव्यासुरलििषयान ॥ ६
asāstravihitam ghoram tapyante ye tapo janāḥ

dambhāhamkāra samyuktāḥ kāma rāga balānvitāḥ
karsayantah sartrastham bhūtagrānam acetasāḥ
mām ca itva 'ntahsartrastham tān viddhy āsuraniscayān

अशास्वविहितम् asāstra vihitam not enjoined by the scripture ghoram terrific tapyante practise ye ye who tapaḥ austerity jana janāḥ men dūmatā saṁsāra

dambha ahamkāra samyuktāḥ given to hypocrisy and egoism kāma rāga bala anvitāḥ by the force of lust and attachment

कर्षयतः karsayantah torturing sarīrasthām sartrastham in the body bhūta grānam all the elements acetasāḥ senseless mām mām me ca and eva even at ātanta sartrastham who dwells in the body tān tān them vidhī viddhi know āsuraniscayān to be of demoniac resolve

Those men who practise violent austerities not enjoined by the scriptures, given to hypocrisy and egoism, impelled by the force of lust and attachment,

Fools that they are, they torture their bodily organs, and Me, too, who dwell within the body—know that they are Asurika in their resolve.

The austerities practiced by the Asurika people are in no way pleasing to themselves. Bare-bodied they lie on spikes. While keeping one hand always
lifted up, they try to stand on one leg only, hoping to acquire mystic powers thereby. They keep gazing at the sun constantly unmindful of the harm done to the eyes. Their attempts are as much painful to the beholders as to the performers themselves. The Lord residing in the heart as conscience is denied by these demoniac people. He who is beyond happiness and misery seems to be subjected to misery at the hands of these crude people. Their so-called self-culture is in no way in tune with the path followed by the holy men. It runs counter to the teachings of the scriptures. They seem to be endowed with sraddhā, but actually their practices are derogatory.

What are the other practices by which the attainments of men may be sorted out? The answer comes:

अहारस्तवपि सर्वस्य त्रिविद्यो भवति प्रियः ।
यहाँतपस्तथा दानं तपसं मेददिम्म श्रुतः ॥ ७ ॥

अहार: हृद्वि सर्वेऽया त्रिविद्या सन्तति प्रियः ।
श्रुति: तप: तथा दानम् तेवाय वेदम् इस्मू श्रुतः ॥

āhāras tv api sarvasya trividho bhavati priyāḥ ।
yajñās tapas tathā dānam teśāṁ bhedam imām śrṇu ॥

अहार: ahārak food हु tu indeed अष्टि api also सर्वस्य sarvasya of all विद्ब्द्र trividhaḥ threefold सन्तति bhavati is प्रियः priyāḥ dear यज्ञ: yajñāḥ sacrifice तप: tapaḥ austerity तथा tathā also dānam alms-giving तेषाम् teṣāṁ their सेददम् bhedam distinction इस्मू imām this श्रुतः śrṇu hear

The food also that is dear to all is of three kinds. So are the Yajnas, austerities and gifts. Hear now of the distinction of these.
The food habits, traditions, usages and meritorious acts may vary among nations and countries. There may be apparent conflicts among them. But karma by itself is neither good nor bad. The motive that impels it and the effect that it produces on man contribute to make it good or bad. How the sanctioned karmas that are conducive to spiritual progress get vitiated at the hands of the diabolical is dilated upon here.

The Three Kinds of Food — 8–10

आयु: सत्त्ववल्लरोगसुखप्रीतिविवधेना: ||
रस्य: स्रिग्या: सिरा ह्वथा आहारा: सात्त्विकप्रिया: ||

आयु: सदा-स्व-बल-आरोग्य सुख-प्रीति-विवधेना: ||
रस्य: स्रिग्या: सिरा: ह्वथा: आ-ह्वथा: सात्त्विक: प्रिया: ||

āyuḥ sattvā balārogya sukha priti vivardhanāḥ ||
rasyāḥ snigdāḥ sthīrā hṛdyā āhārāḥ sāttvikapriyāḥ ||

आयु, सत्त्ववल्लरोगसुखप्रीतिविवधेन: āyuḥ sattva bala ārogya sukha priti vivardhanāḥ those which increase Ayu (life). Sattva (purity), Balam (strength). Arogyam (health), Sukham (joy), Prithi (cheerfulness and good appetite) रस्य: rasyāḥ what are savoury दिनव: snigdāḥ oleaginous सिरा: sthīrāh substantial ह्वथा hṛdyāḥ agreeable आहारा. āhārāḥ the foods सात्त्विकप्रियाः sāttvikapriyāḥ are dear to the Sattvika

The foods that augment vitality, energy, vigour, health, joy and cheerfulness, which are savoury and oleaginous, substantial and agreeable are liked by the Sattvika.

The food that adds to cheerfulness is also a promoter of appetite. The food that is substantial
gives a prolonged sustenance to the consumer. The
non-substantial food gets quickly digested. It gives
no vigour to the body. But the food that is hard to
digest weakens the digestive organs and hinders
longevity. Time and place have their part to play
in the consumption of the foods mentioned herein.
Breakfast should necessarily be light. Supper should
be so adjusted that while going to bed at night, the
digestive organs also have the needed rest. Atten-
tion may be paid to the partaking of warmth-giving
foods in cold countries and of those that have a
cooling effect in hot countries.

Eat as much as you require in the day time; but reduce the
food as much as you can at night.

— Sri Ramakrishna

कृत्यन्तंत्रमात्रायतुष्णार्तिक्षणस्तुस्मृतनिदाहिनः ॥
आहारार राजस्तैप्रेता हुःशोकोकामवधानः ॥ ९

कदु-अभ्यु-वज्र-शव-तैव-वण 
तीङ्क-क्ष-व-दाहिनः ॥
आहारार: राजस्य दृष्ट: 
हुः-शोक-वामवर्द्धक ॥

कात्वमला लवनात्युस्ना तिक्ष्णा रुक्षा विदाहिनः ॥
ाहरः राजसाये इतः दुःख्या सोकामया प्रदाह ॥

कदु: कतुह (those that are) bitter अम्ल: amla sour
तत्वः: lavana saline अत्यु: atyus extensively hot
tīkṣṇa: pungent रुक्ष: rukṣa dry विदाहिव burning आहारः: āhāra foods राजस्य राजसाया of the
Rajasika हता: istah are liked हुः: शोक वामवर्द्धः: duḥkha soka aṁaya pradāḥ are productive of pain, grief and
disease.

The foods that are bitter, sour, saline, over-hot,
pungent, dry and burning are liked by the Rajasika,
and are productive of pain, grief and disease.
There is tingling and burning in the tongue; the eyes get bloodshot and tears trickle down profusely; the nostrils water copiously; the head reels; the stomach burns—these are the characteristics of the *Rajasika* foods. They tell upon the duration of the life of the consumer, they are definitely injurious to spiritual practices.

That which is stale, tasteless, stinking, cooked overnight, refuse and impure is the food liked by the Tamasika.

Discrimination has to be used in regard to the food cooked overnight. There are certain kinds of food which cannot be used immediately after cooking, but have to be kept for hours or even days before being used. There are others which have to be consumed soon after preparation. The fitness for consumption or otherwise of a food article is self-revealed. A fruit kept long loses its attractive
colour as it gets rotten. The putrid food produces foul odour. Old food becomes stale. The spoilt food becomes tasteless. The food already tasted by somebody is unfit to be taken by another. The remnants left over in plate by one individual are unfit to be served to another. People with a Tamasika disposition are heedless to all these restrictions. They help themselves to any impure and rotten food without the least hesitation. Their attainments are indicated by the sort of food they take and the manner in which they partake of it.

The way in which adoration is made to the Almighty is another indicator of the spiritual attainments of people. It is being elaborated as follows:—

The Three Types of Worship—11-13

अफलकाण्किक्षित्रिस पित्रि चिरिद्रव्य इत्यदि ।
यष्ट्यमेकेति मन: समाधाय स सात्तविक: ॥ ११

अ-फल-आ-काण्किक्षित्रिस: यहः। विधि-श्रद्धा: य: (यज्ञ:) इत्यदि ।
यष्ट्यमेकेति (यज्ञ-सात्तविक:) एवं इति मन: समाधाय-वायु स: सात्तविकः ॥

aphalākāṅkṣibhir yajño vidhīrṣṭo ya ijjate
yāstavyam eve 'ti manah samādhāya sa sāttvikah ॥

अफल आकांक्षित्रिस: apha-la ākāṅkṣibhīḥ by men desiring no fruit यहः: yajñah sacrifice विधिद्रव्य: vidhi dṛṣṭah as enjoined by the ordinance य: yah which इत्यदि ijjate is offered यष्ट्यमेकेति yāstavyam ought to be offered ena only इति iti thus मनः manah the mind समाधाय samādhāya having fixed स: saḥ that सात्तविकः: sāttvikah Sattvika

That Yajña is Sattvika which is performed by men desiring no fruit, as enjoined by ordinance, with their mind fixed on the Yajña only, for its own sake.
A mother who serves her baby expects no reward. She finds satisfaction in service. The good and the holy worship the Lord expecting nothing in return. This divine act is inherent in them. Again their adoration is quite in tune with the ordinance of the scriptures. All forms of Yajna resolve themselves into the adoration of the Almighty. The Sāttvika men are given to this kind of worship.

While the Pandava brothers were in exile this pertinent question was put to King Yudhishthira by Queen Draupati. “Why should these series of troubles and tribulations befall you who are an embodiment of dharma?” The reply bespeaks the mental calibre of the man concerned. “Behold, O Queen, the yonder majestic Himalayas. I can’t help adoring them. Sorrow finds no quarters in my mind given to this adoration.” Yudhishthira was made of such stuff as this. And this verily is the way of the Sāttvika.

अभिसंधाय तु फलं दम्भार्थेमपि चैव यत् ।
इत्यते भरतंश्च तं यहं विद्यः राजसम् ॥ १२
भमस्ति-सम-वा-य तु फलम् दम्भ-श्रव्यम् भवि च एव यत् ।
इज़(जजू)-यते भरत-शेष्यं तद्य यतं विद्यः राजसम् ॥

abhisamdhāya tu phalam dambhārtham api cai 'va yat
ijyate bharaṭasresṭha tam yāṇam viddhū rājasam ॥

अभिसंधाय abhisamdhāya seeking for tu tu indeed
phalam fruit deśārtham dambhārtham for ostentation
अपि api also च ca and एव eva even यत् yat which इत्यते
ijyate is offered bharaṭa sresṭha O best of
the Bharatas ūtam that jñānam yajñam sacrifice vidhi know rājasam Rājasika

That which is performed, O best of the Bharatas, in expectation of reward or for self-glorification, know it to be a Rājasika Yajna. 12

It is no true worship which is done in a bartering spirit. The man offers an oblation to the Lord and appeals to him for a favour or mercy or a miraculous cure of a disease. There is another man who offers worship for a show, for advertisement or for self-glorification. All these forms of worship are of Rājasika nature, more detrimental than helpful to spiritual progress.

विद्धिहिन्मसर्वधारां मन्त्रहीनसदक्षिणां ||
अद्राविविन्दितं यद्य तामसं परिच्छते || १३
विद्धिहिन्म अ-स्वरूप-अन्त: अन्त: भक्त: सन्त्य-दश्विणां ||
अद्भावे-वे-रहितमु यवन् तामसम् वर्द-वश: वर्ये ||

vidhihinam asṛṣṭānām mantrahīnām adakṣīnām ||
sraddhāvirahitāṁ yajñāṁ tāmasāṁ paricaksate ||

विद्धिहिनम् vidhihinam without keeping to ordinance
अस्त्रयां अन्तः asṛṣṭa annam in which no food is distributed
मन्त्रहीनम् mantra hīnam which is devoid of Mantras
अदक्षिणम् adakṣīnam which is devoid of gifts adrava-virahitam
sraddhā virahitāṁ which is devoid of faith jñānam yajñam sacrifice
tāmasāṁ Tamasika parichāṣtete paricaksate (they) declare

They declare that Yajna to be Tamasika which is contrary to the ordinances, in which no food is distributed, which is devoid of Mantras, gifts and Sraddha.
All good acts which are conducive to public welfare are emphatically enjoined in the Sastras. Therefore they may be all undertaken even without consulting the Sastras. But whatever act is harmful, it is prohibited by the scriptures which are the infallible guides. Therefore the Sastras necessarily come in for guidance whenever a doubt arises about the validity of an action.

Beings depend on food for their existence. Voluntary distribution of it is therefore a mark of consideration and regard for beings. Cherishing beings with food is a form of worship of the Almighty.

Mantras are the external indications of the solemn determination and noble intents behind an action. An undertaking which is devoid of elevating ideas is more mechanical than human.

Reverent gifts are to be made to those who participate in a Yajna with an attitude of service. Gifts are also to be made to other deserving people and to good causes.

Above all if a holy undertaking be devoid of sraddhā, it is to be eschewed as vainglorious and demoniac. The Tamasika type of people undertake Yajnas full of these defects.

Austerity is a holy means for the human to emerge into the divine. Its characteristics are mentioned in the following few stanzas:
The Threefold Austerity — 14-19

देवदीदिमुरुपारपुजनं शौचमार्जिव्यम्।
श्रवणश्रवणमहिसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते। ॥ १४ ॥

deva dvija guru prajña pujanam saucam arjavam।
brahmacaryam ahimsa ca sartram tapa ucyate।

The worship of the Gods, the twice-born, the teachers and the wise shouccham saucam purity ashirvad arjavam straightforwardness brahmacaryam celibacy ahimsa ahimsa non-injury ca and shariram sartram of the body tapah austerity ucyate is called

Worship of the Gods, of the twice-born, of teachers and of the wise; purity, uprightness, continence and non-injury — these are said to be the austerity of the body. 14

Tapah means to melt. Useful metals are extracted by melting ores. Old and scrap metals are renewed by the same process of melting. The life of man can similarly be renewed and rejuvenated by tapas or austerity. It is a boon with which man is endowed so that he may reform and re-create himself into a higher order of existence. Blessed is that man who applies himself to this spiritual means so that he may emerge from manhood into godhood. Man is constituted of the body, the speech and the mind. When these three components are modified by tapas, man automatically changes for the better. The process of transformation is presented herein.
The facets of Brahman such as Siva, Vishnu and Ambika are called Gods. They are recognized as Deities worthy of adoration. The Brāhmaṇa is called the twice-born because of his being born again mentally for a dedicated spiritual life. The teachers are they who set an example of spiritual life through their personal career. The wise are they who are awakened to Brahmanavastha; they have transcended the body-consciousness. By worshipping all these whole-heartedly, the aspirant gets himself cast in their divine moulds. Bodily purity is maintained by regular baths and clean clothing. It is uprightness to execute all bodily activities in a clean, open and ethical way. When all sense-indulgences in general, and sex-indulgence in particular are eschewed and the body is dedicated only to the service of the divine, it is acclaimed as continence. Recognizing the sacredness of all beings and refraining from hurting any of them is non-injury. All these sacred observances put together are called bodily austerity.

अनुद्वेगाकरण वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियाहितं च यत् ।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यासं चैव वाक्यं तपं उच्यते ॥ १५ ।

शनू-उद्देश-रासु वाक्यम् सत्यम् प्रिय-हितम् च न तः ।
श-अध्याय-अभि-अस्तनम् च एव बाक्य-मयम् तपः उच्यते ॥

anudvagakaram vākyam satyam priyahitam ca yat ।
svādhyāyābhyaśanam cai 'va vāmayaṁ tapa ucyate ॥

अनुद्वेगाकरणम् anudvagakaram causing no excitement vākyam vākyam speech satyam satyam truthful priyahitam priya hitam pleasant and beneficial च ca and पतं yat which स्वाध्याय स्वाध्यायābhyaśanam the
practice of the study of the Vedas च ca and एव eva also वाङ्गम् वाङ्गम् vāṁmayam of speech तपः tapaḥ austerity लघ्यः ucyate is called

The speech which causes no excitement, which is truthful, pleasant and beneficial, and also the practice of sacred recitation — these are said to form the austerity of speech. 15

The harm done through speech is often more painful than that caused by physical violence. Words of excitement and words that hurt people should by all means be avoided by the spiritual aspirant.

Truth is in some cases unpleasant to hear and untruth pleasant to hear. The best course is to present truth in as pleasant a way as possible. But there should be no deviation from truth for the sake of pleasantness. If it comes to it, even at the cost of pleasantness, truth alone should be ever upheld.

Flattery is often in tune with truthfulness and very pleasant to hear. May a sadhaka employ it in his dealings with people? No, flattery has to be scrupulously avoided. Harsh words have not done so much harm to society as undue compliments have done. Even great men have fallen victims to flattery and gone off their moorings. The words uttered ought to be pleasant and beneficial but never pandering to one’s vanity. Beneficial words form a benediction, and they alone ought to be spoken always.

The Vedas are the oldest books known to humanity, and they are held the most sacred because of their dealing with matters spiritual. Chanting them daily with proper intonation is not only a perfect vocal
training, but it is also a sanctifying agency to the student. This book, however, is not within the reach of all. Fortunately for man, however, there are sacred books in all languages. A devotional reading or chanting of them daily forms an aspect of spiritual discipline.

All the four phases of training the tongue dilated herein, put together form the austerity of speech.

\[
\text{मनः प्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः } \\
\text{भावसंहितकरितितेतच्यो मानससुच्चद्यः } \\
\text{１６ } \\
\text{मनः प्रसादः सौम्य-कामः मौनम् आस्म(न)-किनि-महः } \\
\text{भाव-सम्बन्धिन्द्रे इति पत्तं तत् मानसम् सुच्चद्यः } \\
\text{manahprasādah saumyatvam maunam ātmavinigrahaḥ bhāvasamśuddhir ity etat tapo mānasam ucyate} \\
\]

\[
\text{मनः प्रसादः manah prasādah serenity of mind सौम्यत्वम् saumyatvam: good heartedness मौनम् maunam: silence आस्मविनिग्रहः ātmavinigrahaḥ: self-control भावसंहित: bhāva samśuddhiḥ: purity of nature इति iti: thus etat thus tapaḥ austerity मानसम् mānasam: mental उच्चते ucyate: is called} \\
\]

Serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control and purity of disposition — this is called the mental austerity.

Eschewing depression and confusion and being established in a blissful calmness is serenity of mind. Being kindly disposed towards all is gentleness. Keeping all mentation in a state of equilibrium is silence. Control of the mind is superior to the control of the tongue and the body. Permitting pure thoughts and noble emotions alone to crop up in the
mind is self-control mentioned herein. What is in the mind expresses itself as words and actions. He, who has mastery over his mind never utters an unwanted word and never does an undesirable action. When a person's temperament is congenial and attitude felicitous, he is said to be imbued with purity of disposition. Maintaining this benign state of mind under all circumstances is austerity of the mind.

अध्यया परयाः तस्ते तपस्तत्रिविषयं नरेः। 
अफलाकान्तिष्विभस्म: सात्तिकम् परिचक्षते॥ १७

अध्यया परयाः तत्त्वाः तप: तद्व विष्मव् नरेः। ।
अफल-त्व: आकान्तिष्ब्धम् युक्त: सात्तिकम् परिचक्षते॥

sraddhayā parayā taptam tapas tat trividham naraṁ।
aphalākāṅkṣibhir yuktaḥ sāttvikam paricaksate।

अध्यया sraddhayā with faith parayā highest
tapnam practised तप: tapaḥ austerity तत् tat that
trividham threefold naruḥ by men अफल
आकान्तिष्ब्धिः: aphala ākāṅkṣibhiḥ desiring no fruit युक्ते:
yuktaḥ steadfast सात्तिकम् sāttvikam Sattvika paricaksate (they) declare
desire.

This threefold austerity practised by steadfast
men with the utmost Sraddha, desiring no fruit, they
call Sattvika.

The austerity loses its sanctity to the extent
fruit or reward is sought for. He is steadfast in the
pursuit of the ideal, who remains unaffected by
success and failure. Relentlessly he engages him-
self in his divine endeavours. All the three instru-
ments—the body, the speech and the mind, are
benignly utilized for the service of the Lord. That aspirant is fixed in Sāttvika who expects no reward and who does not suspend his practice of austerity for any reason whatsoever.

satkāra māna pujārtham tapo dambhena cai ’va yat
kriyate tad iha proktam rājasam calam adhruvam

satkāra māna pūjā artham with the object of gaining good reception, honour and worship tapaḥ austerity dambhena with hypocrisy ca and eva even yat which kriyate is practised tat tat that iha here proktam is said rājasam Rajasika chāttvam unstable adhruvam transitory

The austerity which is practised with the object of gaining respect, honour and reverence, and with ostentation is here said to be Rajasika; it is unstable and transitory.

The Rajasika man does not understand that austerity is the effective means to recast his base nature into benign. As children play at imitating the actualities in life, this man imitates tapas for mere show. He expects the others to esteem him as a man of austerity. The way of the world is to hold a holy man in great regard. The Rajasika man avails himself of that credulity in society and poses as a man given to severe spiritual discipline. Apart from
gaining adoration from the public he has no other purpose for his austerity. There is no stability in it. After the glamour for it is over, he either suspends or puts an end to it. There is no spiritual value in this kind of Rajasika austerity.

सूहःग्रहणात्मनो यत्पः प्रियया कियते तपः ।
परस्परसाधनार्थं वा तजामसुदाहरणम् ॥ १९ ॥

That austerity which is practised with a foolish obstinacy, with self-torture or for the purpose of destroying another, is declared to be Tamasika. 19

Among human beings there are individuals resembling stones and blocks. Their intellectual development is yet incomplete. Ideals in life are imperfectly understood by them. Such dullards also, often take to the practice of austerity without knowing its scope. They fast to the point of self-immolation, expose themselves to the heat of sun and fire and dip themselves in cold water to benumb their sense-organs. Instead of outgrowing the body-
consciousness in ātmabodha, they are body-centered and torture it religiously. Occasionally they stumble upon some psychic power which they utilize for hurting, wrecking or destroying others. These men are Tamasika in their performance of austerity.

The Threefold Gift — 20-22

द्रातव्यमिति यदा न दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे।
देषे काले च पात्रे च तदाने सात्विकक स्वतंत्र। ॥ २०

drātavīyam iti yad dānam diyate 'nupakārīne.
dese kāle ca pātre ca tad dānam sāttvikam smṛtam ॥

द्रातव्यम dṛtavīyam ought to be given iti iti thus यद् यत that dānam dānam gift दीयते diyate is given अनुपकारिणे anupakārīne to one who does no service in return देषे dese in a fit place काले kāle in time च ca and पात्रे pātre to a worthy person च ca and च तत tat that dānam dānam gift सात्विकक sāttvikam Sattvika स्वतंत्र smṛtam is held to be

That gift which is made to one who can make no return, with the feeling that it is one's duty to give, and which is given at the right place and time and to a worthy person, that gift is held Sattvika.

What is given expecting a return contribution or reward is no gift. It is only an exchange of courtesy or hospitality. In some cases it happens to be a motivated investment. But a gift is that which is voluntarily offered expecting nothing in return. The recipient is necessarily a person who is not in a position to make a return gift. At the
same time he is worthy of the gift and whatever is given to him would be well spent on worthy causes. The attitude of the giver is more important than the gift itself. With the sense of a sacred duty the bestowing ought to be made. In humility, with bashfulness and to the best of one’s ability, the means at one’s disposal ought to be shared with the deserving people. To a person residing in one region, a gift made in another distant region is not one given at the right place. The gift ought to be made just when there is the need for it. Early or belated offering becomes untimely and purposeless. That gift is Sāttvika which fulfils all these conditions.

and yt tu pratypakārārtham phalam uddiśya vā punah 
dityate ca parikliṣṭam tad dānam rājasam smṛtam

And that gift which tu indeed pratypakārārtham with a view to receive in return fruit uddiśya looking for vā or punah again dityate is given ca and parikliṣṭam reluctantly tat that dānam gift rājasam Rajasika smṛtam is held to be

And that gift which is given with a view to receive in return, or looking for the fruit, or again grudgingly, is accounted as Rajasika. 21

Let not the left hand know what the right hand gifts, is the injunction. The idea is that there is
sanctity in the gifts made without publicity. But the Rajasika man is more concerned with publicity than with sanctity. Actually he has no mind to part with his possessions. With compunction and disquietude he gives away a niggardly dole. Even while doing so he grumbles at people choosing to exploit him. He plans of regaining his stinted gift, multiplied if possible. The Rajasika gift causes discomfort both to the giver and the receiver.

अदेशकालेयददानमिप्तस्यम्मो दीयते ।
असत्कृतसंवज्ञातं तत्कांमसुदाहृतम् ॥ २२
श-दैश-काले यद् दानम् । अपात्रेय: च (श)स्व-दीयते ।
श-सत्कृतम् तत् हताम् । तत् तामसाम उद्द-आ-ह-तम् ॥

adēsakāle yad dānam apātrebhīyas ca diyate
asatkratam avajñātam tat tāmasam udāhrtam

अदेशकालेया अदेशकाले adēsa kāle at a wrong place and time यत् yat that दानम् dānam gift अपात्रेयः apātrebhīyaḥ to unworthy persons च ca and दीयते diyate is given असत्कृतम् asatkratam without respect अवज्ञातम् avajñātam with insult तत् tāt that तामसाम tāmasam Tamasika उदाह्रतम् udāhrtam is declared to be

The gift that is given at a wrong place or time, to unworthy persons, without respect or with insult, that is declared to be Tamasika.

A wrong place is that which is dirty, full of disadvantages and uncongenial for residence. A wrong time is that which is set apart for sleep, toilet, personal concerns and for unavoidable obligatory activities. Those are not the times suited to make gifts. Persons unworthy of charity and gifts are
they who are of questionable character, who are
devoid of self-control, who do not engage themselves
in the welfare of beings and who squander away
money. When the recipients are received disrespect-
fully and insolently and when the doling out is made
with abuses and scoldings—it is Tamasika gift.

The contributions made to public causes due to
the pressure from government officers, are Tamasika
in nature. Bribes very often put on the garb of
voluntary contribution for good causes. They are
also base in nature.

Yajna, dāna and tapas are the holiest of all
karmas; but even they have a tinge of evil inherent
in them. How are these evils to be rectified? The
answer comes:—

Demerits Turned into Merits — 23-28

ॐ तत सद इति निर्देशो ब्रह्माणिनिविष्ठ: स्थूलः ।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन ब्रह्माय यज्ञाथ विहिताः पुरा ॥ २३

ॐ अह तत सद इति निर्देशो ब्रह्माणिनिविष्ठ: स्थूलः ।
ब्राह्मणाः तेन ब्रह्मा य यज्ञाः न निर-चित-तः पुरा ॥

aum tat sad iti nirdeso brahmaṇas trividhaḥ smṛtaḥ ।
brāhmaṇās tena vedās ca yajñās ca vihitāḥ purā ॥

ॐ तत सद इति निर्देशो ब्रह्माणिनिविष्ठ: स्थूलः ।
nirdesah designation brahmaṇ: brahmaṇah of Brahman
trividhaḥ threefold स्थूल: smṛtaḥ has been declared
brahmaṇah Brahmanas tena tena by that ब्रेता:
vedāḥ Vedas च ca and यज्ञa: yajñāḥ sacrifices च ca and
विहितa: vihitāḥ created पुरा formerly
“Om Tat Sat,” this has been declared to be the triple designation of Brahman. By that were made of old the Brahmanas, the Vedas and the Yajnas. 23

Every time a necessity arises for the indication of Brahman, these three words, Om Tat Sat are utilized either together or severally. Brahman projects Himself as sound for the purpose of manifesting Himself as the phenomenal universe. The sum total of the sound of the Cosmos is Om. It is otherwise called Nāda Brahman. This sacred sound is indeterminable. Brahman is referred to by the utterance of Om. He is also indicated by the word Tat which means It. A respectable person is not referred to by his name but with the simple word ‘he.’ In such deference, Brahman is indicated with the word ‘It’. Again Sat means the Reality, which remains unaffected by time, space and causation. Brahman is also referred to as Sat. This triple designation therefore always indicates Brahman.

Though both butter and buttermilk come from the same substance, milk, we only say that butter comes from milk and make no mention of the other substance. Though all things and beings have come out from Brahman, the most prominent productions among them are the Brāhmaṇas, the Vedas and the Yajñas. The most evolved and the most spiritually inclined ones among men are called the Brāhmaṇas. Among the branches of knowledge, the sublimest are contained in the Vedas. And among the activities going on in the world, the most elevating and beneficial ones are the Yajñas. In the Nāda Brahman these three occupy the foremost place.
And how is this triple designation utilized? The answer comes:

तस्माद अम्ब मित्र उदाहरणं यज्ञदानतपः किंयोः ।
प्रवर्तने विधानोक्तः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनामः ॥ २४ ।

तस्माद् द्वितीय इति उदा-आ-हृ-तपः किंयोः ।
प्र-वत्ते-वि-भान-दक्षा: सत्तमं ब्रह्म-बादिनामः ॥

tasmād aum ity udāḥṛtya yajña dāna tapah kriyāḥ ।
pravartante vidhānoktāḥ satatam brahmavādinām ॥

तस्माद् tasmāt therefore आ० om. Om इति इति thus
उदाहरणम् udāḥṛtya uttering यज्ञदानतपः किंयाः: yajña dāna tapah
kriyāḥ: the acts of sacrifice, gifts and austerity प्रवर्तने
pravartante begun विधान उक्ता: vidhāna uktāḥ as enjoined
in the scriptures सततम् satatam always ब्रह्मवादिनाम्
brahma vādinām by the students of Brahman

Therefore, with the utterance of “Om,” are the
acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity, as enjoined in the
scriptures, always undertaken by the followers of the
Vedas.

24

There is no karma which is all perfect. For
that reason no karma can be dropped out. Any
attempt made by the embodied to eschew karma
proves futile. A karma is therefore commenced with
the utterance, “Om” in order to eradicate the evil
in it. The implication is that every karma ought to
be in accordance with the plan of Nature. There is
a divine orderliness in the working of Nature; and
it aids the evolution of the Jīvatman. Every karma
done by man ought to aid this divine purpose. This
principle has, in course of time, modified itself into
the worship of Ganesa, who is also known as
Vigneshwara or the Lord who wards off obstacles. This Deity is the embodiment of “Om.” As all sounds merge in “Om” all actions ought to be in harmony with the cosmic scheme. That karma alone is performed successfully which fulfils this condition. This is the infallible law governing the idea that a karma ought to be commenced after uttering “Om.”

\[ \text{tad ity anabhisaṃdhāya phalam yajña tapaḥ kriyāḥ} \]
\[ \text{dāna kriyāḥ ca vividhāḥ kriyante mokṣakāṅkṣibhiḥ} \]

That “Tat” without aiming at the fruits, are the acts of sacrifice and austerity and the various acts of gift performed by the seekers of Moksha.

The word “Tat” refers to Brahman. All actions belong to Iswara and not to the individual souls. Therefore, while undertaking a karma, the thought should be invoked that it belongs to Brahman. Even the best of the actions, done for oneself, begets evil. But even the worst of the actions, like a warfare, waged for the service of the Lord, is freed from all sins. And war has its inevitable place in the cosmic
plan. He who submits himself as an instrument in the hands of the Lord and carries on a deadly and disastrous war commits no sin. Freed from agency as he is, he realizes that all actions belong to the Lord. While engaging himself in Yajna, dāna and tapas, the sadhaka is firm in the thought that the Lord is getting His work done. Such a one attains Brahmaṇhood, which is Moksha.

सत्स्ये साधुभावे स ददित्येवत्त्वयुख्याते ।
प्रासाते कर्मणि तथा सच्चन्द्र: पार्थ युज्यते ॥ २६ ।
सदृभावे साधु-भावे च तदृ ईते एततः प्र-सदृ-य-दे ।
प्र-नासैः ते कर्मणि तथा सदृ-शन्धः पार्थ युज्य-दे ॥
sadbhāve sādhubhāve ca sad ity etat prayuṣyate ।
prāsaste karmāṇi tathā sacchabdaḥ pārtha yuṣyate ॥

The word “Sat” is used in the sense of reality and of goodness; and so also, O Partha, the word “Sat” is used in the sense of an auspicious act. 26

Brahman alone is “Sat” and not the Jīvatman. Still when a son is born, he is blessed to be ever living. In the worldly parlance, calling the asat as “Sat” is customary.

Brahman alone is free from blemish. Everything else has some trace of evil in it. The sinful man ought not to be addressed as sinner. For, by
doing so the sin in him is further cherished. But by calling him good at all times, the goodness in him is fostered. The attitude of goodness is an effective means to reform the world. This is a great lesson in life to be learnt by all. The word “Sat” is used for this purpose.

The word “Sat” is used in benediction, approbation and sanction. The discerning ones know for certain that marriage is the cause of the downfall of man. It is an inauspicious act in life. Still it is sanctioned and approbated as an auspicious act. The word “Sat” is used in this respect.

Worldly life is ever wrought with evil. On that ground man should not be always harping on the bad. Neither should he assume a pessimistic attitude. There should always be the attempt to make the best of the existing evil. For this purpose also the word “Sat” is used.

Are there any other purposes for which the word “Sat” is used? The answer ensues.—

यथे तपसि दाने च स्थिति: सदिति चोच्च्यते ।
कर्म चैव तद्दैयं सदित्येवामिशीयते ॥ २७

यथे तपसि दाने च स्थिच(स्था)स्थि तत्त स्वतः इति च उच्च्यते ।
समेच एव तदुद्ध-उरियोम सत्तु इति एव अभि-(धा)पी-रतेः ॥

ययः tapasi dāne ca sthitih sad iti ca 'cyate ।
karma ca 'tva tadarthiyam sad ity eva 'bhidhiyate ॥

ययः yajña in sacrifice तपसि tapasi in austerity दाने
dāne in gift च ca and स्थिति: sthitih steadiness सत् sat
Sat इति iti thus च ca and उच्च्यते ucyate is called कर्म
karma action च ca and पत्र eva also तदर्थियम् tadarthiyam
in connection with these or for the sake of the supreme सत् sat Sat. इति iti thus पव eva even अभिधियते abhidhyate is called.

Steadfastness in sacrifice, austerity and gift is also called “Sat” and action for the sake of the Lord is also called “Sat.”

In stanza twenty-five the performance of Yajna, dāna and tapas is dominated by the thought of “Tat.” Here the performance of the same three sacred acts is dominated by the thought of “Sat.” And there is a slight difference between these two doings. The former is actuated by the urge for Moksha or liberation. The intensity of the feeling is at a high pitch in it. The means and the end therefore get merged into one. The Brahmāvastha is in evidence at the very beginning of the sādhana. Whereas in the latter which is “Sat” bhāva the progress is slow but steady.

When Yajna, dāna and tapas are performed properly they naturally come under the category of “Sat” in which the means and the end are not the same, although the means requires to be given the importance attached to the end. This may be clarified through an example. Scaffolding is necessary for constructing high buildings. The former is temporary and the latter permanent. The former is the means and the latter, the end. Attention is to be given to the means as much as to the end. The attitude of “Sat” is bestowed to the means and the end alike. Yajna, dāna and tapas are the means; Godhead is the end. The ardent sadhaka
is all attention and all steadfastness in the discharge of these holy acts. He does not mind the end being very remote. His attitude towards the means — sacrifice, austerity and gift — is “Sat.”

Adoption of a wrong method because of ignorance to a right end is also “Sat” for the simple reason the end is great. Godhood is the goal to a sadhaka; he follows a wrong path to begin with. Even that wrong path is “Sat” because it is bound to get rectified. An example clarifies this point. A pilgrim to a northern sacred place chooses to walk southward, not knowing the right path. In this situation somebody comes in to put him on the right path. Because of the good intention of the pilgrim, even the wrong road that he has chosen is “Sat.” Whatever action one takes for the sake of the Lord is “Sat.” Good karma done for selfish ends is “asat.” Even bad karma done for the glory of the Lord is “Sat.”

अभृद्या हुं दृष्ट तपस्तसं कृतं च यत् ।
आसदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्वेत्य नो ह्य ह्य ॥ २८

अभ्रद्या हुं दृष्ट तपस्तसं कृतं च यत् ।
आसदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्वेत्य नो ह्य ह्य ॥

astra היתyā huṇa dattam taptam kṛtam ca yat
asad ity ucyate pārtha na ca tat pretya no iva ॥

अभृद्या astra היתyā without faith huṇa dattam is sacrificed दृष्टम् dattam given तपः tapah austerity तपस्तम्
taptam is practised कृतम् kṛtam performed च ca and यत्
yat whatever असत् asat Asat इति iti thus उच्यते ucyate
is called पार्थ pārtha O Partha न na not च ca and तन् tat
that तेष्व प्रेत्या hereafter (after death) न na not हि iha here

Whatever is sacrificed, given or performed and whatever austerity is practised without Sraddha, it is called Asat, O Partha. It is of no account here or hereafter.

Yajna, dāna and tapas when performed well lead the sadhaka into God-consciousness. Correspondingly his individualistic consciousness is eliminated. But if these good acts be done with selfish motive, the man's individualism develops, promoting his enjoyment of earthly pleasures. Sraddhā is indispensable for the enjoyment of either the divine plenitude or the earthly joys. But he who lacks in Sraddhā enjoys neither the here nor the hereafter.

Machines make no progress for themselves through their working; they merely wear out. The man without Sraddhā becomes an automaton or machine. But he alone progresses in life who is full of Sraddhā. Getting educated and earning money are among the earthly activities of man. If he be devoid of Sraddhā he remains alien to these accomplishments. If wealth be placed at the disposal of a man bereft of Sraddhā he would squander it in no time. Hence Sraddhā is the one divine gift endowed with which man makes progress both in his earthly life and in his spiritual pilgrimage. Whatever duty falls to his lot in his endeavours to gain the here and hereafter, he is to execute it with Sraddhā. Defective as each duty is with one blemish or another, it may
all be overcome by uttering "Om Tat Sat" at the commencement of every undertaking and by attuning the mind to the ideal conveyed by this triple designation of Brahman. This indeed is the means to attain the Supreme

इति श्रीमद्भगवदगीताः अपामः श्रीमद्भगवदगीताः अपामः श्रीमद्भगवदगीताः अपामः श्रीमद्भगवदगीताः अपामः श्रीमद्भगवदगीताः अपामः

In the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the seventeenth discourse designated

THE YOGA OF THE THREEFOLD SRADDHA

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Sanyasa and Tyaga Explaned — Tamasika and Rajasika Tyagas are Purposeless — Tyaga of Sattvika Nature is Indispensable — The Components of Karma — Atman is Inaction — The Three Gunas give Impetus to Karma — The Fourfold Caste Explained — Karma Yoga is Karma Sanyasa — Egoism is Harmful — All Karma belongs to Iswara — Freedom of Enquiry into Truth — The Category of Self-surrender — Competency for Following the Gita — The Dawn of Knowledge — Sanjaya's Conclusive Statement.

Sanyasa and Tyaga Explained — 1-6

अर्जुन उवाच

सन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वं इच्छिमि वेदितम् ।
त्यागस्य च ह्रीकेशा प्रथक्के शिष्यिन्युद्दन ॥ १ ।
सन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वं इच्छिमि वेदितम् ।
त्यागस्य च ह्रीकेशा प्रथक्के केशिन्युद्दन ॥

Arjuna uvāca

**saninyyāsasya** mahābāho tattvam icchāmi veditum ।
**tyāgasya ca hrītkesa prthak kesinīśudana** ॥

अर्जुन उवाच arjuna uvāca Arjuna said:

सन्यासस्य saninyyāsasya of renunciation महाबाहो Mahā bāho O mighty-armed तत्त्वं tattvām the truth इच्छामि icchāmi (I) wish वेदितम् veditum to know त्यागस्य tyāgasya of Tyaga च ca and ह्रीकेशा hrīkēṣā O Hrishikesa प्रथक्क prthak severally केशिन्युद्दन kesinīśudana slayer of Kesi

Arjuna said:

I desire to know severally, O mighty-armed, the truth of Sanyasa, O Hrishikesa, as also of Tyaga, O slayer of Kesi.
These truths have not been left unexplained, what have been enunciated already are recapitulated for clarification. The early part of this chapter therefore, deals with the harmonization of all the yogas. It is possible to present the same principle in different forms, in a different setting. It may even seem a new theme because of the variation of the context. Truth permits itself to be presented in a variety of patterns, and each pattern provides an appeal of its own. Each limb of an elephant leaves its special impress on the observer's mind. This majestic animal again, creates a comprehensive impress on its beholder. The position of the Bhagavad Gita is very much like this. Each chapter in it is designated as a particular yoga. While the book as a whole is considered as Yoga Sastra, the eighteenth chapter is regarded as its synopsis.

Kesi was an Asura who assumed the form of a horse and encountered Sri Krishna, intent on swallowing Him up. But this Superhuman Being thrust His arm into the stomach of the demon, squeezed his bowels into a paste and did away with him. Because of this deed of valour He is extolled as Kesinshudana. His arms being the sinews of war, He is esteemed as Mahabahu or the mighty armed. In the midst of these deeds of valour, He was ever the master of the senses. He is therefore praised as Hrishikesa.

There is an implied purpose in Arjuna's addressing Him as the lord of the senses, as the mighty-armed and as the slayer of Kesi. The process of the evolution of beings from the low to the high is
all contained in these three significant epithets. Encountering and vanquishing of the demon is a cosmic function and so a necessity. Every creature in the universe has enemies to encounter, dangers to life and evils to conquer; and all of them are compelled to undergo training for their conquest. Acquisition of strength is the reward for living earthly life with a purpose. The strong ones thrive while the weaklings are exterminated. Man is to make himself strong physically and also to avail himself of all the weapons of offence and defence that can be got from Nature. This is the message contained in Sri Krishna being the slayer of Kesi and in His being the mighty-armed. Finally man has to conquer his senses and the mind. This is the greatest of all conquests. It is by subduing the senses and the mind that man evolves from the human to the divine. The Lord delivers this message, Himself being Hrishikesa—the lord of the senses. He embodies the perfection attainable to the aspirant.

In chapter five stanza thirteen and in chapter nine stanza twenty eight the Lord made reference to Sanyāsa.

In chapter four stanza twenty and in chapter twelve stanza eleven He made mention of Tyāga.

These two spiritual practices require to be clarified and differentiated. This is the purport of the question raised by Arjuna. The Lord of yoga can authoritatively answer this question.
The Blessed Lord said

The renunciation of kāmya karma, the sages understand as Sanyasa; the wise declare the abandonment of the fruits of all works as Tyaga.

Kāmya karma requires to be clarified. Hankering after health, wealth, long life, progeny, name, fame, title and social status — all these come under kāmya karma. Under this category comes also the hope for various heavenly enjoyments after death. That it is Sanyāsa to renounce all these desires, is the view of some sages. There are others who acclaim...
that it is Tyāga to abandon the fruits of all actions such as nitya or obligatory ones, naimitya or the occasional specific ones and kāmya or the optional work. Kāmya karmās are those that create new bondages leading to rebirths for the fulfilment of desires that prompted those actions. Seeds for further transmigrations should not be sown by those aspirants who are intent on gaining liberation. When the fruits of the various works are not cared for, that attitude is Tyāga, which prepares the sadhaka for emancipation. This is the view of a second set of sages.

The aspirants endowed with sattva guna need not do any karma. In fact, all activities drop off from them, of their own accord. Any endeavour on their part to retain karma proves itself futile. The Lord Himself releases them from all duties. The domestic activities of a pregnant young woman are reduced as her pregnancy advances. After delivery she has no work except looking after the babe. Such is the case with those imbued with sattva. But the others who are not sattvikas should necessarily engage themselves in their allotted duties. As the servant of a rich man does the work assigned to him, the devotees of the Lord should discharge their duties, holding them all as the Maker’s mandate. The Lord’s name ought to be repeated mentally while the activities are going on at the physical level. At the appointed times meditation on the Lord may also be carried on. This is the gist of the Karma yoga.

— Sri Ramakrishna

त्याज्य दोषवदित्वाय कर्म प्रादुर्यमेविषयः ।
यथानन्तरः कर्म न त्याज्यतातिचापरे ॥ २ ॥

त्याज्यम् दोष-चये इति एकेकर्म । प्रश्रुतार्थः सन्तीतः ।
वकी-दलावस्तुऽकर्म न त्याज्यम् इति च अपरे ॥
tvāṣyaṁ dosavat ity eke karma prāhur manisinah
yat yajña dāna tapah karma na tvāṣyaṁ iti ca 'pare

Sāyaṁ tvāṣyaṁ should be abandoned.transpose.dosa
vat as an evil इति iti thus एके eke some कर्म karma
action प्राहुः prāhuḥ declare सत्तीप्रिये manisinah philosophers यक्शनन्तप कर्म yajña dāna tapah karma acts of
sacrifice, gift and austerity न na not सा not स्याम tvāṣyaṁ
should be relinquished इति iti thus च ca and अपरे
apare others

Some sages declare that all action should be
relinquished as evil, while others say that Yajña,
gift and austerity should not be relinquished.

Cause and effect are contained in karma in all
of its forms. The effect is inevitable when the cause
is set in motion. When it rains, the farm and a
house under construction alike get wet. The effect
is good to the former and bad to the latter. Cause
here in the form of rain has both good and bad
effects on two different things. The burning of a
lamp which is the cause, produces a good effect for
a reader of the Bhagavad Gita and a bad effect on
the insects that fall in the flame and perish. In
man's maintaining his life, there is the good effect
of his dedicating it to the adoration of God and the
bad effect of his consuming other lives as food. Evil
is thus inherent in all actions. A third set of sages who
take note of the evils contained in karma, advocate
its complete abandonment. They are for liquidating
mundane life as quickly as possible. Some go to the
extent of enforcing slow suicide with the noble
intention of not adding to the existing evil
A fourth group of sages is in favour of persisting in the performance of Yajna, dāna and tapas even though they are fraught with evil. The plea of these wise men is that the evil of mundane life cannot be eradicated completely. Let life be accepted therefore for what it is worth. As much good as possible may be derived even from this defective existence. The rose is amid of thorns; but on that ground the raising of roses should not be suspended. Poison is bad no doubt; but a beneficial medicine may be extracted even from that deadly stuff. Karma is undoubtedly an evil. It binds man in bondage to Prakriti and to the wheel of birth and death. Still, by converting karma into the acts of Yajna, dāna and tapas, maximum good may be extracted from it. These meritorious acts ought not to be abandoned, is the view of these great ones.

But what is the view of the Lord in this respect? The elucidation comes:—

निष्यर्थ्य भृषु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतस्ततम् ।
त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र विनिधि: संप्रकृतित: ॥ ४ ॥

निष्यर्थम् भृषु (भृषु) मे तत्र त्यागे भरतस्ततम् ।
त्याग: हि पुरुषव्याघ्र विनिधि: समु-प्र-कृतित: ॥

niscayam sṛṇu me tatra tyāge bharata sattama ।
tyāgo hi puruṣa vyāghra trividham samprakṛtītah ॥

निष्यर्थम् niscayam conclusion भृषु sṛṇu hear मे me
tatras there tyāge about abandonment भरतस्ततम् bharata sattama O best of the Bharantas त्यागः
tyāgaḥ abandonment हि hi verily पुरुषव्याघ्र puruṣa
yāghra O best of men त्रिदिध: trividhaḥ of three kinds संप्रकृतित: samprakṛtītah has been declared
Learn from Me the truth about this abandonment, O best of the Bharatas; abandonment, verily, O best of men, has been declared to be of three kinds.

The words Sanyāsa and Tyāga are synonyms. Both the words mean abandonment, renunciation and the act of giving up. It is not a negative process born of frustration and failure in life, as some would have it. In renunciation there is fulfilment as well as acceptance. It is an act of giving up the lower after one's concern with it is successfully over and embracing the higher with greater responsibility and keener application. All good and purposeful acts in Nature are the acts of renunciation. We shall presently see how they are so.

Renunciation is both the key and the basis for higher life. This principle is evinced by Nature at all levels of existence. The sun is constantly giving up its heat and light, facilitating thereby the life process of beings in planets where they have made their appearance. A ripe fruit renounces the parent tree that has been sustaining it, so that it may fulfill itself elsewhere by its intrinsic worth. A mother fosters a babe in her womb as part and parcel of herself. But she delivers it in time lest a delay in that act should prove dangerous both to herself and the babe. This is an act of renunciation though we do not call it so. A pupil has to renounce in time the school that has been educating him. While availing himself of the benefits of that school, his aim is to get out of it successfully. The aim of the Jīvatman is to get himself educated in the school of Nature.
and then to renounce it so that he may fulfill himself by union with the Paramatman. And this is the acme of renunciation towards which beings are knowingly or unknowingly wending their way. It is the yogi who hastens the progress while the others are lingering in the wilderness of the Prakriti.

The goal of the Jīvatman is to be emancipated from Prakriti which expresses itself in the form of karma. But he cannot and should not, violently snatch himself away from karma. There is a natural and delightful way of transcending karma; the process is presented as follows:—

यज्ञादानतपः कर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।
यज्ञो दानं तपथिवं पावनानि मनिषिनाम् ॥ ५ ॥

यज्ञ-दान-तपः-कर्मः न त्याज्यम् कार्यम् एवं तत् ।
यज्ञः दानमेव तपः एवं पावनानि मनिषिनाम् ॥

yajña dāna tapah karma na tyājayam kāryam eva tat
yajño dānam tapas cai 'va pāvanāni maniṣinām

यज्ञादानतपः कर्म यज्ञा dāna tapah karma acts of
sacrifice, gift and austerity न na not त्याज्यम् tyājayam
should be abandoned कार्यम् kāryam should be performed
एवं eva indeed तत् tat that यज्ञः yajñaah sacrifice
dānam gift तपः tapah austerity एवं eva and एवं eva
indeed pāvanāni pūrifiers मनिषिनाम् maniṣinām
of the wise

Acts of Yajna, gift and austerity should not be
given up, but should be performed; Yajna, gift and
austerity are purifying to the wise.

The silkworm builds a cocoon for its further
development and evolution. But it gets itself encaged
in the cocoon in order to bring about the required change. In the seeming imprisonment it transforms itself from the larva into a beautiful butterfly. At this stage it has to come out to enjoy light, air and open freedom. For this purpose it has to break open the cocoon built by itself. The act of breaking open the cocoon is as important as that of building it. Man’s position in the world is exactly like that of the silkworm in the cocoon. The varieties of kāmya karma that he performs are for his self-education and self-preparation. By experience he comes to know at last of the limitations of the mundane life. An attitude of detachment from earthly existence develops in him as a matter of course. He gets fixed in the truth that his Home is in the Divine and that he is here in the mundane for mere schooling. The karma that he does after gaining in this conviction, transforms itself into Yajna, dāna and tapas. As the butterfly breaks through the cocoon it built, the sadhaka breaks through the shackles of the earthly life by his performance of sacrifice, gift and austerity. The world stands to gain thereby. The performer of these holy acts maintains his purity. Maximum good to all concerned emanates from these meritorious acts.

How do the wise men maintain their purity by performing these noble acts? The clarification comes:

एतान्यथात् कर्माः शरीरं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।
कार्येष्यानांति मे पार्थ निधित्वं मलयुक्तम् ॥ ६
etāṇy api tu karmāṇi sangāni tyaktvā phalāṇi ca
kartavyāni 'ti me pārtha niscatam matam uttamam uṣṇa

etāṇi these api even tu but karmāṇi
karmāṇi actions sangāṇi attachment tyaktvā
leaving phalāṇi fruits ca and kartavyāni
should be performed iti thus me my pārtha
O Partha niscatam certain uttamam belief

But even these actions should be performed giving
up attachment and the fruits, O Partha; this is My
certain and best belief.

The mother produces milk in her breast and
suckles the baby. She willingly abandons sleep and
rest to serve her baby. The cow produces milk in
her udder and yields it to the calf and to people.
These acts of the mother and the cow are selfless as
well as sacred. Rudiments of sacrifice, gift and
austerity are found in them. The wise among men
are expected to develop on these lines their acts of
Yajña, dāna and tapas. They are boons to the giver
as well as to the one who receives. That mind which
grabs, shrinks. The other mind that gives, grows in
plentitude. Life at the base level thrives by grabbing;
life at the divine level fulfils itself by giving. The
mother maintains her motherhood by ever giving to
her child and never seeking anything from it. The
cow is held sacred because of her gift. Man’s height
of glory is in the contribution that he makes and not
in the wealth that he amasses. The wise men main-
tain their purity by their constant contribution in the form of Yajna, dāna and tapas. These benign activities are as natural with them as subsisting is with lesser beings. These sacred acts emanating from the holy ones have a purifying effect on givers and those who receive alike. And these are the means to maintain the sanctity of the world. This is the Law that governs life at the spiritual level. Therefore, the Lord says that this is His certain and best belief.

Those who want to make progress in spirituality and those who want to realize Iswara have to protect themselves first from base desires. Attainment of perfection is impossible without purity of mind.

— Sri Ramakrishna

Tamasika and Rajasika Tyagas are Purposeless — 78

नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपदवते ।
मोहातस्य परित्यागतामस्तः परिकीर्तितं ॥ ७

नि यतस्य तु सर्व नि भातु कर्मणं न उप-पदः यते ।
मोहातु तस्य परि-स्थान तामसं परि-कीर्तित ||

niyatasya tu samnyasaḥ karmano no 'papadyate ।
mohat tasya parityagas tamasah parikirtitah ||

नियतस्य niyatasya obligatory tu tu verily संन्यास samnyasaḥ renunciation कर्मण karanah of action


na not upapadyate upapadyate is proper mohat mohat from delusion tasya of the same paritvagan parityagah abandonment vāmas tāmasah Tamasika parikīrtit parikirtitah is declared

Verily, the abandonment of any obligatory duty is not proper, such abandonment out of ignorance is declared to be Tamasika.
To flower and fruit is the obligatory duty of a tree. And it lets off a fully matured fruit of its own accord. It is a natural abandonment. Contrary to this course, if an ignorant person plucks off an immature fruit, its purposes are foiled. Forced Sanyāsa from ignorance is as derogatory and destructive as this act.

Nitya karma or the obligatory duty varies in scale according to the attainments of man. Bathing, eating and earning wealth are acts of nitya karma to an ordinary man. Yajna, dāna and tapas are the obligatory duties of a spiritually advanced man. These sacred duties are to be discharged as long as the body lasts; for, the body and the duties done with it are inseparably connected. A rigid following of this principle adds to the purity of a pure man. Abandoning the obligatory duty through ignorance brings in deterioration. It enshrouds the man in greater ignorance. This unwise act is born of a Tamasika disposition.

A devotee ought to continue to utter the name of the Lord and to discharge his worldly duties until his mind gets merged in Sat-chit-ananda.

— Sri Ramakrishna

\[ duhkham ity eva yat karma kāyaklesa bhayat tyajet \]
\[ sa kṛtvā rājusam tyāgam nai 'va tyāgaphalam labhet \]


He who from fear of bodily trouble abandons action, because it is painful, thus performing a Rajasika abandonment, obtains not the fruit thereof.

Earthly existence cannot be freed from bodily trouble. Nothing great here can be obtained without taking pains. If a pupil abandons his schooling on the ground it is painful, he does not derive the intellectual benefit obtained by one who subjects oneself to the taxing discipline imposed on one by that school. The shirker would never become fit for higher education. There are people who view worldly life as full of troubles and difficulties, and they are not prepared to face those ordeals. Governed by an escape-mentality, they choose to embrace Sanjäsa and live a life of ease and comfort at the cost of the credulous people. They do not obtain the supreme benefit of renunciation.

Arjuna who came to the battle-field to wage a war of righteousness, was overwhelmed by a fit of Rajasika renunciation. He thought it was not proper to incur the sin and the pain of killing his kith and kin. His obligatory duty was to defend the cause of dharma and not that of his wicked relatives. The thought of abandoning the righteous war which
crossed his mind was not born of true discrimination. When *Rajas* overtakes a man, his understanding undergoes a corresponding distortion. A person of Arjuna’s calibre bore evidence to this fact. It therefore fell to the lot of the Lord to cure him of this purposeless spirit of renunciation.

**Tyaga of Sattvika Nature is Indispensable — 9-12**

कार्यम् कार्यम् यतः कार्यम् नियतम् कृयते वर्णिनः ।
संसारः त्यक्तव प्रावः स स्त्यागः साक्षिको मतः ॥ ९ ॥

कार्यम् इति पदः रत्नेष निम-न(०) तथा क्रियते-क्रियतेन ।
संसारः शांकु-रा फलम् च एव सः लगः साक्षिकः मतः ॥

*kāryam ity eva yat karma niyatam kriyate 'rjunaः*
*sangam tyaktvā phalam caiva sa tyāgaḥ sāttviko mataḥ*

कार्यम् कार्यम् ought to be done इति iti thus एव even yat which कर्म karma action स्त्वतः niy attain obligatory कृयते kriyate is performed कर्जन arjuna

O Arjuna सङ्गमः sangam attachment त्यक्तवा tyaktvā abandoning फलम् phalam fruits च ca and एव even सः saḥ that त्यागः tyāgaḥ abandonment साक्षिकः sāttvikaḥ

Whatever obligatory work is done, O Arjuna, merely because it ought to be done, abandoning attachment and also fruit, that abandonment is deemed to be Sattvika.

The very performance of karma is abandoned both in the *Tamasika Tyāga* and *Rajasika Tyāga*. But such a suspension of work does not take place in the *Sāttvika Tyāga*. The execution of duty goes on unabated. All karmas, including the *nitya karma,*
are fruit-bearing in their nature. But the Sāttvika Tyāgi is not concerned with the fruit, he does his duty to the best of his ability though he is unattached to it. He does not renounce karma, he only renounces the agency. Calmness and purity are born of this frame of mind.

The in-patient in the hospital has no intention to be there permanently, neither does he want to be treated all through his life. Still he willingly undergoes treatment with an attitude of detachment. Such a man as he is the one who truly renounces ailments. The Sāttvika Tyāgi renounces the fruit of his action after the fashion of a sensible patient who seeks to get rid of his disease.

The patient, however, abhors his disease. The Sāttvika Tyāgi is devoted to his obligatory duty. Breathing is the obligatory duty of all living beings. The yogi resorts to prāṇāyāma or the scientific way of breathing which yields great benefits. Still, the yogi does not do this great act with any attachment, he does it as disinterestedly as the others do their normal breathing. He is verily a healthy man who is free from body-consciousness while being in the body. He is verily a yogi who is free from the sense of agency while engaging himself in work intensively. Adoring the Lord, serving the society, meditating on the Supreme—all these spiritual activities go on vehemently. But the sadhaka is not conscious that he is the doer of these benign duties. He is steadily fixed in atma bodha. His renunciation verily is Sāttvika Tyāga.
How can it be known that this sadhaka is perfectly attuned to the right path of renunciation? The clarification comes:

न देश्यचकुशलं कर्म कृशले नानुषजते ।
त्यागी सत्समाविष्टिः मेघावी छिन्नसंशयः ॥ १० ॥

na dveṣṭy akusalam karma kusale nā 'nuṣajjate ।
tyāgī sattvasamaṇvisto medhāvi chinnasamsayaḥ ॥

The relinquisher imbued with Sattva and a steady understanding and with his doubts dispelled, hates not a disagreeable work nor is he attached to an agreeable one.

The sadhaka fixed in Sattva has a clear mind. He sees things in their true perspective. Therefore he is one of a steady understanding—medhāvi. He sees Purusha and Prakriti just as they are. Karma and akarma do not create confusion in his mind. Akarma is characteristic of Atman or Purusha, who occupies the position of a clear mirror. No change whatsoever takes place in a mirror while reflecting objects or when ceasing to do so. The position of the Atman is akin to it. He is ever himself, both while karma has its course in His presence and when
it is in suspense. The mirror acquires no merit by reflecting beautiful objects, nor demerit by reflecting ugly and dirty objects. The position of ātmachaitanya is the same. The activities of the Prakriti are reflected in the Purusha. On that ground the Purusha is not affected in any way. Sthitaprajña or the man of steady understanding knows this truth. So he remains his doubts dispelled.

The duty of every one is to work hard and to contribute to the cause of prosperous living. Man's growth and expansion of life consist in the endeavours that he makes. Those who understand this fundamental have no problems and doubts pertaining to life on the earth. They apply themselves deliberately to whatever work they have undertaken. But there are those who view all work as painful. Their aim is to drift on to an easy-going life and get out of it as much pleasure and happiness as possible. They have no compunction to live like drones at the cost of others. They shrink from troublesome toil and seek quietism. The cloak of religiosity proves very handy to hide their hypocrisy. But the gems of society are they who are heroic in their endeavours, in their contribution to the common weal and in their bearing with equanimity the odds of life. And that is their conformity to renunciation.

Why should not one simplify things by renouncing all work instead of doing it in a detached way? The analysis comes:—

न हि देहभूता शक्तिः लयतः कर्माण्यशेषतः।
वस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागित्यभिषीयते॥ ११
The Sannyasi who has not abandoned action entirely renounces the fruit of action. But he who renounces the fruit of action is regarded as one who has renounced.

There are several points of similarity between the bodily existence and a flight in an aeroplane. One is called a Jivatman as long as one is embodied; this one is a Godward pilgrim. Another is called a passenger as long as he is flying. Bodily existence is renounced permanently by the Jivatman on the attainment of Godhood. The plane is vacated only on reaching the destination. Conditions while in the body are all alike those while in the aeroplane, which flies over plains, hills, dales, mountains and boisterous seas. Bodily existence has its pleasant and unpleasant aspects and its ups and downs. The aeroplane does not stop its work while in flight lest it should crash. Bodily activities also cannot be suspended by the embodied.

Karma takes place as long as the body lasts. Breathing, eating, sleeping—all these are bodily activ-
ities going on ceaselessly. Obligatory duties also have to be executed relentlessly. The prudent man has his profitable way of getting his work done. While in the plane if the passenger gets worried over the possible dangers and risks of the flight, he defeats himself and his purpose. He does in no way improve matters by worrying himself; rather he loses his stamina thereby. Instead, if he resigns those eventualities to the crew and to Providence and if he engages himself in his higher pursuits, he stands to gain. His conducting himself in this wise amounts to renouncing the fruit of the flight, but not the flight itself. Man should engage himself in the earthly duties that fall to his lot. He ought not to be concerned with the consequences of his duties. While doing his duties, if he keeps his mind fixed on the Maker, his gain is immense and he is one who has truly renounced.

A man's body gets hurt accidentally. He neither weeps over it nor neglects it. He bandages the wound and gives all attention to it. If need be, money is spent for the cure. But in the midst of all of these activities, there is no attachment whatsoever to the wound that has come about. It is attended to so that it may be healed. That man who gets the wound treated is the one who has renounced it but not he who neglects it to the point of its becoming septic. Bodily activities are like the wound. They cannot be neglected. They ought to be carried on with complete detachment. He who does so has really renounced karma and everything worldly
And how about the man who is attached to life and karma? The answer comes:—

अनिष्टविष्टिः सिद्धं च त्रिविष्टिः कर्मणं: फलम्।
भवत्सर्वं शास्त्रवन्तं तु सत्वासिनां कृतित्। ॥ १२॥

अनि-इष्टम् इष्टम् सिद्धम् न तितिभिंकव्यं कर्मणं: फलम्।
भवति अत्यागिनाम्, प्र-इ-त-न तु सत्वासिनाम् कृतित्। ॥

anîṣṭam istoram ca trividiham karmanah phalam|
bhavaty atyâginâm pretya na tu samnyâsinâm kvacit ||

अनिष्टविष्टिः anîṣṭam disagreeable इष्टविष्टिः istoram agreeable मिश्रम् mixed च ca and त्रिविष्टिः trividiham threefold कर्मणं: karmanah of action फलम् phalam fruit भवति bhavati accrues अत्यागिनाम् atyâginâm to non-abandoners प्रेत्या pretya after death न na not तु tu but सत्वासिनाम् samnyâsinâm to abandoners कृतित् kvacit ever

The threefold fruit of action—evil, good and mixed—accrues after death to one who does not relinquish but there is none ever for the one who renounces.

Being hurled into hell and being born as a beast is the fruit of evil action. Gaining heaven and being born as a celestial is the fruit of good action. Obtaining the earthly existence and being born as man is the fruit of mixed action. In the mixed action there are the elements of both good and evil actions. Transmigration is inevitable to those who are attached to karma. They are also subjected to happiness and misery. But the worldly weal and woe are not to those who are not attached to karma. They are also not entangled in the wheel of birth and death. They are blessed with Mukti.
There are marks to indicate that a man has reached perfection and that he no more needs to be born again. Such a man is ever contented in the Self. The body is hanging on him like a shadow. The activities of that body take place meticulously in spite of his having withdrawn the mind from it. While actively in the world, he is not of the world.

The immediate future birth of a man attached to karma may also be inferred now and here. Death and rebirth are like sleep and reawakening. The man who goes to sleep gets up in the same body and the man who dies wakes up in another body. A bad man going to sleep wakes up a bad man and so is the case with a good man too. There are people who wallow in hell even here on earth. There are the others who behave like brutes. Yet others walk the earth as celestials and they make a heaven of this world. Still others exhibit all human traits only. All these varying characteristics go along with them when they relinquish the existing bodies and choose to build new bodies. Their rebirths are according to their traits. The sequence is maintained.

The fruit of action is his who thinks of himself as the author of karma. Happiness and misery come to him as a result of this thought. But is man in reality the originator of karma? The exposition comes:

The Components of Karma — 13-16
पञ्जैतानि महाराहै कारणानि नियोथ मे ।
सौष्ठवे छल्लन्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धे सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥ १३ ॥
pañcāi 'tāni mahābāho kāraṇāni nibodha me
sāmkhya kṛtānte proktāni siddhayē sarvakarmanām

pañca five ētāni these mahābāho O mighty-armed kāraṇāni causes nibodha learn ē me from me sāmkhya in the Sāṃkhya kṛtānte which is the end of all action śekāni proktāni as declared śiddhayē siddhayē for the accomplishment sarva karmanām of all actions

Learn from Me, O mighty-armed, these five factors in the accomplishment of all action, as taught in the Sāṃkhya which is the end of action. 13

As in chapter two, here also the Sāṃkhya refers to the philosophy of Vedanta and not to that of the sage Kapila, which deals with the cosmology. According to Vedanta, the undertaking of all karma is to transcend it ultimately. He who does karma imperfectly and he who shuns karma for any reason whatsoever cannot get to that state which is beyond karma. Prakriti which is characterized as composed of karma is the training ground of the Jīvatman. As children go to school to learn, the Jīvatman comes into the world to learn his lesson. The children apply themselves diligently to their studies. They are not to waste time. The required attainments have to be reached within the prescribed time. Then they have to pass out successfully. They are not to get stuck to the school permanently. These points are clearly borne in mind by the pupils. All these points apply to the Jīvatman as well. He is to learn
his lessons from Prakriti. He has to know of the nature of karma even when he is involved in it, and to get himself beyond it, is the goal set for him.

The five factors are expounded as follows —

अविधानां तथा कर्ता करणं च प्रथविधयम्।
विविधाथ प्रथक्षेपा देवं चैवान पञ्चमम्॥ १४
भव्य स्थानम् तथा कर्ता करणम् च प्रथवज्ज्विधम्।
वि विगाः न प्रथक्षे देवम् च एव जन पञ्चमम्॥

adhisthānam tathā kartā karanam ca prthagvidham |
vividhāś ca prthakeśṭā daivam ca 'vā 'atra pāñcamam|

अविधानम् adhisthānam the seat or body तथा tathā|
also कर्ता kartā the doer करणाम karanam the senses च ca|
and प्रथविधयम् prthagvidham various विविधाः vividhāḥ|
various च ca and प्रथक्ष prthak different देवता cestāḥ|
functions देवम् daivam the presiding deity च ca and|
एव eva even जन atra here पञ्चमम् pāñcamam the fifth.

The body, the agent, the various senses, the different functions of various sorts, and the presiding deity also, the fifth.

A parallel requires to be drawn here between a motor car and the human being. An automobile 'moves'. The various things that contribute to its motion have to be taken into consideration. Heaps of bolts, nuts, bars, plates and other parts are found in the factory before a car is assembled. The raw rubber juice is in the tree, the petrol is in the womb of earth and water on its surface, air is in the space above earth. All these elements are made use of to fabricate a car. The factory is the body or the place.
where it exists. The proprietor is the agent. The wheels, the steering wheel, the brake, the clutch and the gear box are its various senses. Petrol is its prāṇa or life energy. The driver is the manipulating deity.

The human being has parts parallel to all these. The body is the centre from where attachment and aversion, joy and misery, the faculty of understanding—all these experiences express themselves. Ego is the agent that records these experiences. The senses of knowledge and the senses of action are his various senses. Prāṇa or the life energy functions in various ways. The Jivatman is the presiding deity manipulating all these instruments.

शरीरवाच्छन्नोत्तरत्कर्मणासाहुते नरः ||
न्याय्यं वा चिपरीतं वा पश्चाते तस्य हेतवः || १५
शरीर-वाच्छन्नोत्तरत्कर्मणासाहुते नरः
न्याय्यम् वा चिपरीतम् वा पश्चाते तस्य हेतवः

sartravānmanobhir yat karma prārabhate narakah ||
nyāyyam vā viparitaṁ vā pañcaite tasya hetavah ||

śarīr vācchaḥ sametiḥ: sartra vāk manobhīḥ by body, speech and mind शव्य यत whatever कर्म karma action शर्मणासाहुते prārabhate performs नरः narakah man न्याय्यम् nyāyyam right च व ओर बिपरीतम् viparitaṁ the reverse वा ओर पश्चाते pañca five ईते ete these तस्य tasya its हेतवः hetavah causes

Whatever action a man performs with his body, speech or mind, whether right or wrong—these five are its causes.
The motor car assembled of innumerable parts may be made use of for various purposes. Some may make use of it for murder and theft. Some others may avail themselves of it to rescue people involved in dangers and accidents. Yet others may utilize it for quick medical aid. Pleasure hunters put it to use in their own way. Educational tourists commission it for their purpose.

The human body may be used in all the ways mentioned herein. It is aptly called the dharma kshetra. The human tabernacle made of the five components, can be utilized for noble purposes. It may be sublimated into a temple and Divinity invoked into it. And these are verily acts of dharma. They are therefore right doings. This body which comes into being from the five causes enumerated above also allows itself to be converted into a den of demoniacal doings. All possible wrong may be perpetrated with it. It is as much useful for bad acts as for good ones.

All the activities carried on by man are brought under the triple heading—thought, word and deed. The subtletest of the karma takes place in the mind in the forms of thoughts and feelings. Not a moment passes without mind doing karma of one kind or another. The gross manifestations of it are words and deeds.

How is Atman connected with these activities going on in body, speech and mind? The answer comes —

80—55
tatrai \textit{evaṁ} sati kartāram ātmānam kevalam tu yah
pasyaty akṛta buddhisvān na sa pasyati durmatiḥ

That being so, the man of perverse mind, who, on account of his imperfect understanding looks upon the Self, the Absolute, as the agent—he does not see at all.

The example of the motor car may again be taken to clarify the great teaching contained in this stanza. Earth, water, fire and air are the four elements out of five, that are utilized for the manufacture and functioning of this vehicle. Its components have all been mainly procured from the earth which further serves as the support on which the car runs. The supply of the parts comes from the earth and the activity of the car called movement takes place on the earth. Though supplying the resources and facilities for the activities of the car, the earth remains actionless in its relationship with the vehicle. It plays no part in the fivefold activity of the car.
It shall not be called either the agent or the presiding deity of the automobile

The author of a karma is that which actually performs it. The categories of Prakriti are given to the ceaseless execution of it. All the five causes of action mentioned in stanza fourteen belong to Prakriti. A doubt may arise whether the fifth cause designated as daiva or the presiding deity, is a category of Prakriti or a facet of Brahman. The truth of it is to be arrived at through an analogy ākāsa and vāyu (ether and air) are almost alike. Subtlety is common to both of them. But while ākāsa is all-pervading and immovable vāyu is limited in space and movable. Similarly the daiva referred to here is like Atman but not actually Atman. He is chidābhāsa or reflected Atman. This daiva is the Jivatman and not the Paramatman. A reflected consciousness is not the original Consciousness any more than a reflected sun on a wave can ever be the original sun. Jivatman works while the Paramatman does no work. There is modification in the former while the latter is free from it. ātma chaitanya reflected in Prakriti is the Jivatman, so he works as a category of the Prakriti. The Jiva and the Jagat make their appearance on Paramatman or the Chidākāsa, sport on It and merge back into It. All these activities are karma belonging to Prakriti. The Chidākāsa or the Paramatman is ever constant, immovable, full and perfect in Itself. The play of the Prakriti does not affect It in any manner. The Jivatman understands this truth when his antah-
karana or mental faculty gets clarified. But the
dullard takes the Atman as the agent.

Atman is Inaction — 17

yasya na añēkto bhāvo buddhir yasya na lipyate
hatvā 'pi sa imān lokān na hanti na nibadhyate

yasya whose n na not añēkta: aham kriyā
eoistic bhāva: bhāva the notion buddhi: intelligence yasya of whom n na not lipyate is tainted
hatvā having slain api even sakt he iṣṭa
imān these lokān people n na not hanti slays
na not nibadhyate is bound

He who is free from the notion of egoism and
whose understanding is not tainted — though he kills
these people, he kills not, nor is he bound.

17

Modifications such as agency and egoism create
difference between man and man. But as man
evolves high, he is able to outgrow all modifications
and be established in Pure Consciousness. Let us
take cases of men being affected by modifications
and those not being affected by them. Men act on
the stage as murdering and as being murdered.
These acts being mere pretence, agency and egoism
are absent in them. The actors are not affected by
the staged modifications. But where an actual
murder takes place, the concerned men are affected
by the modifications of agency and egoism. Whereas
to a spiritually evolved man stage act and life act are one and the same. Because of the absence of egoism, no modification of any kind takes place in his mind. There are instances of this in the Mahabharata war itself. Arjuna vanquished his grandfather Bhishma in the encounter. But he did not harbour the egoistic feeling that he caused the death of the grandsire. His mind was free from that modification. While waiting to give up the body in the auspicious northern passage of the sun, Bhishma did not feel that he was vanquished. Non-ego was the cause of it. As a man casts off a worn out clothing, Bhishma cast off his old body, unattached as he was to it.

The reflection of a moving body is seen in a mirror. That mirror is not the creator of the reflection and its movement. The reflection leaves no impression either in the mirror. While reflecting the things as they are, the mirror is ever itself, unattached, unaffected and unmodified. Like the mirror is Atman, the Pure Consciousness. It reveals the activities of the Prakriti. But Atman is no doer of karma. It is not bound in spite of its being the lord, ruler and regulator of the Prakriti. That Jivatman who traces his original state to this Pure Consciousness regains his stainless understanding. Freed that he is from egoism he is not affected by the actions of the body and the senses. Happenings such as killing and being killed are all modifications of the Prakriti. As Atman is supremely above karma, the knower of Atman also rises above the turmoil of karma.
Purusha is free from karma. No vibration of any kind takes place in him. Prakriti is the doer of all karma, while Purusha is merely the witness to it. But for the presence of the Purusha, no action is possible for the Prakriti. So say the scriptures.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The Three Gunas give Impetus to Karma — 18-40

ज्ञानं खेयं परिज्ञातां बिबिधं कर्मपीडत ।
करणं कर्मं कर्तृति विविधं: कर्मसंग्रहः ॥ १८

ज्ञानम् (क्ष-समू) हेयम् परिज्ञातां बिबिधं कर्म-पीडत ।
करणम् कर्मं कर्तां इति विविधं: कर्म-समू-ग्रहः ॥

jñānam jñeyam pariññātā trīvidhā karmacodanā ।
karanam karma karte 'ti trīvidhāḥ karmasamgrahah ॥

ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge हेयम् jñeyam the knowable परिज्ञातां pariññātā the knower बिबिधं trīvidhā threefold कर्मपीडत कर्मपीडत karmacodanā impulse to action करणम् karanam the organ कर्म karma the action कर्तां kartā the agent इति iti thus विविधं trīvidhā threefold कर्मसंग्रहः karma samgrahah the basis of action

Knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower form the threefold incitement to action; and the instrument, the object and the agent are the threefold constituents of action.

Knowledge mentioned herein refers to the knowledge obtained through the senses. The object of knowledge is that which is perceived by the senses and interpreted by the intellect. The knower is the Jīvatma burdened with and impeded by all of his inclinations and dispositions. These three put together form the tripūṭi or the triad of knowledge.
Of these three, where the one is, the other two are bound to be, like the three sides of a triangle. The action, the instrument and the object or agent contribute to make the triad of karma. Induced by this triad, the mind, the speech and the body discharge their respective functions. The desirable and the undesirable aspects of karma are made evident by this triad.

The instruments are twofold, internal and external. The manas, buddhi, chitta and ahamkāra are the internal instruments. The body, the tongue, the eye, the nose and the ear are the external instruments. They divide themselves again as the instruments of knowledge and the instruments of action. The Jīvatman himself functions as the agent to all these activities. He is the knower as well as the doer. Both jñāna and karma are indispensable to the self-culture that he is undergoing. A schoolboy requires both play and study for his progress. He is to build the body and enrich the mind. This two-sided growth becomes more pronounced in the Jīvatman. As he adds to his knowledge he grows in the efficiency of work. As he applies himself to a variety of endeavours, his experience and knowledge are on the increase. Therefore, he stands in need of the triad of jñāna and the triad of karma mentioned in the above stanza.

We see in the Jīvatman gradation both in the knowledge and the capacity to work. What is it that brings about this differentiation? The explanation follows:—
Knowledge, action and actor are declared in the science of Gunas to be of three kinds only, according to the distinction of Gunas; hear of them also as they are.

Among the six systems of philosophy Samkhya is the fourth, and the sage Kapila is the author of it. This system is the authority in regard to Cosmology. So, the functionings of the three Gunas have to be learnt from it. The Purushas are many in number according to this school of thought. The existence of the Paramatman supremely above them all, is not accepted by the Samkhya. It is not therefore an authority in regard to the Supreme Reality. The Vedanta philosophy is the authority in this respect. But the Samkhya alone has to be relied on, to know all about the Prakriti; and the Lord attests to this fact. In the statement, "Hear of them also as they
are,” the Lord further makes it clear that the teachings of the Samkhya about Nature and its working are in tune with reason and experience.

The competence of the taught is a factor that demands deep scrutiny. The disciples are graded as the intelligent, the mediocre and the dull. The first-rate aspirant grasps the means and the end at the very first teaching, the mediocre one requires to be a little more painstaking, and the backward student requires long drilling and preparation. Even he can be pulled up appreciably with constant application.

सर्वभूतेषु येनेकं भावमवहयमीष्टे ॥
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञां विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ २०
सर्व भूतेषु येन एकम् भावम् शःर्ति-मययम् इत्य-मते ॥
व-त्व-भूत-तमू वि-भूत-चेतु तदु ज्ञानम् विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥
sarvabhūtesu yena 'kam bhāvam avayam iksate
avibhaktam vibhaktesu taj jñānam viddhi sāttvikam ॥

सर्वभूतेषु sarvā bhūtesu in all beings वेन yena by
which एकम् ekam one भावम् bhāvam reality अविभक्तम्
avayam indestructible इक्सेट iksate (one) sees अविभक्तम्
avibhaktam inseparable विभक्तेषु vibhaktesu in the
separated तत् tat that ज्ञानम् jñānam knowledge विद्धि
viddhi know सात्त्विकम् sāttvikam Sattvika

The knowledge by which the one Imperishable
Being is seen in all existences, undivided in the divided,
know that that knowledge is Sattvika. 20

The categories of the Prakriti have divided
themselves into the multitudinous. The movable
and the immovable, the sentient and the insentient—
all these are the modifications of Nature of Māyā
The Imperishable Being is the Substratum behind the many. It is the One without a second. It is undivided like the ākāsa. It undergoes no modification even though Prakṛti emanates from It. Infinite as It is, no change is possible in It. Nothing can be added to It and nothing can be subtracted from It; for, It is Imperishable. It does not divide Itself into different Atmas in different beings. To know this Great Being as It is, is Sāttvika knowledge.

Though the air carries fragrance and foul smell alike, it is not affected by them. Such is even the case with the Paramatman, the Basis of the varying universe.

— Sri Ramakrishna

prthaktvena tu yaj jñānam nānābhāvān prthagvidhān | vetti sarvesu bhūteṣu taj jñānam viddhi rājasam ||

prthaktvena as different from one another tu tu but yat which kāmasu jñānam knowledge nāna bhāvān various entities prthag vidhān of distinct kinds vetti vetti knows sarvesu in all bhūteṣu in beings tatt tat that kāmasu jñānam knowledge viddhi know rājasam Rajasika

But that knowledge by which one sees in all beings manifold entities of different kinds as varying from one another — know that that knowledge is Rajasika.
The *Rajasika* knowledge holds that there are Atmas of varying traits residing in the bodies of various types and grades of evolution. The Atman itself has to undergo evolution as the body does, is the view entertained by this school of thought. Gold ore may be procured from different continents and they may all have different kinds of dross pertaining to the nature of the earth. While there is difference in the dross, pure gold is the same independent of the sediment and the soil. Similarly the Atmas seem one different from another because of the limiting adjuncts — *Upādhis*. It is even believed that Atmas belong to different species, castes, colours and nationalities. Attaching importance to these *upādhis* is the way of the *Rajasika* knowledge. But these limiting adjuncts are born of ignorance. When they are all eliminated Pure Consciousness alone remains. In unselfish love, there is no such thing as the oriental love and the occidental love. In its pure form love is a universal factor governing and guiding life. But for it, existence is not worth having. There is another category in life, which is worth studying. In dreamless sound sleep all differentiations get dissolved. The high and the low, the learned and the ignorant, the virtuous and the sinful, the happy and the miserable—all these inequalities vanish in that state. An indeterminate universal existence alone remains then as vague consciousness. All these phases of the underlying unity are not cognized by the *Rajasika* knowledge. It sees nothing but diversity.

Seeing unity is knowledge, seeing diversity is ignorance.

— Sri Ramakrishna
yat tu kṛṣṇavat ekasmin kārye saktam ahaṭtuṣam
atattvārthavad alpaṁ ca tat tāmasam udāḥṛtam

yat which tu but kṛṣṇavat as if it were the whole ekasmin one single kārye to effect saktam attached ahaṭtuṣam without reason atattvārthavat without foundation in truth alpaṁ trivial ca and tat that tāmasam Tamasika udāḥṛtam is declared

And the knowledge that clings to one single effect as if it were the whole, and is without reason, without foundation in truth, and trivial—that knowledge is declared to be Tamasika.

There are people who believe that their individuality is confined to the physical frame made of the five elements. The perishing matter is mistaken for the persisting principle. An image is merely an aid for the worship of God, just as a map is an aid for the study of a country. But the ignorant man thinks that the image itself made of a metal or of wood or of clay to be God. If the image be mutilated he feels God has been despoiled. This attitude is an evidence to the fact that he clings to one single effect as if it were the whole. That he is an entity more than the body and that God is above form are truths incomprehensible to him. God as Truth is
Indestructible. God as an All-powerful and All-merciful Reality has provided various paths and beliefs to suit the different types of men. The ignorant man does not take note of these facts and he refuses to do so. He imagines himself a self-appointed champion of God and a defender of faith. In the name of serving God and religion he does havoc to society and prevents its harmonious growth. The so-called proselytizer plays the part of the blind leading the blind. These are all specimens of the Tamastika knowledge. On scrutiny they are found to be not in tune with reason. Rather, they come into conflict with reason. They are so, because they are not founded in truth. Whims and fancies as they are, they have to be treated as trivial. Nothing good comes out of such baseless understanding.

नियतः सज्जरहितमरागदेशपतः ऋतम् ।
अफलप्रेप्सना कर्म यत्सात्त्विकसुचयते ॥ २३
नियतः सज्जरहितम ।
अफलप्रेप्सना कर्म यत्ततः सात्त्विकसुचयते ॥

niyataṁ sangaráhitam arāgadvesatāḥ kṛtāṁ ।
aphalaprepṣunā karma yat tat sāttvikam ucyate ॥

नियतः niyataṁ ordained सज्जरहितम् sanga rahitam
free from attachment अरागदेशपत: arāga dvesatāḥ without love or hatred ऋतम् kṛtāṁ done अफलप्रेप्सना aphaḍaprepṣunā by one not desirous of the fruit कर्म karma action यत्तत: yat which ततः tat that सात्त्विकम् sāttvikam Sattvika ucyate ucyate is declared

An action which is ordained, which is free from attachment, which is done without love or hatred by
one not desirous of the fruit, that action is declared to be Sattvika.

Breathing is indispensable to life; and it is done without love or hatred. An ordained duty also ought to be executed in that manner. The obligatory duty of a man varies with his attainments. The working out of a sum in arithmetic by a pupil differs according to the standard in which he is placed. Similarly the duties of men vary according to their station in life. The duties of Arjuna’s station were to wage a righteous war, to protect the weak and to punish the wicked. Every individual in society has his duty to discharge. It has to be executed faithfully and as incessantly as breathing. No selfish consideration should dominate that work. Duty for duty’s sake is the motto of the yogi. When the duty is discharged with a sterling attitude, the man grows both in knowledge and efficiency. Action of this calibre is upheld as Sattvika.

A man of Sattvika nature makes no show of his spiritual practices. As far as possible he keeps his holy doings concealed from public gaze. While the others are asleep at midnight, he sits up within the mosquito-curtain and meditates.

— Sri Ramakrishna

यत् कामेःप्रचुर कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः ।
कियते वहुःकायार्थं तद्वारास्कुद्रमहः ॥ २६

यत् तु काम-कृष्णसं कर्म स-जहहा-कोरेन वा पुनः ।
कियते सुते वहुःकायामसं तत् राजासमु दह-आ-हल्म ॥

yat tu kāmeścūra karma sāhāṃkāreṇa vा punah ।
kriyate bahulāyasam tad rājasam udāhṛtam ॥
But that action which is done by one craving for desires, or again with egoism, or with much effort, that is declared to be Rajasika.

Desire is of two kinds. What promotes man's ethical progress, what induces spiritual anguish, what aids service to beings—a desire of this kind is wholesome and fit to be fostered. But that desire which entangles man more in worldliness ought to be scrupulously eschewed. Earning money by honest means and expending it on good causes is dravya yajna, which ought to be performed. Money should not be earned by unfair means, even though it may be for a good cause. Foul habits deprive man of manliness.

The very fact that man owns a body is a mark of egoism. In addition to it, if the body be used for indulgence, if it be decorated and if it be unduly fattened—these undesirable acts lead to worse forms of egoism. The boon of the human body ought not to be used for base purposes. A pompous body-centred life is the sign of egoism born of Rajas. This base nature may be overcome by holding the body as the temple of God.

Nothing can be achieved without effort. And a reasonable effort is sanctioned for all undertakings.
But that for which man has not yet made himself worthy, does not come to him, try however much he may. Making meaningless efforts in such cases is verily a *Rajasika* action.

How does a wicked egoism assert itself? “Don’t you know who I am? I am so much moneyed. Is there anybody superior to me?” In this fashion it makes itself felt.

— *Sri Ramakrishna*

अनुबन्धम् क्षयः हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम्।
मोहाद्वारस्ये कर्मं यवचारस्थुलह्येते॥ २५॥

श्वस्यद्वृहस्तः क्षयः हिंसाम् अनु-अव-हेष्टः च पौरुषम्।
मोहातः शा-रस्य-वते कर्मः यत् तद् तासाम् उच्यते॥

*anubandham kṣayam hīṁsām anapekṣya ca pauruṣam|mohād ārabhyate karma yat tat tāmasam ucyate ||*

अनुबन्धम् anubandham consequence क्षयम् kṣayam loss हिंसाम् hīṁsām injury अनपेक्ष्य anapekṣya without regard च ca and पौरुषम् pauruṣam one’s own ability मोहातः mohāt from delusion आरस्ये ārabhyate is undertaken कर्म karma action यत् yat which तत् tat that तासाम् tāmasam Tamasika उच्यते ucyate is declared

That action which is undertaken from delusion, without heed to the consequence, loss, injury and ability, that is declared to be Tamasika. 25

The man immersed in *Tamas* is not able to discern whether his undertaking is good or bad, much less the consequence of it. Loss of energy, loss of property and money, loss of time—these reverses do not occur to him as bad. His endeavours are harmful both to him and to the others. It is not within his ken that his resources fall too short of the
project into which he launches. The doings of such a man are born of Tamas.

It is only after the practice of intense tapas that men are freed of guile and stinginess. God vision comes to them who are free from crookedness and cunning. But in the name of simplicity man should not become a simpleton. It is good to be a devotee, but bad to be a dullard. Know what is right and do what is good.

— Sri Ramakrishna

After dilating on knowledge and action, the Lord now dilates on the agent —

मुक्तसंगो नानहवादी धृत्युत्साहसामनविताः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्यो निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्चवेन ॥ २६

गुहु-व-रग एव अहुः वादी धृति उद्द-साह सम् अनु-इत ।
सिद्ध अ-सिद्धो निरु-विमर्शः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्चवेन ॥
muktasango 'nahamvadi dhṛtyutsāhasamanvitaḥ
siddhyasiddhyor nirvikāraḥ kartā sāttvika ucyate ॥

Muktasangah who is free from attachment अनहवादी anahamvādi non-egoistic धृति उत्साहसमनवित dhṛtyutsāha samanvitaḥ endued with firmness and enthusiasm सिद्ध असिद्धो siddhi asidhyoḥ in success or failure निर्विकारः nirvikāraḥ unaffected कर्ता kartā an agent सात्त्विक sāttvikaḥ Sattvika उच्चवेत ucyate is called

An agent who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endued with firmness and zeal and unaffected by success or failure, is called Sattvika. 26

The sadhaka gets fixed in the conviction that it is Iswara who sports assuming the forms of beings and it is His work that is being done by all the beings. And it is this attitude of His that relieves him of all attachment. Instead of claiming the body

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as his, he views it as the temple of the Lord. Whatever karma takes place with that body as the instrument is the doing of Iswara and none else. This frame of mind helps him erase egoism. The belief that he is a faithful servant of the Lord induces him to do his duty with zeal and firmness. Nobody in the world has turned out so much beneficial work as the devotees of the Lord.

He who is attached to the fruit of his work gets elated in success and dejected in failure. But that other man who does his duty as the command from the High, appears as the agent while he is actually the instrument. When the archer misses the target, it is no fault of the arrow; when he shoots it successfully on the target, the credit does not go to the arrow. He who is a genuine instrument in the hands of the Lord behaves as if he were an arrow. Success and failure are not his. An unaffected and unperturbed mind is his. Such an agent is endowed with Śāttvika.

That soft soil alone which is free from pebbles and stones is favourable for the seeds to sprout. Similarly, the mind of that devotee alone untainted by perversion and conceit, is best suited for the Lord to reveal Himself in.

—Sri Ramakrishna

रागी कर्मफलप्रेष्ठसुखवन् हिंसात्मकोपेभुन: ।
हर्मशोकान्नितः कतो राजस: परिकीलितः ॥ २७
रागी कर्म(च)फल-फळ-इपूठु, खुमु-तः हिंसा-शास्त्रक: ख-व्रुणि ।
हर्म-शोक-अंदु-इत: कर्त: राजस: परि-कीलितः ॥

rāgi karmaphalaprepsur lubdho hinsātmanako 'suciḥ
harṣasokānvitaḥ kartā rājasah parikiritiiaḥ ॥
रागि rāgi: passionate कर्मफलोग्यतु karma phala prep-suh desirous of the fruits of action खूब lubdhah greedy हिमसात्मक himsātmaḥ cruel अशुचि asucih impure हर्षोन्मक harṣa soka anvitaḥ moved by joy and sorrow कर्ता kartā agent राजस rājasah Rajasika परि kriyitāḥ parikriyitāḥ is called

Passionate, desiring to obtain the fruit of action, greedy, cruel, impure, moved by joy and sorrow—such an agent is said to be Rajasika.

A greedy person is he who tries by fair or foul means to appropriate the properties of others to himself. He does not hesitate to cause injury to others while giving effect to his base design. Because of his mean decision he is not pure in thought, word and deed. When his plot succeeds he is beside himself with joy, when it fails sorrow overtakes him. These are the traits of an agent who is Rajasika by nature.

Cunning is no virtue. Nobody is more cunning than a crow. It steals artfully. It is ever alert lest it should be caught. It exploits the helplessness of little children. All the same, it is ever out to eat filth. There are people of the nature of the crow. They are deceitful, calculative and cunning. But their one concern day and night is to grab low and vulgar things. Such people are incapable of taking to the path of spirituality.

—Sri Ramakrishna

अयुक्त: prākṛtaḥ स्तव्ध: śāṛṭi nāekratikātālaḥ: ।
विपादीं deivyadūrī Chand karāṁ tāmasa ucyate ॥ २८
ब धुनत त प्राकृत स्तव्ध । शष्ट नासुष्टक अल्प ।
वि वाकी वैष्णु ज्ञातीं च कर्ता तामस (दूर कष) उष्ण य त ॥

ayuktaḥ prākṛtaḥ stabdhah satho naşıkṣitāko 'lasyah ।
visādi dirghasātri ca kartā tāmasa ucyate ॥
Unsteady, vulgar, stubborn, deceitful, malicious, indolent, despondent, procrastinating—such an agent is called Tamasika. That man who practises self-control, self-discipline and self-dedication grows in steadfastness. That other man who is alien to these benign habits would be unsteady in all of his undertakings. Wallowing in low physical life, lacking in intellectual development, evincing childishness in all dealings—these are the signs of vulgarity. Stubborn is that man who refuses to pay homage to great ones worthy of reverence. The shirker who does not harness his talents for any good cause, but allows them all to rust away is deceitful. That man who wilfully creates hatred and enmity among people is said to be malicious. An indolent man is he who does not engage himself in the work in which he is expected to take part. Despondency is a disease of the mind warranting a radical cure. For, he who is a victim of depression and dejection is good for nothing. All manliness dwindles away from him. The passing despondency that came by Arjuna was vehemently reprimanded by the Lord. The teachings known as the Bhagavad Gita came about to cure Arjuna of that disease. When an undertaking that is to be completed in a day is dragged on for days together,
it is procrastination. Achievements of life get lost because of this evil. The Tamasika agent suffers from all these evils.

A fisherman cast his net and caught fish in a river. Many among the catch lay quiet within the net, making no effort to escape. Some of them made unsuccessful attempts. But a few somehow managed to jump out of the net. Likewise, men of the world are of three sorts (1) those who make no effort for emancipation (2) the aspirants who seek deliverance (3) the liberated souls.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The gradations of understanding and of firmness are being explained now —

बुद्धे में द्रोहतैयथ गुणत्विविवियं भूषिः
प्रोच्छमानमश्चेपेण पुष्क्रक्तवेन धनक्षियं
\\
बुध-ते मेद्धू च एवं गुण-त्विविवियं भूषिः
प्र-(क्ष)उप य-मानमु अ-श्येिण पुष्क्र्क्र-रेण धन मू-जय।

buddhe bhedam dhrtes ca'va gunatas trividham śrnu
procyamānäm aśesena prthaktvena dhanamājaya

buddheḥ of intellect भेदम् bhedam division चूँचे
dhrteḥ of firmness च ca and एव eva even गुणत् gunataḥ according to qualities विविद्धम् trividham threefold भूषिः śrnu hear ब्राह्मणम् procyamānānta as I declare अश्रेयेिण aśesena fully पुष्क्रक्तवेन prthaktvena distinctly धनक्षियं dhanamājaya O Dhananjaya.

Hear the threefold distinction of understanding and firmness, according to the Gunas, as I explain them exhaustively and severally. O Dhananjaya.

When Arjuna was itinerating in heaven and on earth, he demanded and took away fabulous wealth from the celestials and from earthly kings. So he is
called Dhananjaya or the conqueror of wealth. Money is not intended to be hoarded and kept idle. It has to circulate and be useful to a large section of people. When that public purpose is not served, the ruling king has got the right to take possession of the property and utilize it properly. And Arjuna discharged that kingly duty very effectively.

Buddhi or understanding is the faculty of distinguishing between the good and the bad, between the right action and the wrong. There are three grades of the grasping power. Dhrti denotes firmness of mind that does not slacken or waver in the execution of a work. In this fixity of purpose also there are three forms.

Dolls may be made of sugar, cloth and stone. The sugar-doll soaked in water dissolves away. The cloth-doll absorbs plenty of water, but does not lose its individuality. The stone-doll does not allow water to percolate. Men who are prepared to merge their individuality in Paramatman are like the sugar-doll. Devotees that imbibe bliss and wisdom from the Lord are like the cloth-doll. The hardbaked worldly man who is proof against godliness is like the stone-doll.

— Sri Ramakrishna

pravṛttim ca nivṛttim ca kāryākārye bhayābhaye
bandham mokṣam ca ya vetti buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttviki

Abstinent pravṛttim the path of work अ त यात्तिम nivṛttim the path of renunciation अ त यात्तिम kārya akārye what ought to be done and
what ought not to be done भय अस्ते bhaya abhayya fear and fearlessness बन्धम् bandham bondage सोऽम mokṣam liberation च ca and या जा that वेति vetty knows बुद्धि buddhi intellect सा sā that पार्थ pārtha O Partha सात्त्विकी sātvīkī Sātvika

The intellect which knows the paths of work and renunciation, right and wrong action, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation—that intellect, O Partha, is Sātvika.

Pravṛtti is the path of interested work or the path of entanglement in earthly life. It involves the Jīvatman in the wheel of birth and death. Nivṛtti is the path of renunciation or the path of emancipation from earthly life. This term applies to Akarma and Sanyāsa too. It aids transcendence into the Beyond. The right action is that which is helpful to the spiritual progress of man. This sanctioned action may be so modified as to suit the different times, places and circumstances. But the wrong action is that which is detrimental to man’s progress. Man must fear to do bad action. The word fear here is used in the sense that man should refrain from doing bad action. To the man of right understanding there is nothing to fear here or in the hereafter. Man ought to keep aloof from the venomous snake and tiger. There is nothing to fear of death that comes of its own accord. Fear of devils and ghosts is a superstition based on imagination. Pravṛtti, wrong action and fear lead man into bondage. Nivṛtti, right action and fearlessness lead man to moksha. The Sātvika buddhi is able to
discriminate between the good deeds and the bad ones.

Is this world unreal? It is unreal as long as you have not realized Iswara. For, you do not recognize His presence in the things worldly. The feeling of “I and mine” has gone deep into you. Therefore you have become bound to the world. You are drowning yourself increasingly in the ocean of Samsara. Though the path of liberation is easy and straight, delusion has covered your eyes and so you knock about here and there like a blind man. You know that Samsara is impermanent. Ponder over the house you live in. How many have been born and how many have died in it? Worldly things appear in a trice before you and they disappear too, in a trice. Those whom you hold as your kith and kin are not so after you die. Still, how deep is man’s attachment to the world! Though nobody at home is dependent on an old man, he finds no time to go to Banaras. He gets no leisure for devotional practices. “What will become of my dear grandson, Harisa, if I do not look after him?” says he and gets attached to the child. This is the deplorable way of the worldly man.

— Sri Ramakrishna

यया धर्मस्मये च कार्य चाकार्येमेव च ।
अयथावस्थितानांति दुःखः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३१ ॥

यया धर्मस्य श-धर्मस्य च कार्यम् च अ-कार्येमेव च ।
अ-शत-शत्रु प्र-जा-नाति हुष्ट-तिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥

yayā dharmam adharmam ca
kāryam cā 'kāryam eva ca
ayathāvat prajānāti
buddhiḥ sā pārtha rājasī ॥

यया yayā by which धर्मस्मये धर्मम् dharma अधर्मस्म adharmam adharma and कार्यम् kāryam what ought to be done च ca and अकार्यम् akāryam what ought not to be done एव eva even च ca and अयथावत् ayathāvat wrongly अयथावत् prajānāti understands
The intellect that makes a distorted grasp of dharma and adharma, of what ought to be done, and what ought not to be done—that, O Partha is Rajasika.

The reflection of a thing in a disturbed water is not even, it gets distorted. Similarly the acts of dharma and good and conducive undertakings prescribed in the Śāstras do not appear in their true light to a man of Rajasika disposition. His intellect makes a distorted reading of good and holy acts. Duryodhana challenged and enticed Yudhishthira into gambling which is an evil practice. He usurped the kingdom and drove his cousins to the necessity of waging a war. Duryodhana felt that his doings were all acts of dharma while they were actually acts of adharma.

A man endowed with the Rajasika intellect is capable of turning out enormous work. But his evil genius taints all his doings. Let it be supposed that two neighbours enter into a joint effort in agriculture or trade or industry and that one of the two is imbued with a Rajasika nature. No doubt, the endeavours of the Rajasika man would be more than those of the other, his partner. But his evil understanding would be ever working at exploiting the partner. He may go to the extent of ruining the other. In litigation nobody can equal him. He is an adept in trying to convert truth into falsehood and vice versa. He delights in foul ways. Righteous
men are objects of ridicule to him. He scrupulously avoids associating with good people. Any talk on spiritual matters would be distasteful to him. He would hold spiritual men as unfit for life and mock at them. His wicked earnings would be all spent on evil projects. For no good cause would he part with a pie. This is how the Rajasika intellect works.

अबर्म धर्मसिद्धि या सन्यते वधसाङ्तत ।
सर्वर्थानिपरितां बुद्धि: सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ ३२ ॥

adharmaṁ dharmam iti yā manyate tamasā ००१ा ।
sarvārthān viparitāṁ ca buddhiḥ sā pārtha tāmasi ॥

That which, enveloped in darkness, regards adharma as dharma and views all things in a perverted way, that intellect, O Partha, is Tamasika.

A perverted intelligence is that which regards the good as bad and the bad as good. A patient refuses to take a prescribed medicine stating that it is not to his taste and insists on helping himself to a dish palatable to him though it would aggravate his disease. Going to school appears troublesome and purposeless to the immature understanding of a boy of Tamasika nature. Playing truant and joining the
vagrant seems to him the best thing that he can do. There are grown up people who think that industry is purposeless and that a life of ease and repose is prudential. They hold that the hard working ones do not know of the joy of quietism. Enquiry into the spiritual aspect of life is distasteful to them. It appears to them that the study of Vedanta and the practice of it may take place in the evening of life, any early thought bestowed on them is premature and purposeless, is their view. They delight in derogatory talks about others and waste their time in slander. The virtuous appear bad and the vicious good in their eyes. Virile body-building games and exercises do not appeal to them, instead, a slothful sedentary pastime like a play at cards engages them day and night. Without the least compunction, they present themselves uninvited at parties and entertainments. The Tamasika intellect guides people in all these irregular ways.

The grades in the firmness of mind are being described now —

धृत्या यया धारयते मनः प्राणेन्द्रियतिवियः।
योगेनन्यश्चारिष्य धृति: सा पार्थ साज्जिकी॥ ३३

धृत्या यया धारयते मनः ग्रन्थेन्द्रिय-क्रियाः।
योगेन न तं-भस्य-चारिष्या पृति ता पार्थ साज्जिकी॥

dhṛtyā yayā dhārayate manah prāṇendriya kriyāḥ।
yogenā 'vyabhicārinyā dhṛtiḥ sā pārthā sāttviki॥

धृत्या dhrtyā by firmness yayā (by) which धारयते dhārayate holds मनः प्राण इन्द्रियतिवियः manah prāṇa indriya kriyāḥ the functions of the mind, the Prana and the
senses बोनेन yoga by yoga अन्वयविन्यासम् avyabhicāri-
या unswerving बृहि: dhriti: firmness सा sā that पर्यं
pārtha O Partha सत्त्विकी sattvika Sattvika

The unswerving firmness by which, through yoga, the functions of the mind, the Prāṇa and the senses are regulated, that firmness, O Partha, is Sattvika. 33

Dhṛti means firmness. It also means fortitude or resolve. This virtue is indispensable to him who has chosen to live a spiritual life. Again, as one advances in the ethical and spiritual life Dhṛti in that one becomes pronounced in its details. The diverging sunbeams may be made to converge again. That gathered up brilliance directed on anything, is capable of providing greater revelation of that thing. Dhṛti is akin to this. Knowledge and action converged into one and increased in the capacity is termed as firmness. Yoga fosters Dhṛti. As one advances in yoga, fortitude develops in that one as a matter of course. The mind, the Prāṇa and the senses of the yogi become increasingly acute and efficacious. The benign part of this great potentiality is that these sharpened faculties are all utilized in the service of the Paramatman. That is to say, all the feelings and cogitations of the mind are devoted to the adoration of the Almighty. The Prāṇa is the life-energy. The aspirant has no other motive in life than directing it to the glory of the Lord. The functions of the senses are all dedicated to His worship in as many ways as possible.

A thread is made up of innumerable fibres. Even so dhṛti is the outcome of the combined sublimated
activities of the mind, the Prāna and the senses. The fibres at the end of a thread ought to be twisted to convergence in order to pass it through the eye of a needle. But if that eye be blocked with dirt, the pointed thread would bend instead of passing through it. And this is due to lack of stiffness in the thread. But the dhṛti of the yogi is as pointed as the end of a thread and as stiff and penetrating as a sharp needle. Such a carefully cultured dhṛti is dedicated by the yogi for the benign invocation of Iswara. It is in no way prostituted for any other purpose. As the needle of a compass always points to the north, the resolve of the yogi is ever directed to the Lord. It is therefore unswerving. This dhṛti is Sāttvika in its make. It leads the sadhaka to the Supreme.

यथा तु धर्मं कामार्थानुप्राप्तः धारयते वद्ये ।
प्रसंगेन फलाकांक्षी धृति: मा पार्थ राजसी ॥ ३४

यथा तु धर्मं कामांक्षी धृति: मा पार्थ राजसी ॥

यथा तु धर्मं कामार्थानुप्राप्तः धारयते र्जुनाः प्रसंगेन फलाकांक्षी धृति: मा पार्थ राजसी ॥

Yayā tu dharma kāmārthān dhṛtyā dhārayate 'rjuna | prasangena phalākānksī dhṛtīh sā pārtha rājasī ॥

Yayā which tū tu but dharmakāma arthān dharma kāma arthān Dharma, desire and wealth 'ṛjuna dhṛtyā by firmness ārthān dhārayate holds 'ṛjuna O Arjuna prasangena from attachment phalākānksī desirous of the fruit of action dhṛtih firmness sā sā that pārtha O Partha Rajasa Rajasika

But the firmness, O Arjuna, by which one holds fast to Dharma, Kāma and Artha, desirous of the fruit of each from attachment, that firmness, O Partha, is Rajasika. 34
Purushārtha or the ideal in life is four-phased. The phases are dharma, artha, kāma and moksha. Conforming to the law of life is dharma. Practical training in this respect is imparted in the Brahma-charya Aśrama or the period of tutelage. The mature man learns to earn wealth and enjoy the pleasure that life provides. These two phases are artha and kāma respectively. Preyas comprises of all the first three phases. Dhrti mentioned in the previous stanza leads the aspirant to Sreyas culminating in moksha or liberation. The Śāttvika man alone is competent for it. The Rajasīka man has scope in dharma, artha and kāma to have all his earthly desires fulfilled.

The attachment to dharma is the best of all, if man cannot help being attached. Nobody was so much drawn to it as the king Yudhishthira was; therefore his case is the model for all. His clinging to dharma had no ulterior motive. He practised dharma for its own sake. And dharma in its turn protected him all through.

To the Rajasīka man the practice of dharma is a safe and sure investment. He expects that the good he does is returned to him with compound interest both here and in the hereafter. He is firm in that belief. Therefore with pleasure he goes on doing a good turn here and a good turn there.

All the worldly attachments may be brought under two broad headings—love of property and love of pleasure. With what firmness man holds on to money may be noticed all over the world. Renounc-
ing food and sleep, comfort and rest, man toils for money day and night. Parting with kith and kin, he goes on to distant lands if there are prospects of adding to his wealth. If the hard-earned fortune be lost somehow, it is worse than death to the grabber thereof.

The *Rajasika* man's attachment to *kama* or pleasure is equally vehement. In fact, all beings are in search of joy and pleasure. Clinging to life on earth is all due to the enjoyment derived from it. The resolute attempts made are all for the enjoyment of pleasure. The modes of obtaining the pleasures provided by Nature may vary with beings, but the end is the same to one and all. It is no exaggeration to state that many a man stakes life itself in his quest for enjoyment. The firmness with which the *Rajasika* man seeks property and pleasure is to be admired, because it is his way of making life a fulfilment. In course of time he is bound to learn the lesson that this quest has to be made for the Imperishable and not the perishable.

If drinking water and nice eatables be kept in the room occupied by a patient suffering from malignant fever would he refrain from partaking of those things? Will a sensuous man contain himself when he finds himself in the midst of several objects of senses left at his disposal? He is sure to deviate from the path of devotion and indulge in sense pleasure.

— Sri Ramakrishna

**Gita**

যায় স্মরণ ভগ শোক বিপাদ মহিমেচ ন।

ন বিমূখবিতি দুঃখেচ তৃতি: সা পার্য তামসঃ। ৩৫

গায় করুণ ভগব শোকী নিমাদ্ন মহিম গব চ।

ন বে মন তি দুঃখ ভগ ঐ তি গা পার্য তামসঃ।
yāyā svapnam bhayam sokam viśādam madam eva ca
na vimuṇcati durmedhā dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha tāmasi ||

That by which a stupid man does not give up
sleep, fear, grief, despair and also conceit, that firm-
ness, O Partha, is Tamasika.

Tamas and ignorance are interrelated. Sleep
and insentience are alike. A dream being vague, it
is ignored as a part of sleep. Day-dreamers are not
uncommon in society, given as they are to Tamas.
In their case, there is hardly any difference between
their wakeful engagements and dreamy visions, as
there is no firmness at all in any of their doings.
Neither does the world derive any benefit from their
undertakings.

The blind king Dhrtarashtra is a typical example
of a man of Tamasika firmness. His blindness was
the physical symbol of the lack of discrimination and
forethought. And his sons, Duryodhana and others,
bespattered his make up. For, evils are all born of
ignorance. This blind king was inordinately attached
to the empire though he was physically unfit to reign.
The fear lest the empire should slip out of the hands
of his sons, lurked in his heart. Hearing of the
atrocities perpetrated by his unscrupulous sons, he
was very much grieved. Still, he took no stern
action against his unworthy sons. Pondering over the ill-fame to which he was exposed, he became overwhelmed with despair. Still, he was not prepared to be guided by the counsel of Bhishma, Drona and Sri Krishna; for the conceit that he was the monarch over all of them lay concealed in his heart. The firmness of king Dhrtarashtra was verily steeped in Tamas and therefore producing nothing good.

There are in this world at all times innumerable people who are of the mould of Dhrtarashtra. What their ancestors have bequeathed to them is their sole property. They are incapable of adding to it. Neither discrimination nor right understanding is found in them. Endeavour is unknown to them. They are blind of mind if not of body. Their chief occupation is to eat and sleep away their time. The fear is there in them that their moneys are all expended and nothing earned. After exhausting the whole of their resources they come to grief in their helplessness. They who wallowed once in money now wallow in the mud of despondency. Chewing the cud of their past opulence, they cherish themselves with nothing but conceit. Stupid as they are, this is the wretched life that they carry on. The firmness of these people is all born of Tamas.

सुखे त्विदाना ग्रिविधं भुषु मे भरतपरम ।
अक्षामाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्ते च निगच्छति || ३६
सुन्द मु देशानीम विविधं श्रु से मे भरत भराम ।
अभिभ आयाति रसते यत्र दुःख - अस्तम च वि - गच्छति ||
sukham tv idam trividham srnu me bharatarṣabha 1
abhyāsād ramate yatra duṣkhāntam ca nigacchati ||
80-57
And now hear from Me, O chief of the Bharatas, the three kinds of happiness. That in which a man comes to rejoice by long practice and in which he reaches the end of his sorrow;

It is the search for happiness that gives impetus to life. There is no being in any region, that does not want happiness. Immeasurable is the effort exerted by beings in this direction. Still it is not the same measure of happiness that all obtain. Like a flash of lightning it appears before a few, but before they behold it all, it disappears. Still the search does not stop and cannot be stopped. It goes on endlessly. There are the others to whom the enjoyment of happiness is like pouring water into a leaky pot, which knows no filling up. As it is being sought after from the world, it vanishes away into oblivion. Still the attempt to enjoy happiness goes on endlessly. Hope of success somehow sustains life. But there are a rare few whose experience of happiness is a unique phenomenon. Like the waxing moon, their joy is ever on the increase. They become heirs to unobstructed delight bordering on blessedness. The cause behind the variation in the enjoyment of happiness is worth a study.
Abhyāsa or practice is a powerful weapon to modify man's mode of life. The utility of the physical exercise is self-evident. The culture of the mind, however, is more consequential. What is called an inherent trait is nothing other than persistent practice. A change of individuality ensues a change of practice. It holds true even in the case of animals. But practice brief and sporadic does not succeed. Prolongation of it has a far-reaching effect. Elimination of sorrow and attainment of abiding happiness are possible by long practice.

yat tad agre visam iva parināme 'mṛtopamam
    tat sukham sāttvikam proktam ātmabuddhiprasādajam

That which is like poison at first, but like nectar at the end; that happiness is said to be Sattvika, born of the translucence of intellect due to Self-realization.

To a beginner swimming seems as dreadful as death, but the same becomes delightful to him after he picks it up. Strangers and strange places do not
create favourable impression at first sight; but with continued acquaintance they become congenial. The Jivatman has been used to the life in the body and the senses in his previous births. His switching on now to the control of the senses, detachment from the body and meditation on the glory of Atman—all these practices seem to him strange and painful. But as he perseveres in them he comes to know that his plenitude is in the Self and not in the mundane. He was a fish out of water when he lived in the senses. He is now a fish got back into water due to his taking to spiritual life.

He who desires to live a spiritual life may easily come to know of its merits by observing the life of a yogi and that of another given to sensuality. How the one makes and the other mars life stand self-revealed. Though hard to practise, self-control alone is the path to happiness.

Man gets purified in body and mind as he progresses in the path of spirituality. Purification of the mind is more important than the purification of the body. A purified heart is like a translucent glass, revealing a fundamental truth in regard to life. Happiness or bliss is actually in the Self and not in the non-Self. The realization of this truth sends the sadhaka into raptures. His bliss becomes abiding. The sādhanā that started as a hard task culminates in supreme happiness. And this is possible to the Sattvika man alone.

In the old days the priests of the temple of Govinda at Jayapuri were celibates and therefore spiritually very powerful. The Raja of the place once sent for those priests; but they
refused to respond to the summons. They suggested instead that the Raja might go to them. Subsequently the priests got married and became family men each with a few children. Then they would repair to the Raja every now and then on one plea or another. For, the favour and patronage of the Raja was required for their family affairs. Poor priests, what else could they do with their wives and children to look after! When a man becomes a slave to lust, he falls and becomes a slave to man also, losing his happiness thereby.

— Sri Ramakrishna

It is the sense-control that, like the waxing moon, fosters steady happiness. The man who masters his senses is slave to none in any region. He blooms in immortal bliss.

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाचतुर्दशमूलप्रमम् ।
परिणामे विषमिचतुर्बंराजतं स्वतं ॥ २८ ॥

विषय-इन्द्रिय-समु-संयोगात् यत् तत् अग्रे अ-मृत-उपमाः ।
परिणामे विषम् इव तद् सुखम् राजसम् स्व-तत् ॥

viṣayendriyasamyogād yat tad agre ‘mṛtopamam ।
parināme viṣam iva tat sukham rājasam smrtam ॥

विषय इन्द्रिय संयोगात् visaya indriya samyogat from
the contact of the sense-organ with the object यत् yat
which तत् tat that अग्रे agre at first अ-मृत-उपमाः amṛta
upamam like nectar परिणामे parināme in the end विषम
viṣam poison इव iva like तद् tat that सुखम् sukham
pleasure राजसम् rājasam Rajasika स्वतं ॥ smrtam is
declared.

That happiness which arises from the contact of
the senses and their objects and which like nectar at
first but like poison at the end—it is held to be
Rajasika.
The happiness that is obtained from the contact of the senses with their objects, gets converted into poison and eats into the personality of the enjoyer. Consequently the strength and stamina of the man wane away. He is not able to discharge his duties efficiently. The body loses its comeliness. Senility sets in all too early. Instead of growth, there takes place a deterioration of the intellectual capacity of the man. Spiritual sagacity in him fades away. Dharma unconsciously gives place to adharma. The man's career gets corrupted. Like water poured into a leaky pot, his happiness slips away as quickly as it is sought. Hellishness haunts him instead.

Mythology has it that the Devas and the Asuras churned the ocean of life, allegorically presented as the ocean of milk. The blessings and the amenities such as education, wealth, means of transport, ornaments, wholesome food and the gifts from Nature—all these were obtained in plenty. These boons are all clothed in theological language as Saraswati, Lakshmi, Airavata, Kaustubha and Kama-dhenu. The participants in this great project enjoyed in full measure the happy results of their ardent endeavours. But every enjoyment has its retribution. It comes as action and reaction. None can resist it. Death is the recompense for life. The love of life reacts as the dread of death. The former is liked as nectar and the latter hated as poison. As the ultimate result of embracing life, its counterpart death made its appearance as a dreadful poison before the Devas and Asuras. Not being prepared for
this consequence they ran in despair to the regions above and below to escape, but escape was impossible.
Life that seemed inviting not long ago took a turn
and appeared bitterly painful. In sorrow and dismay
they repaired to the Lord Siva and sought refuge in
Him. And He in compassion consumed the devastat-
ing poison and saved the beings that surrendered
themselves to Him. The great God Siva is renowned
as Tyagaraja or the Lord of renunciation. He is the
embodiment of self-control. Death is not where
Siva is. Therefore they who took refuge in Him were
saved from death. The principle is that self-control
and renunciation are the means to immortality.
Renouncing the Rajasika happiness, the sadhaka
should go to the Sattvika happiness. He should
finally transcend it too and merge in the Bliss
Beyond

यद्यप्रे वातुनन्ये च सुखं मोहनमालमः ।
निद्धलस्यमादालोथं तत्तामसतुदाहतमम् ॥ ३९॥

यत् विषयं च छत्र चन्द्रे च सुखम् मोहनम सामान्यः
निद्रा-वालस-प्र-प्र-वाद-उत्थमम् तदु तामसम उद्व-आ-इ-तमम् ॥

yad agre cā 'nubandhe ca sukham mohanam ātmanah
drālasya pramādottham tat tāmasam udāhrtam ॥

Yat yat which āgreh at first ca and ānubandhe
anubandhe in the sequel ca and suktam sukham
pleasure mohanam mohanam delusive ātman ātmanah of
the self nidra ālasya pramāda uttham arising from sleep, indolence and heedlessness
tat tat that tāmasam tāmasam Tamasika udāhrtam
is declared
That happiness which deludes the self both at the beginning and at the end and which arises from sleep, sloth and miscomprehension—that is declared to be Tamasika.

A man derives happiness from intoxicants that make him forget the miseries of the world temporarily. But this happiness is wrought with misery in the procurement of the stuff, in the consumption of it in privacy, in being exposed to ridicule when tipsy and in getting sunk in spirit after its effect is over. The lazy man who seeks to maintain himself with borrowed money meets with the same fate. His happiness is marred while borrowing, while expending and while trying to clear the debt with great effort. Sleep and repose are necessary to all embodied beings. There is immense happiness too in indulging in them. But the Sāttvika and Rajasika men shake off sleep and sloth at the call of duty. Whereas the Tamasika man delights in prolonged sleep and in dozing for hours together. But this happiness is nullified by the neglect of duty, by the pricks of conscience and by the derision of the active people. The Tamasika man suffers from miscomprehension in regard to the means of the procurement of happiness. Like a flash of lightning his happiness comes and goes.

The hemp-smoker believes that his inebriation is a form of spiritual ecstasy. But it is nothing of the kind. He deludes himself in his indolence into such a belief.

— Sri Ramakrishna
The three Gunas and Prakriti are identical. The former are taken into account when distinction is to be made among the attainments of the Jivatmans. But as the aggregate substance, the Gunas and Prakriti are one and the same. From a blade of grass up to Brahma the Creator, all the Jivatmans are bound by the Gunas of Prakriti. Be they the human beings or the celestial beings, they are all in bondage until they transcend the three Gunas. The continuity of births and deaths is inevitable to them when they are in the fetters of Prakriti. Their rebirths range high and low conforming to the predominance in them of the varying Gunas. Brahma,
the Creator is the foremost among the Jivatmans. His functional status is the greatest; but he is not a liberated soul. In other words, he is also involved in the Gunas. Creation by him is impossible except with the Gunas as the material. The greatest power that he is endowed with is called the Prakriti laya or the identification with the Cosmos. And his distinction is that he is not bound to be born again. He is having his final reincarnation. At the close of the prevailing kalpa or eon, he enters the krama mukti or the gradual liberation. Then he gets beyond the Gunas.

The Sadhaka has to struggle hard against the base nature. It is after a prolonged endeavour that he gets into samadhi, in which no trace of ego is left. The attainment of samadhi is not as easy as one would have it. The ego born of the three Gunas does not disappear easily. We are born in the world repeatedly because of the persistence of ego.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The ways and means of liberation are now expounded:—

The Fourfold Caste Explained — 41-48

श्राह्मणक्षत्रियविविधां शुद्धां च परंतपः ।
कर्मांशी प्रविचित्कानि स्मातः सम्भवेऽगुहिःः ॥ ४२ ॥

श्राह्मण-क्षत्रिय-विविधाः शुद्धाः च परं-परं ।
कर्मांशी प्रविचित्कानि स्मातः सम्भवेऽगुहिः ॥

brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-visāṁ śuddaṁ ca paramāṇaḥ।
karmāni pravibhaktāni svabhāvaprabhavatīr guṇaih ||

The ways and means of liberation are now expounded:—

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śhrāmaṇa-kṣatriya-visāṁ śuddhaṁ ca paramāṇaḥ।
karmāni pravibhaktāni svabhāvaprabhavatīr guṇaih ||
of Sudras च ca as also परंतप paramtap O Parantapa कर्माणि karmāṇi duties विभक्तानि prabhaktāni are distributed स्वाभावसमवै svabhāva prabhavaiḥ born of their own nature गुनाइह gunāiḥ by qualities

The duties of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, as also of Sudras, O scorcher of foes, are distributed according to the Gunas born of their own nature.

Svabhāva is another name attributed to Prakriti or the Mayā Sakti inherent in Iswara. This cosmic reality is constituted of the three Gunas. Variation in karma is based on the variation of the Gunas. Karma in its turn leaves its samskāra or impress on the mind. As the samskārās get themselves refined, they go to modify the nature or svabhāva of the individual. That karma and svabhāva are inseparable is a fact ever to be borne in mind. The varṇa or the grade of evolution of a Jīvatman is based on his svabhāva or nature. So it is possible to know of the varṇa of an individual from his svabhāva and his karma. Of the two, the svabhāva is subtle and hard to be observed. A man of intuition alone can see into it just as we all cognize the contents of a glass case. Karma, on the other hand, is gross. It is possible for us to get at the varṇa of a man from the karma to which he is given. The way in which a man makes use of his life is a sure indicator of the varṇa of that man.

Why has God made some great and others small? —is a stock question. But this question is meaningless to the knower of the fundamental. Creation is impossible without differentiation. No two things
or beings are alike in the Cosmos. Going back to sameness is going back to destruction, a state unwanted by beings. Creation proceeds on the basis of differentiating one from another. Limbs in the body vary with their functional differences. Bodies vary; species vary; attempts vary; attainments vary. There is a grandeur in the infinite varieties exhibited by Nature. The omnipotence of the Lord stands self-explained in this way. Infinite scope is provided in Nature for the low to evolve into the high. Life fulfils itself by attempting and attaining the high, stage by stage. \textit{Varna dharma} is nothing other than a reading of this plan of Nature at all levels in general and at the human level in particular.

The distinctiveness of each \textit{varna} as evinced by its \textit{svadharma} is delineated as follows:—

\begin{center}
\begin{quote}
\begin{verse}
शमो दमस्तप: शौचः क्षान्तिराजेज्वेच च \ ।
शानं विज्ञानवाल्लिपिकर्थ वहकर्ष लमारजसू ॥ ४२
\end{verse}
\end{quote}
\end{center}

\textit{samo damas tapah saucam ksantir arjavam eva ca} ।
\textit{jñanam vijnanam astikyam brahmakarma svabhavajam}

\begin{quote}
\begin{verse}
शम: \textit{samah} serenity दम: \textit{dama} self-restraint तप: \textit{tapah} austerity \shouc: \textit{saucam} purity \ksantih forgiveness इर्जवमू \textit{arjavan} uprightness \eva \textit{eva} even \ca and ज्ञानम् \textit{jnanam} knowledge विज्ञानमू \textit{vijnanam} realization आस्तिक्यमू \textit{astikyam} belief in God वहकर्षम् \textit{brahma karma} the duties of Brahmanas लमारजसू \textit{svabhavajam} born of nature
\end{verse}
\end{quote}
Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, and also uprightness, knowledge, realization, belief in a hereafter—these are the duties of the Brahmanas, born of their own nature.

He is a Brāhmaṇa who is imbued with qualities all conducive to a spiritual life. Self-control and self-discipline are as natural and agreeable to him as water is to a duckling. His mind being turned to sublime and supramundane concerns, serenity is the norm with him. He cannot afford to be flippant with trifles. Sense-control is a moral warfare to the ordinary man; but to the Brāhmaṇa it is a matter of course. Sublimation of the body, mind and speech is austerity. This merit finds its full expression in this spiritual man. A thing that retains its original state is said to preserve its purity. The spiritual man is fixed in the feeling that he is Atman. His body and the senses behave in tune with this divine feeling. Therefore purity and the Brāhmaṇa are one and the same. The even tenor of the spiritual life of a god-man is bound to be affected once in a way at least by the intrusion of the worldly people. But he is never affected thereby nor does he ever think of retaliating or resisting. Calm forgiveness is his way. His thought, word and deed being ever directed to the welfare of all, there is uprightness in every bit of his action. He is as trustworthy to people as the mother is to her baby. The Brāhmaṇa begins his life with scriptural knowledge in regard to God and His creation; and he fulfils it with intuitive knowledge or God-realization. Any amount of scriptural
knowledge without God-realization avails nothing. 
Astikya is more than a formal belief in God and in 
the hereafter. It is a burning faith in the divine 
aspect of life and in its eternity. A Brāhmaṇa holds 
himself as a pilgrim on earth and not as one belong-
ing to it. His treasure is not of the mundane but 
of the divine. A simple living with a bare earthly 
possession distinguishes him from the others. To 
decorate the body is not in his way. While living in 
the body he is not of the body. He loves all beings 
alike and claims a universal kinship. And these are 
the marks of a Brāhmaṇa. As the Brāhmaṇas increase 
in number, the ethical and spiritual standards of 
the society go up.

The life of renunciation and self-dedication that 
Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa lived is the model of 
and an ideal for a Brāhmaṇa.
Heroism, vigour, firmness, resourcefulness, not flying from battle, generosity and lordliness are the duties of the Kshatriyas born of their own nature. 43

In the scale of spiritual evolution the Kshatriya comes next to the Brāhmaṇa. While the topmost man is the embodiment of divinity, the second best man is the embodiment of dharma. While the Brahmarishi gives all attention to the godliness in man, the Rāja rishi pays all attention to the manliness in man. It is only after being an ideal man that one becomes a god-man. The ideal man is found in the Kshatriya, who is devoted to putting the earthly life of man in perfect order. The literal meaning of the word Kshatriya is he who always protects others from hurt and injury क्षत्रियं ब्राह्मणं Kṣatīt trāyate. The Kshatriya has dedicated his body for the good of the world. While in that noble endeavour his body may be hurt or may even be destroyed. The destruction of the body is no loss to him; but reconciliation with adharma is the worst loss that he sustains. Bhishma's life illustrates the relative value that a Kshatriya gives to his bodily existence and to his frame of mind. While his body was being hurt to the core, his mind remained pinned to the ideal. All the spiritually evolving souls require to be processed in the Kshatriya mould before they can aspire to the Brāhmaṇa mould. The intensity of the training may vary but the process cannot be avoided.

Just as the farmer is obliged to eradicate the pest that attacks his crop, the Kshatriya is in duty
bound to oppose the evils in society. Callousness and pacifism are no marks of a champion of dharma. A hero is he who knows no fear of opposing an enemy decidedly stronger than he. *Tejas* or vigour is his who is ever jubilant in the discharge of his duty. *Dhrti* is the frame of mind which is firm and dominant even when overpowered by the enemy. *Dākṣhyam* or resourcefulness is the ingenuity of the mind which hits upon the right place, right time and right strategy in war and peace as quick reaction to the changing situations. A sudden crisis causes no confusion in the mind of a man gifted with this virtue. Sometimes a strategic retreat is prudent for a later decisive offensive. But on no account should a *Kshatriya* fly from battle for fear. Death is any day better than a vegetating life of slavery.

*Dāna* or generosity is the art of administration allowing the maximum facilities and prosperity to people. With a parental attitude the *Kshatriya* should be ever intent on providing for public weal rather than on extorting for private ends. *Iśvara-bhāva* is lordliness. Preventing people from lawlessness and guiding them to be law-abiding are the outcome of this gift in a *Kshatriya*. Leadership of this kind comes automatically to one resolved to serve the people. The spirit of renunciation is the guiding factor in this respect. The *Kshatriya* is the protector of society. By self-discipline and self-dedication he rises equal to this divine duty. The spiritual culture of the *Brāhmaṇa* and the
earthly resources of the *Vaisya* get themselves harmoniously commingled in the *Kshatriya* who harnesses and utilizes them all for the public welfare

कृषि-गौरक्ष्याणिज्ञयं वैश्वकर्म खम्भावायम्।
परिचार्यात्मकम कर्म शूद्रस्यापि खम्भावायम्। ॥ ४४

krṣi gaurakṣya vānyyam vaisya karma svabhāvajam
paricaryātmakam karma sūdrasyā 'pi svabhāvajam ॥

कृषि-गौरक्ष्याणिज्ञय्यम् krṣi gaurakṣya vānyyam agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade vaisya karma
the duties of Vaisya svabhāvajam svabhāvajam born of
the nature paricaryātmakam paricaryātmakam consisting
of service karman svabhāvajam svabhāvajam born of the
nature

Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the
duties of the Vaisyas, born of their own nature;
and action consisting of service is the duty of the
Sudras born of their own nature.

Wealth and material resources are also the
glories of God in their own way Lakshmi the God-
dess of wealth being the spouse of the Lord is
pregnant with meaning. Life at the physical level is
impossible without the material resources Man’s
life takes its start in that plane only to soar into the
higher regions. But the bodily sustenance and
prosperity are to be maintained, and wealth is a
necessity for this purpose. The *Vaisya* is he who
creates and distributes the material wealth of the

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society. The time-honoured means for this are agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade. But in course of time, tapping the resources of nature has developed marvellously; industry has grown to the point of perplexing its progenitor. And these are all the occupations of the *Vaisya*.

All craftsmen, artisans, job-workers, and technicians are classified as *Vaisyās*. The modern practitioners such as the lawyers and the doctors are also to be treated as *Vaisyās*. The dharma of these people is to serve society through their calling; but if they exploit people they become offenders morally, if not legally. The preparation and the sale of intoxicants are not sanctioned by dharma unless they are handled as medicines.

The *Sūdra* is he who can only render physical labour, but who is incapable of setting up a calling of his own. Whoever gets himself employed as a paid lower subordinate to somebody, is a *Sūdra*, dependent on others for his livelihood. A clerk who merely does an intellectual work as directed, is also a *Sūdra*. The labour class people come under this classification. But all the paid men are not *Sūdrās*. A school master with the right frame of mind is a *Brāhmaṇa*. A government officer is a *Kshatriya*. The rank and file in the army are all *Kshatriyās*. People who sell their labour and independence and those who take bribes and tips are all *Sūdrās*. He whose life is centred in the body and who has no other higher outlook in life is a *Sūdra*.
The four varṇās or grades are all based on the quality of the mind. In all societies and countries these natural classifications can be found. Among four brothers it is possible to find these four varṇās. It is also possible to find a group, a clan or a tribe to be given predominantly to any one of the four varṇās.

Just as there are the lower classes and the higher classes in a school, the existence of the four varṇās in a society is but natural. The plan is for the lower class man to evolve into the higher class. Any artificial obstruction to this natural scheme is injurious. A pupil of the higher class knows the lessons of the lower class. This principle applies to the varṇās in society. A Brāhmaṇa is he who can discharge the dharmas of all the four varṇās. A Kshatriya can discharge the dharmas of three varṇās. A Vaisya can carry out the duties of two varṇās while the Śūdra can only do his own dharma.

Though there is difference in the attainments of the four varṇās, there is no differentiation among their respective dharmas. The dharma of the one is as sacred and conducive to enlightenment as that of the other. A Śūdra is as much competent for the practice of yoga as the others are. Almost all the Acharyas have had among their disciples, men who were of mere Śūdra calibre to begin with, but who through their devotion rose to the pinnacle of realization. In the human body, the brain does the Brāhmaṇa dharma, the heart the Kshatriya dharma, the stomach the Vaisya dharma and the hands and feet,
the Śūdra dharma. The dharmas of all these limbs are of equal importance and necessity. The same is the case with society too.

Among the four great Yogas, the Karma Yoga has the characteristics of the Śūdra dharma. The Raja Yoga contributes to the sadhaka what the Vaisya contributes to the society. The functions of the Bhakti Yoga and the Kshatriya are alike. The Jnana Yoga provides to the aspirant what the Brāhmaṇa does to society. As the Lord equates all the four Yogas, He equates all the four Vargṇas also, they being the component of his Cosmic form. An ideal sadhaka is he who embraces all the four Yogas putting them all on a par. An ideal society is that in which the citizens are given training in the duties of all the four varṇas and they discharge their duties to the best of their ability.

The varṇa dharma is the last word on an ideal social order. India has evolved this system to its perfection. It cuts at the root of the cruel competition with its attendant evils. It offers instead, an attitude of self-dedication crowned with renunciation. Every time India was faithful to this philosophical basis of her social order, she emerged as a heaven on earth. But every time she deviated from this benign principle, she met with a deplorable set back. Her latest fall was due to casteism with its privileges masquerading as Varṇa Dharma. But this chimera is shattered and a new spiritual India is at the point of emerging.
sve sve karmany abhiratah samsiddhim labhate naraḥ svakarmanirataḥ siddhim yathā vindati tac churnu ḫ

sve sve in own śve śve in own karmani to duty abhirataḥ devoted sāṁśiddhim perfection labhate attains naraḥ a man śa karma nirataḥ engaged in his own duty sāṁśiddhim perfection yathā how vīndati finds tathā tat that śruṇu hear

Devoted each to his own duty, man attains the highest perfection. How engaged in his own duty, he attains perfection, that do you hear. 45

To whatever station in life man has made himself competent, that is verily his svadharma. He who discharges his svadharma jubilantly and efficiently turns out to be a good sadhaka. The temporary disgust that Arjuna harboured for his svadharma was not born of mature understanding. It was the outcome of a momentary delusion. He who abhors his duty can never become great. A model student is he who applies himself diligently and delightfully to his studies. He is loyal to the class in which he is placed, so that he may step into a higher class when the time for it comes. It is his svadharma to go steadily into the higher classes. This principle however, does not apply to one’s position in life. If a scavenger thinks of changing his occupation
for a better one, he may thereby prove himself worldly-wise. But that attitude is definitely a hindrance to his spiritual growth. Through his seeming humble *svadharma* he can rise to be a perfect yogi. For, no work is ugly to a *sadhaka*. Any and every work becomes worship when the attitude is sound. The how of it is explained below:

 yat: पश्चात्भूतानां येन सर्वसिद्धं तत्तः ।
 स्वकर्मणा तस्मयस्ति सिद्धिः विन्दति मानवः: || ४६
 yat: प्र-चरिते: भू-नानाम येन सर्वम् इदम् ।त(न)-तमः ।
 स्व-कर्मणा तस्म असि-नृस्वे न विधु-तिमरु विन्द-ति मानवः: ||

*yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānāṁ yena sarvam idam tatam ।
svakarmanā tam abhyarcaya siddhim vindati mānavaḥ||

yat: yataḥ from whom प्रभृति: pravṛttiḥ the evolution सूक्ष्ण सर्वायथ bhūtānāṁ of beings येन yena by whom सर्वम all इदम idaṁ this तत्तः tatam is pervaded स्वकर्मणा sva karmanā with his own duty हृद tam him अभ्यर्च्या abhyarcaya worshipping सिद्धिः siddhim perfection विन्दति vindati attains मानवः mānavaḥ man

He from whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him with his own duty, man attains perfection.  46

It is because of the proximity of Isvara that the universe functions uniformly and intelligently. No being is superfluous or useless in this Cosmic setting. By doing his duty properly, every man is contributing his quota to the phenomenal whole. This being the plan, an intelligent man ought to perform his duty as an act of worship of the Lord. When the right attitude is assumed, it aids the purification of the mind. One's *svadharma* proves
thereby the means for the gaining of wisdom and for the attainment of Godhood.

The common notion of man is that the worship of the Lord is one thing and that the discharge of one's worldly duty is another thing. Such a man betrays his ignorance of the worship of the Almighty. It is evident that every physical exertion is an aid to the build of the body. A bodily exertion can serve simultaneously both for the build of the body and for the earning of one's livelihood. The same endeavour can next be made to serve three purposes by holding it as an act of the worship of God. The Mahabharata has it that a butcher treated his profession as an outlet for self-expression, for his livelihood, for his service to society and for his adoration of the Lord. Through the discharge of his duty that man matured fully in wisdom. His teachings to an ascetic form a scripture known as the Vyadha Gita—the Butcher's Gita. The idea of eking out an earthly existence is a wretched one, unbecoming a man. This negative attitude should be elevated to the positive one of adoring the Lord with the life that one lives; and that life should be worthy of the Maker. Whatever duty falls to the lot of one is sacred in itself and it should be directed to the glory of the Lord. This attitude would pull him up Godward. He is a yogi who converts his earthly life into the worship of the Lord.

A coconut contains the fibrous sheath outside, the shell inside and the kernel within. The sheath
has to be peeled off and the shell broken in order to get at the kernel. Similar to this, doing one’s duty in the spirit of adoring the Almighty is the means to get at the kernel which is God in the heart of man.

\[ \text{श्रेयान्त्वस्वस्त्र्यो विगुणः परधर्मांस्त्ववनुष्ठितात्} \]
\[ \text{स्वभावनियते कर्म कुर्वचामोति किलिषयम्} \]
\[ \text{॥ ६७} \]
\[ \text{श्रेीयन् स्व-धर्मः विगुणः पर-धर्मां सु-शुहः त्वं} \]
\[ \text{स्व-भव-निय-मृ-तमक कर्म कुर्वच न बादन-सी-ति किलिषयम्} \]
\[ \text{sreyān svadharmo viguṇah paradharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt} \]
\[ \text{svabhāvaniyatam karma kurvan nā ṯnoti kilbiṣam} \]
\[ \text{॥} \]

\[ \text{श्रेीयन् sreyān better स्वधर्मः sva dharmah one’s own} \]
\[ \text{दुश्चरी: viguṇah (though) destitute of merits परधर्मांта} \]
\[ \text{para dharmāt than the duty of another सु-शुहः su} \]
\[ \text{anusuṣṭhitāt (than) well performed स्वभवनियतम् svabhāva} \]
\[ \text{niyatam ordained by his own nature कर्म karma action} \]
\[ \text{कुर्वच kurvan doing न na not अपनोति ānoti (he) incurs} \]
\[ \text{किलिषयम् kilbiṣam sin} \]

Better is one’s own dharma, though imperfect, than the dharma of another well performed. He who does the duty ordained by his own nature incurs no sin. \[ 47 \]

The karma that is in tune with a man’s disposition is his svadharma. Arjuna’s case clarifies the issue raised herein. He is ordained by his nature for warfare. Events have driven him to the necessity of waging a righteous war. His duty is to pursue it even if it proves itself disadvantageous to him. If the odds turn against him, even then he is to fight to the finish. It is possible for him to retreat
from the battle-field and resort to severe austerity in the forest. Imperfect war is better for him than a perfect penance. Death due to opposing the wicked is better for him than life seeking the hereafter.

A man trained for medicine should not choose to become a lawyer on the ground he can plead a case very fluently. It is injurious if one changes one’s calling prompted by likes and dislikes, by opportunism and careerist mentality. One’s personality gets dissipated thereby. The training that one has received and the time devoted to it are all wasted away. On the other hand, there is a twofold advantage in a man confining himself to his svadharma. Firstly, it is as natural to him as water is to fish. He need not unduly strain himself in picking up and in discharging his inherited duty. He executes it almost involuntarily. Secondly, there is the release of consciousness to be directed Godward. He is a yogi who achieves the maximum benefit with the minimum of effort. To make his worldly life a fulfilment and to reach Godhood—these are the ideals set by a yogi for himself. Devotion to svadharma is the sure means to the achievement of these objects. All activities are unfailing means to reach Godhood. And that man who swerves not from his svadharma gains in constancy. No yoga is possible without constancy.

But should not an aspirant renounce the world and all worldly activities when dispassion and desire for liberation dawn in his mind? This question is answered:—
sahajam karma kaunteya sadoṣam api na tyajet
sarvārambhā hi doṣena dhūmenā 'gnir iva 'vṛtāḥ

sahajam born together karma action
kaunteya O Kaunteya sadoṣam with fault
api even na not tyajet one should abandon sarvārambhā all undertakings hi
hi for doṣena by evil dhūmena by smoke
agnih fire iva like āvṛtāḥ are enveloped

One should not abandon, O Kaunteya, the duty
to which one is born, though it is attended with evil;
for, all undertakings are enveloped by evil, as fire by
smoke.

A truth reveals itself to him who desists from
likes and dislikes and who enquires into karma with
an equanimity of mind. There is no karma whatsoever
in Nature, which is completely free from evil.
We cannot breathe without hurting millions of
microbes in the atmosphere. When we eat we deprive
another of food or life. An ascetic suspends all
bodily activities and practises austerity in a mountain
cave. His body fostered by others vegetates thereby,
without being useful in its turn. There is no karma
completely free from evil. Why should there
be then the distinction between vice and virtue?
The great ones have advocated virtue and denounced
vice. Which among the acts of man, is to be accepted
as virtue and which rejected as vice? Among the fuels, that which smokes too much is bad and that which smokes less is good Among the karmas that which is attendant with more evil than good, is vice, and that other in which there is more good than evil, is virtue It is in accordance with place, time and circumstance, that a karma becomes good or bad. The knowing ones ought to discern and do the good karma only

But the yogi has his own criterion. He discharges his duty as an act of worship of the Lord. A pilgrim who halts at a wayside rest house, cooks his food there with the fuel available and proceeds further He does not delay on the way for want of good fuel The attitude of the yogi is very much like this He performs for the sake of the Lord, that karma to which his body is found fit And he acts with the sole motive of reaching the state of Inaction or Atman. The embodied one is obliged to act in a good and useful manner The yogi therefore discharges his svadharma as an adoration of the Almighty.

How his act becomes an adoration is further explained —

Karma Yoga is Karma Sanyasa — 49-57

अस्तक्षुद्धिः सर्वेऽ जितात्मा विगतस्वाहः ।
नेष्क्ष्यति सिद्धि परंशः सुनयासेराधिग्निजिति ॥ ५९

स-सहज-त-युद्धिः सर्वेऽ जि-त-शाल्मा वि ग(मृ)-त-स्थाः ।
शेष्कर्मे-विविधम् परमाम् समू-ति-श्रातेन शधि-प्राहः-विति ॥
asaktabuddhiḥ sarvatra jītātmā vigata sr̥pah ।
naiśkarmyasiddhiḥ paramāṁ samnyāsenā 'dhigacchati

असक्तबुद्धि: asakta buddhiḥ whose intellect is unattached सर्वत्र sarvatra everywhere जितात्मा jītātmā who has subdued his self विगलयिह: vigata sr̥pah whose desires have fled नैषकर्म्यसिद्धी naiśkarmya siddhiḥ the perfection consisting in freedom from action परमेऽः paramāṁ the supreme सम्यासेन samnyāsenā by renunciation अधिगच्छति adhigacchati (he) attains

He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, who has subdued his self, from whom desire has disappeared, he by renunciation attains the supreme state of freedom from action.

A karma yogi is engaged in intense activities. One form of activity succeeds another even as the hour of the clock succeeds one the other. He seems to know of no rest. This is the spectacle he presents to an onlooker. But what actually he is at the core of his heart requires to be studied. He does not identify himself with any place or residence. Wherever he happens to be placed, is accepted by him as his residence. Or to view it in another way, he does not get attached to any place anywhere. Again, things are being handled in abundance by him. As they come in profusely, even so are they disbursed. No modification of any kind do they produce in the mind of the yogi. Water flows in on one side of a bridge and it flows out on the other side. The bridge is neither the recipient of water nor its distributor; it is unaffected by the flow of the river. The yogi, in that fashion, keeps his mind unaffected by the
things of the world. He takes no note of the people
drawn to him, of the people indifferent to him and of
the people opposed to him. This is the state of the
intellect that is unattached everywhere. Thoughts
and feelings rise in the minds of the ordinary people
even as waves do on the sea. But the mind of the
yogi maintains a different state. It is like a waveless
sea. This placid state is due to his mastery over the
self. Objects of sense-pleasure may be displayed in
plenty before an innocent child; but the child does
not cast a covetous look at them, because it has not
yet developed a desire for them. A yogi also does
not behold those objects with any wistful eyes,
because he has outgrown all desire for sense-enjoy-
ment. This man who is obviously the doer of great
activities is in reality a Sanyasin as his mind is
completely unattached, his individuality subdued and
his desires utterly annihilated. The state of actionless-
ness and Brahmanastha are one and the same.

सिद्धि शासी यथा नाह तथा मोति निभोध मे ।
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निह्या ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥ ५०

विधि-दिमुर्गः-नूत; यथा नाह तथा नूत्ति निभोध मे ।
समासेन एव कौन्तेय नि-(स्था) ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥
siddhim prāpto yathā brahma tathā 'pnoti nibodha me
samāsena 'va kaunteya nisṭhā jñānasya yā para ॥

सिद्धिं siddhim perfection शासी: prāptah attained
यथा यथाः as brahma Brahman तथा tathā that ज्ञानोति
'apnoti obtains निभोध nibodha learn ने me of me समासेन
samāsena in brief एव eva even कौन्तेय kaunteya O
Kaunteya निस्त्हा nisṭha state ज्ञानस्य jñānasya of knowledge
या yā which para para highest
Learn from Me in brief, O Kaunteya, how reaching such perfection, he attains to Brahman, that supreme consummation of knowledge. 50

Siddhi or perfection is the state to attain which everything in Nature is incessantly struggling. The very plan and purpose of Nature tend towards this end. The sentient and the insentient are all shaping themselves only for perfection. Carbon that remains buried under earth for ages turns into diamond, a most precious gem. That this great possibility is potent in a piece of charcoal cannot ordinarily be thought of. Time and environment are the factors that contribute themselves for this great miracle to take place. Man delights in helping himself to a luscious apple. The perfection that this fruit has undergone is the cause of the delight of man. But he does not ponder over the process that the apple plant has undergone to bring about this perfection. Sun, rain, dew, fog, water, frost, soil, manure, air—all these have contributed their quota to the apple and have aided its progress towards perfection. All lives are struggling in their own way to reach perfection in their respective spheres.

But of all the attempts of all beings for perfection, that of man enjoys a special merit. The siddhi of the other things and beings is confined to the material plane. Therefore, it is prone to nullification. A diamond for example may again be reduced to a bit of carbon. Honey, nectar and ambrosia turn again into dirt. But the siddhi that is open to man leads him to immortality, to immutation and to
Beatitude. And this perfection of man is not of the body but of the mind. The mind of one man is not like that of another. There are as many moulds of mind as there are human beings. In the course of countless rebirths, these minds are undergoing modifications influenced by internal promptings and external situations.

It is the practice of yoga that chisels the mind of all of its angularities and shapes it into perfection. He is a siddha whose mind is cured of all of its defects. A pure mind is fit for Brahma jñāna. That yogi who gains in Brahma jñāna, becomes himself Brahmā. There is no perfection higher than this to be attained. This unique attainment is open to the human alone.

शब्दोऽविश्वास्य शृङ्खलाय निरूप्य च।
शब्दादिनिविश्वास्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषोऽविद्वस्य च। ५१ ।

buddhyā visuddhayā yuktō dhīryā 'tmānāī niyamya ca
sabdādin visayāms tyaktvā rāgadvēsau vyudasya ca ॥

buddhyā with an intellect visuddhayā pure yuktāh endued dhīryā by firmness
śvāsamātmānāī the self niyamya controlling
ca and shabdādin sound and other visayān sense-objects
vyaktvā relinquishing rāga dvesau attraction and hatred
vyudasya abandoning ca and
Endowed with pure understanding, restraining the self with firmness, turning away from sound and other objects, and abandoning attraction and aversion;

A thing is said to be pure when it is unaffected by extraneous objects. The distilled water is pure because it contains nothing else. The nature of a pure understanding requires to be looked into. It may be compared to a pure and even glass. But, seen through a blue glass, a yellow object appears green. Here, the peculiarity of the instrument of seeing gets itself imposed on the object seen. When seen through a pure colourless glass, yellow remains yellow. The intellect is the instrument of seeing of the Jivatman. The defects in the intellect distort the vision obtained by the seer. Purifying the intellect is, therefore, the foremost factor in self-perfection. Dispositions in the forms of attachment and aversion have all to be eliminated. A serene and equipoised intellect fixed on Pure Consciousness is here designated as a pure understanding. Restraining the self results in transcending the body-consciousness. Thought of the body rarely ever crosses the mind of a perfect sadhaka. The body clings to him just as the shadow clings to all. Firmness in the attainment of this perfection leads him to Brahmāvastha. The external indication of this firmness is the absence of the craving for the bodily requirements such as food and clothing. Further, he is free from attraction and aversion to those few things even, with which he is providentially provided. Simplicity and self-mastery get themselves explained through the life of this sadhaka. Moreover:
विविक्तारी लघ्वास्य यत्वाकायमानसः ।
भ्यानयोगपरो नित्ये चैरास्य समुपास्तिः ॥ ५२

विविक्तास्व लघ्वास्य यत्वाकायमानसः ।
भ्यानयोगपरो नित्यम् चैरास्य समुपास्तिः ॥

viviktasevi laghvast yatavakkayamanaSaḥ

dhyānayogaparo nityam vairāgyam samupāsrītah

विविक्तास्वी vevikta sevi dwelling in solitude लघ्वास्य eating but little यत्वाकायमानस: yata vak kāya mānaśaḥ speech, body and mind subdued भ्यानयोगपरः dhyāna yoga paraḥ engaged in meditation and concentration नित्यम् nityam always चैरास्य vairāgyam dispassion समुपास्रितः samupāsrītah taking refuge in

Dwelling in solitude, eating but little, speech, body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and concentration, ended with dispassion; 52

Man is a gregarious being. Solitary confinement is a punishment inflicted on him; he may go mad if kept long in segregation. He needs company. Society is the training ground for him to pick up civility. Moving amicably with people is his first and foremost lesson in life. But the yogi turns over a new leaf in life by resorting to solitude. He is to change over from extrovert to introvert. His spiritual growth is all subjective. His delight and relaxation are all in the Self. Company of people is a hindrance to him. He feels out of sorts when pestered by people. The sign of his advancing in yoga is that he chooses to be in solitude. By experience he comes to learn that solitude is to the mind what diet is to the body. Man comes alone into the world and
he quits it alone. He is a yogi who learns to be alone while in the world.

Both over-eating and under-eating are harmful at the initial stage. But as one advances in age and becomes advanced in yoga, one finds that under-eating is advantageous both to body and mind. Lightness of the former and clarity of the latter are the advantages. The spiritual fervour in the sadhaka contributes much to the sustenance of the body and the vigour of the mind. Physical food therefore gets automatically reduced.

The yogi commands a perfect mastery over his speech, body and mind. He speaks but sparingly. No vain words come out from his tongue. Measured speech which is ever to the point, marks him out. The yogi involuntarily reveals an elegance in his demeanour. He is a stranger to doing things by fits and starts. His bodily movements are all purposeful and spare. Above all, the mind of the yogi is ever given to communion with the Self. Vagaries therefore can have no access to it. Calmness and serenity mark it for their own.

He is in his element when absorbed in the thought of God. If any other thought happens to cross his mind, it causes him acute pain. Being engaged in meditation on the Paramatman, is the norm with him.

A novice tries to cultivate vairāgya or dispassion to the world. He reflects on the evils of sense-pleasure whenever a passing thought of indulgence makes its appearance in his unwary mind. But a
past master of yoga has no such struggle. As a ripe fruit that has severed its connection with the tree no more goes back to it, the yogi no more gives any thought to worldly enjoyment. His dispassion is superb.

अहंकार चलन दर्पं कामं कोयं परिप्रेक्ष्य ।
विरुध्य निर्मोः शान्तो ग्रहस्वूयाय कल्पते ॥ ५३

ahamkāram balam darpam
dāram krodham parāgraḥ

vīmucya nimamah sānto
brahmabhūyāya kalpate ॥

वाहिकसः अहंकारम् ईकगम चलम् दर्पम् अग्नि कामम् कोयम् कोयम् परिप्रेक्ष्यम् विरुध्य निर्मोः शान्तो ग्रहस्वूयाय कल्पते kalpate is fit.

Having abandoned egoism, violence, arrogance, desire, enmity, property, free from the notion of “mine” and peaceful, he is fit for becoming Brahman.

Man is different from the clothing he puts on. But there are those who identify themselves with their clothes and feel happy or miserable due to the remarks made on their dress. This identification is egoism of a crude kind. Identification with the body is the egoism kept up all through the soul’s transmigrations. Renouncing the body-consciousness and
being established in the Self is the abandonment of egoism.

Thinking of the individuals as physical entities and one individual trying to have an upper hand over the others is violence. He who outgrows this evil is a yogi.

While exercising violence, that individual who succeeds in subduing the others, thinks very highly of himself and lightly of the others. This attitude that he develops is arrogance. The yogi does not run the risk of falling victim to this evil.

Kāma or desire is the hankering after sense-pleasure. He who cherishes the senses is a bhogin and he who curbs the senses is a yogin. The latter has nothing to do with any base desire.

An obstructed fondness transforms itself into enmity. The yogi who sees divinity in all is given neither to fondness nor to enmity.

Bodily sustenance is not possible without property. The ownership of the body leads to the ownership of the property too. While in the body, the yogi is not of the body; while in possession of the bare necessities of the body, the thought of possession is not in the mind. That trifling property is handled with the same indifference and detachment shown to the body.

Free as the yogi is from ownership of any kind, he is necessarily free from the notion of “mine.”

When all the disturbing factors are eliminated from the mind, its resting in peacefulness is a matter
of course. The yogi imbued with these excellences is fit for becoming Brahman.

ब्रह्माभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काह्यति।
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्ति लभते पराम ॥ ५४

ब्रह्माभूतः प्र-सद-न (स)-मात्मा न शोच-ति न काह्य-ति।
समः सर्वेषु भू-तेषु मद्भक्तिः हस्त-कविः पराम ॥

Brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na socati na kāṅkṣati ।
samāḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktim labhate parām ॥

Brahmabhūtaḥ: brahma bhūtaḥ Brahman—become serene-minded na not shocati socati
grieves na not kāṅkṣati desires sam samāḥ
the same sarveṣu sarveṣu all bhūteṣu to beings madbhaktim
madbhaktim devotion unto me labhate obtains
parām param supreme

Becoming Brahman, serene-minded, he neither grieves nor desires; the same to all beings, he obtains supreme devotion to Me.

There are those who see difference between Bhakti and Jñāna. Prompted by bias and predisposition, one school of thought holds Jñāna as superior and the finale of attainment while another school gives that status and rarity to Bhakti. But the Lord makes no such artificial difference between the two. Some preliminary distinctions may seem to exist between these two paths; whereas they become one and the same at their culmination. A baby and its mother evince inordinate love for each other, revealing thereby elements of Bhakti. Where is the scope here for Jñāna, may be a point pertinently raised.
The *Jnāna* that the baby belongs to that mother and that it is she who has become the baby, is implied in that sweet love. *Jnāna* and *Bhakti* are the obverse and reverse of the same coin of a perfected personality.

An incident clarifies this point further. A benefactor was liberally doling out to all the poor who resorted to him, without even scrutinizing into their merits. But one day he was involuntarily drawn to a lad of fifteen who was found in the midst of a few holy nomads. The boy’s physical feature with a scar on his cheek roused the rich man’s earnest curiosity. The nomads responded to his enquiry with the information that about twelve years before they picked up that boy lying unconscious on the river bank somewhere in that locality. The benefactor concluded that this in fact was the child of three that he lost in a boat tragedy those twelve years before! The apparently lost son was reclaimed with joy and filial love. Knowing and loving are interrelated, one augmenting the other.

*Bhakti* being involved in *Jnāna* and *Jnāna* being involved in *Bhakti* are but natural. A *Brahma jnāni* is simultaneously a *bhakta* of Iswara. He beholds all beings with reverence, they being the veritable manifestation of Iswara. Cognizing God everywhere in all beings, he grieves not that any loss has occurred to him in any manner. No desire crops up in his mind for anything that he has not obtained. The *Bhakti* eulogized in chapter seven, stanza seventeen is recapitulated here again.
bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yāś ca 'smi tattvataḥ
īśo mām tattvato jñātvā visate tad anantaram

By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; then having known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me.

Love makes way to the inaccessible. It opens the door to the impossible. The unknown and the unknowable become known to the true lover. More than diagnosing the disease, if the doctor truly loves the patient and identifies himself with the sufferings to which the man is subjected, his diagnosis would be accurate and treatment very efficacious. What is known through love is the true knowledge and what is done through love is the true service.

The Bhakta understands the Lord well because he sees with the eye of love. The more he understands the Lord, the more he loves Him. What the two wings are to a bird, Bhakti and Jñāna are to the sadhaka. He understands that his Lord is both the Saguna Brahman and the Nirguna Brahman.
universe and the beings have all come from Him. After knowing his own relationship with the Lord, he gives himself over entirely to Him. The Lord accepts him as His own self. The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

It is possible for the Jivatman to merge in the Paramatman. He can then state, “I and my Lord are one.” A devoted servant of a master may in the long run be treated by him as a member of his family. Being quite pleased with his earnest service, the master may also install the servant in his place and empower him to execute the domestic concerns in his stead. But the installed man declines that high office with compunction. Still the master insists on his assuming that status. It is in this wise that Iswara claims the ardent devotee as His own. He first reveals His attributes and glories to the Bhakta and then absorbs him in union.

— Sri Ramakrishna

sarvakarmāṇi sadaḥ kūrvaṇo madvyāpāṣrayah|
matprasadād avāpnoti sāsvatanā padam avyayam|

sarva karmāṇi all actions are for the sake ofness of sirvā karmāṇi all actions are for the sake of

Doing continually all actions whatsoever, taking refuge in Me, by My grace he reaches the eternal undecaying Abode.
As Jnāna and Bhakti are the same in their supreme state, Jnāna and karma are the same in their climax. The sadhaka established in Sattva does not renounce karma, he only renounces his agency to karma. Along with his liquidation of agency his Īvānhood is also abnegated. Intense activity creates no weariness in him who renounces agency. The feeling that I am the doer brings in exhaustion and frustration in its trail. A trifling attempt of his own would then seem enormous in his estimate. His attitude of agency is responsible for that magnified feeling. On the other hand, he who serves the Lord thinks of Him and none else. The thought of his own self goes into obliteration. That state of self-abnegation is verily the state of self-surrender. A river maintains its individuality until it reaches the sea. It has an activity too, of its own. But on reaching the sea, that river loses its individuality. It may further get commingled with an under-current in the sea. That activity belongs to the sea and not to the river. Such is also the case with a devotee who dedicates himself to Iswara. He seems bodily an entity, but mentally he is absorbed in Iswara. Whatever takes place in and through that individual is actually the doing of the Lord. The patterns of that action may be variegated. A world devastating warfare also has its place in the sport of the Lord. He who submits himself to be an instrument in the hands of the Lord, is no actor, no agent, no reaper of the fruit of the karma taking place through his instrumentality. His ego is surrendered, Brahman, the Pure Consciousness alone persists, instead.
To be ever engaged in karma is not the goal of life; it is only a means to attain Godhood. Work done without attachment leads the sadhaka Godward. Do not mistake the means for the end. The road to a town is not itself that town.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How are you therefore to conduct yourself in life? The injunction comes:—

चेतसा सर्वकार्माणि मवि संत्न्यस्य मत्तप्र: ||
शुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्म भद्रिच: सत्तम् भवः ॥ ५७

चेतसा सर्व-कार्माणि मवि सम्-वि-अशु-य मद-परः ||
शुद्धि-द्रि-योगम् उप-शा-शि-न्द-व मद-सिद्धः सत-तमुः भवः ॥

cetasā sarvakarmāṇi mayi samnyasya matparaḥ
buddhiyogam upāśritya maccittah satataṁ bhava ॥

चेतसा cetasā mentally sarvkarmaṇi sarva karmāṇi,
all actions मवि mayi in me संत्न्यस्य samnyasya resigning
मत्तप्र: matparaḥ having me as the highest goal शुद्धियोगम्
buddhi yogam the yoga of discrimination उपाश्रित्म
upāśritya resorting to मवि mayi in me सत-तमुः satatam always भव bhava be

Mentally resigning all deeds to Me, having Me as the highest goal, resorting to Buddhhi-yoga, do you ever fix your mind on Me. 57

An aspect of the powers of a government comes to that man who is an office-bearer in it. When he discharges his duty faithfully, more power and responsibility are entrusted with him. In the midst of his exercising authority, he is to hold himself as a limb of that government and that whatever power he wields is actually the power of the administrative system. When he does this, he is said to be endowed
with Buddhi-yoga pertaining to the government and his position in it. But if he fancies that that power is his own, it is a mark of lack of understanding. Similar to this, when the Jivatman comes to know the truth about himself and his relationship with the Paramatman, he is said to have obtained Buddhi-yoga. He is to inquire and find out if there is any category to which the appellation "I" can be pertinently applied. The next inquiry ought to be in regard to the question whether there is anything to which man can lay permanent claim as "mine." Thirdly what exactly man's own karma is, has to be analysed. An accurate study would lead the aspirant to the conclusion that the ego designated as "I," that the ownership fancied as "mine" and that the agency to karma of the Jivatman—that all these three factors are merely in one's imagination. There is no reality whatsoever responding to the Jivahood of the Jivatman.

That aspirant who is endowed with Buddhi-yoga would earnestly carry out the injunctions laid down here by the Lord. He would not secede from the performance of the duty fallen to his lot. Mentally he would hold that the karma taking place through him belongs to the Lord; he would therefore have no attachment to that work. All the happenings that are going on all over the universe are actually the work of the Lord. His planned activity and purpose suffer neither setback nor stagnation due to any Jivatman failing to discharge his duty. It is Sanyāsa to have no personal concern but to do the Lord's work for the sake of the Lord only. The only con-
cern of the Jivatman is and ought to be to get himself merged in the Paramatman. With this great end in view, the Jivatman ought to get his mind ever fixed on the Lord.

If you happen to be blessed with a vision of the Lord, what would you ask of Him? Would you appeal to Him to provide you with facilities to build hospitals, schools, water tanks and alms houses? All these philanthropic activities seem great to us as long as we are removed far away from God. But when we are in communion with Him, all these fade away into insignificance. We ought to pray to the Lord, therefore, not for doing good to the world but for reunion with Him. We ought to beseech Him for devotion, dispassion and discrimination. By loving the Lord we rise from the human to the Divine. Through devotion to the Lord, we get fixed in the conviction that we are the children of His, who is all immortality, all blessedness, all love and all wisdom.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The blessedness born of Bhakti is as follows:

Egoism is Harmful — 58-60

मचितः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्मसादातातिरिष्यति
अथ चेत्मह्याःकारात्र शोष्यसि विनाद्वयसि

मद्-चितः सर्वदुर्गाणि मद्-म-सादात तिरिष्यति
अथ चेतः तवु अहुः-कारात्र न शोष्यसि विनाद्वयसि

maccitakah sarvadurgani matprasadat taryasi
atha cet tvam ahamkaran na sroshyasi vinankshyasi

मचितः maccitakah fixing the mind on me सर्वदुर्गाणि sarva durgani all obstacles मत्मसादात by my grace तिरिष्यति taryasi (thou) shalt overcome अथ atha now चेतः cet if तव्म tvam thou अहुः-कारात्र aham karat from egoism न na not शोष्यसि sroshyasi (thou) wilt hear विनाद्वयसि vinankshyasi (thou) shalt perish
Fixing your mind on Me, you will by My grace, overcome all obstacles; but if from egoism you will not hear Me, you will perish.

The subjective and the objective or the internal and the external are the two aspects of the phenomenal existence. Impediments to smooth and harmonious living have their sources both in the subjective and the objective aspects. Man pays all attention to redress the obstacles caused by the external world. The unhealthy places are improved and made healthy. Copious supply of water is provided to places utterly dry. Hot regions are made comparatively cool by harnessing nature. These are instances of conquering the environment. Modern science pursues these endeavours with remarkable success. But the gaining of happiness does not lie in the subjugation of the external world. Undue extroverted attempt often aggravates pain instead of alleviating it. Introverted attempt is more consequential in this respect. A beneficent world is not beneficent to him who has not conquered his mind. All evils are more subjective than objective. A wicked mind projects wickedness upon the world outside and creates friction and suffering. There is no Satan other than the uncontrolled mind. But that mind which is dedicated to the Lord recognizes His beneficial doings alone everywhere. In the eyes of an ardent devotee, God's helpful hands are constantly at work aiding his onward march. Prahlada's frame of mind may be cited as an example. All the trials and tribulations that came upon him were willingly accepted by Prahlada as the
kindly acts of God in order to increase his Bhakti. Prahlada’s view is the view of every devotee who has effaced the ego.

However much you may try you will not achieve anything if you do not get the grace of the Lord. That grace again, is not easily obtained. All egoism ought to be wiped out as a prelude to it. If the egoistic feeling, “I am the doer,” takes possession of your heart, that attitude would alienate you from Iswara. The Lord remains hidden in that heart which is tainted by egoism.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the harm created by egoism? The answer comes:

यद्यहंकारमाधिस्थितय न चोत्तय इति मन्यते ।
मिथ्येष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतित्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥ ५९

यद अहंकारम् आ-ध्र-त-य न चोत्तये इति मनः-पर-ते ।
मिथ्या एषः वि-मद-सायः ते प्र-कृतिः त्वाम् नि-वोक्ष्यति ॥

Yad ahamkāram āśritya na yotsya iti manyase ।
mithyai ’ṣa vyavasāyas te prakṛtis tvām niyokṣyati ॥

Yat yat if ahamkāram egoism आश्रित्य āśritya having taken refuge in न na not चोत्तये yotsye (I) will fight iti thus मन्यते manyāse (thou) thinkest मिथ्या mithyā vain एषः esah this व्यवसाय: vyavasāyah resolve te thy prakṛti: prakṛtih nature स्वाम् tvām thee niyokṣyaṁ will compel

If filled with egoism, you think “I will not fight,” vain is this, your resolve; your nature will compel you.

Let it be supposed that a murder takes place in the presence of a babe. It is possible that the babe simply laughs at that ghastly happening. This is due
to the utter absence of ego in it. Not only the ego but the inherent tendencies also are lying latent in that nursling. The question cannot be raised as to why the infant does not oppose the murder taking place before it. This is so because agency is not where ego is not. No karma good or bad can be attributed to one who is free from ego. But the duty is different of the man who cognizes evil in society. He ought not to pretend the attitude of a baby. The Lord’s exhortation to Arjuna is as follows —

‘You have been nurtured to this day to the duty of a Kshatriya. Your attainments and aptitudes are such that you vehemently oppose evil wherever you find it. Is it possible for you to practise quietism when wickedness is let loose in your presence? Your hand unconsciously resists a mosquito bite even in sound sleep, that is how your nature works in spite of yourself. That very nature will drag you on to resist evil in the pending war. Any decision on your part contrary to it, amounts to a conflict in your personality. There is no greater harm to you than your make up being split up.’

‘The feeling is surging in you that evil must be eliminated. But physically you want to desist from war, marring your valour. And this is due to egoism born of Rajas. Do not yield to it and disgrace yourself.’

Jnana and mukti cannot be had as long as egoism persists. Birth and death also do not come to an end to him who is given to egoism.

— Sri Ramakrishna
Moreover:

स्वभावजन कौन्तेय निवधः स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कुतु नेचछसि यन्मोहातकरिष्यस्यवशोषस्वपि तत् ॥ ६० ॥

स्व-भाव-जन कौन्तेय नि-(वन्द्र)-वयु-तः स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कक्षम् न इच्छसि यदृ मोहात । कर्त्र-ि-(क्ष)प्रसि ल-वशः भवि तदः ॥

svabhāvajena kaunteya nibaddhaḥ svena karmanā ।
kartum ne 'ichhasi yan mohāt karyasya avaso 'pi tat ॥

स्वभावजन svabhāvajena born of (thy) own nature
कौन्तेय kaunteya O Kaunteya निवधः: nibaddhaḥ bound
स्वेन svena (thy) own कर्मणा karmanā by action कक्षम्
kartum to do न na not इच्छसि icchasti (thou) wishest
यत् yat that mohaḥ mohāt from delusion kariṣ-
yasi (thou) shalt do अवसि avasah helpless अष्टि api also
tat that that

Bound by your own karma born of your nature,
that which from delusion you wish not to do, even that
you shall do helplessly against your will, O Kaunteya.

A man is not different from his nature. He and
his innate tendencies are identical. A few examples
are required to clarify this point. A new cyclist often
drives his cycle into a ditch much against his wish.
This is due to his frightened nature having sway
over him at that moment. A man is an adept in
several languages so much so that it is difficult to find
out which among them is his mother-tongue. But
when an overwhelming joy or sorrow takes possess-
ion of him, he blurs out his feelings in his native
language which is on a par with his own nature.
Dreams of one and all are in tune with their nature.
In other words, dreams are the indicators of the
mental make up of people. Nobody enjoys any freedom to dream according to plan. Everybody is a victim of his dream. He is to experience whatever dream falls to his lot. In the midst of these vagaries, one thing is certain: The dream of an individual is not different from the disposition of that individual. It is but normal that a good man enjoys good dreams and a bad man enjoys bad ones. As dreams cannot be avoided, nature also cannot be ignored. Man is obliged to act in conformity with his nature. Heaven and hell are the projections of the mental make up of people. As shadow follows a substance, man's nature clings on to him. To act therefore in tune with one's nature is the only way to work out and to exhaust one's karma.

The vessel in which garlic juice is kept takes in that strong smell. However much the vessel may be washed, the pungent smell would not disappear. Egoism is very much like the smell of garlic. It is adamant and would not easily be obliterated.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How is the force of karma to be handled? The clue is given —

All karma belongs to Iswara — 61 62

ईश्वरः नर्वभूतां हेदेयेक्तुम निष्ठलि ।
आभिमग्नयर्भूतानि यज्ञामृद्यानि माययः ॥ ६२
उभरः गर्भं तानापः रद्धेर्द्धे अर्जुनं तिष्ठति ।
आभिमुद्गतः गर्भं भूतानि यन्त्य-आ र्द्यानि माययः ॥

Iśvarah sarvabhūtanāṁ hṛddēṣe 'ṛjuna tisthati ।
bhrāmayān sarvabhūtanāṁ vajra-rudhānī māyaya ॥

80–60
Earth: tvarah the Lord sarva bhūtānāṁ of all beings hṛdeṣe in the hearts arjuna O Arjuna tiṣṭhati dwells bhrāmayan causing to revolve sarva bhūtāni all beings yantra ārūdhāni mounted on a machine māyayā by illusion

The Lord dwells in the hearts of all beings, O Arjuna, and by His Maya causes all beings to revolve as though mounted on a machine.

This truth is made evident by the way in which Sri Krishna and Arjuna made their appearance on the battle-field. Arjuna representing the Jivatman was mounted on the chariot, which was analogous to the human body. The chariot moved and the warrior waged the war. The former was unconscious of its movements, while the latter was conscious of the part he played in the war. That hero who first felt that he was the author of his karma was later obliged to learn that all karma actually belonged to Iswara. Sri Krishna drove the chariot, but He took no weapon and waged no war. In other words, while the presence of the Lord causes all work to take place systematically, He remains actionless. He, the Lord who resides as witness in the hearts of all, does no work; but His presence propels the beings do their duties.

The meaning of the word Arjuna is he who is white in colour or pure in nature. He who is pure at heart is competent to know the truth. In the presence of the Paramatman, Māyā sakti assumes the power of action. Not only does it do karma con-
stantly, but it also compels beings under its control to work in obedience to its law and regime. Like dolls tethered to a revolving wheel, they are engaged in action. Ignorant as the beings are, they imagine that they are themselves self-initiated workers. They entertain the notion that the choice of doing or not doing a thing is all in their hands. Because of this notion they get increasingly entangled in Maya. He is a sadhaka who changes his attitude and holds on to the conviction that he is not the doer, but that he is only an instrument in the hands of the Lord. All the Jivatmans ranging from the high to the low are only tools of Iswara in His cosmic activity. It is with this attitude that the sadhaka should work out the karma inherent in him. Instead of claiming agency, he ought to submit to be a willing vehicle.

Poison within the teeth of a snake causes no harm to it. But that poison injected into others causes death to them. Similarly Maya that is in Iswara causes Him no harm. Rather, it is an adorable attribute of His. And this Maya keeps all beings in bondage.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The statement is now made of the benefit ensuing from the feeling that the Lord gets His work done through all beings.

$tam eva saranam gaccha sarva bhavena bharata$  
$tatprasadat param santim sthanaṃ prapṣyaśi sāsvatam$
Seek refuge in Him alone with all your heart, O Bharata. By His grace you will gain Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode.

The most propitious and consequential act that the Jivatman can do for himself is to take refuge in the Lord. To claim the body as his own, to consider himself as the agent of all of his activities, to conceive of himself as a person of consequence in the world—all these attitudes contribute to foster the impermanent Jivahood of the Jivatman. They run counter to taking refuge in the Lord. The relationship between the Jivatman and the Paramatman is the same as that between the wave and the ocean. The wave has no water of its own. The Jivatman has no body of his own. The forms of both are impermanent; they are always in a state of flux. The activities of the wave are actually those of the ocean. The wave can never have an existence independent of the ocean. All activities of the individual souls are in reality the sport of the Lord. They have neither individuality nor existence independent of the Lord. Knowing this truth and attuning one's life to this truth is the act of taking refuge in the Lord.

The Pandava brothers, Vidura, Draupati, Kuchela and others had taken refuge in Sri Krishna.
The brothers of Sri Rama had taken refuge in Him. So also Guha, Sugreeva, Vibheeshana and others had taken refuge in Sri Rama. All those who had taken refuge derived immediate peace of mind. Kaikeyi, Vali, Ravana, Kamsa and others of their type revolted against the Lord instead of taking refuge in Him. And there was no end to the excited troubles they had brought on themselves.

The setting of Nature is ever congenial to the spiritual growth of the Jivatman. This favourable situation is termed as the grace of the Lord. Poetically stated, the wind of the grace of God is constantly blowing. Those among the aspirants who dedicate themselves to the Lord are like the prudent sailors who avail of that wind to navigate the ship to her destination. The seamen who take advantage of the wind need not have to toil much in oaring the ship. Similarly, the devotees who take refuge in God do not suffer from their worldly life. Though heavily engaged in karma, they are not bound by karma. Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode in God are verily theirs.

Srimathi Radha was commissioned to fetch water for Sri Krishna with a pitcher full of holes. Not a drop of water leaked out when she discharged that duty for the sake of the Lord. When the assembled Gopis and others extolled her greatness, she exclaimed that whatever had taken place was the glory of Sri Krishna and that she was merely an instrument in His hands.

— Sri Ramakrishna
Thus has wisdom more profound than all profundities been declared to you by Me. Reflect upon it fully and act as you choose.

That truth is said to be profound which is hard to grasp. That other truth is said to be a secret which is kept hidden from others. The laws of Nature are both profound and secret. We know of some of them while the others still remain hidden from us. Many of the secrets of Nature now known to us, had remained unknown for ages. Electricity may be cited as an example. Modern man has learnt to harness this great power. Science deals elaborately with this phenomenon in Nature. Science brings to light many other features and possibilities of Nature. It has made tremendous strides in modern days and is continuing to make further progress. But all these are classified as secular knowledge, pertaining to the mundane.

Sacred knowledge is that which deals with the Divine. This knowledge is known as Brahma Vidya, and it is the oldest and the most perfect one among
the sciences. Its sole purpose is to lead man from the impermanent to the Permanent, from ignorance to Enlightenment, from sorrow to Beatitude and finally from death to Immortality. In its practical aspect, it comes down as injunctions — what to do and what to refrain from. In this Supreme Science, there is no place for sophistry and dogmatic fiat. The governing principles are presented systematically and logically. Superstition and baseless belief have no place in Vedanta. All tenets, commandments and systems of yoga are presented coherently and convincingly. Man is given the freedom to investigate into the validity of this science. It is no sin, no libel to doubt the very existence of God. Nihilism, atheism and agnosticism have their due places in man’s honest search into the Reality. When consistently pursued, even these seemingly derogatory paths wean man from darkness to Light. Freedom is the first condition of growth — physical, mental, intellectual, ethical and spiritual. The Lord encourages Arjuna and through him all aspirants to exercise their power of understanding, enquire into yoga as daringly and inquisitively as they can and accept and practise those principles only which they are convinced are beneficial to them. Laws pertaining to the ethical and spiritual life of man are inviolable; they are facets of Truth. They require no defenders, no patrons and protectors. Sri Krishna Himself gets His status as Yogeshwara because of His being the embodiment of the principles of Yoga. A personality becomes great to the extent he adheres to principles. A seeker after Truth must be more a
votary of principles than of personality; and that is what Sri Krishna asks Arjuna to do.

The culmination of all human endeavours is enunciated in the following three stanzas:—

The Category of Self-surrender — 64-66

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः भूष्म मे परमः वचः।
ईषोऽसि मे द्रष्टस्यति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम्। ६४

सर्व-गुह्य-समाप्तं भूयः: भूष्म मे परमां वचः।
इष्ट: श(सू)ति मे द्रष्ट: इति तत: ब्रह्म स्वामि ते हितम्।

sarvaguhyatam bhuyah srnu me paramam vacah
isito asi me drham iti tato vakshyami te hitam

सर्वगुह्यतम सर्व गुह्यतम् the most secret of all सूच: bhuyah again भूष्म srnu hear से me my paramam supreme वच: vacah word इष्ट: istah beloved असि asi (thou) art से me of me द्रष्ट: drham dearly इति iti thus तत: itah therefore वक्ष्यामि vakshyami (I) will speak ते te thy हितम् hitam what is good

Listen again to My supreme word, the profoundest of all. You are beloved of Me and steadfast of heart; therefore I shall tell what is for your good. 64

It is not possible for all to dive deep into the sea; a few experts alone can do it. Among the principles governing human life, the ordinary ones can be grasped by almost all; but the profound ones elude the understanding of the common man. A good deal of mental preparation is required for their comprehension. Being dazed with the knotty problems of life, Arjuna appealed to the Lord at the outset for Sreyas to be taught to him. The compas-
sionate Lord guides His constant companion just now converted into a devout disciple, into the core of the Sreyas. Paraman vachaḥ—the supreme word—is the apt term used in this respect. Mahā vākyā—the great assertion—is another rare term equivalent to it. The Mahā vākyās in the Upanishads are the great utterances of the Rishis. This Paraman vachaḥ is on a par with the Mahā vākyās in the Upanishads. The Lord Himself makes this conclusive statement.

Just as the subtle workings of Nature are beyond the ken of the ordinary people, the subtle spiritual truths concealed in the human heart are also incomprehensible, except to a few advanced souls. The Lord residing in the hearts of all is their fastest Friend. His grace is ever at work to redeem beings. All the happenings in the world outside are also directed towards that one end. The grace of the Lord is the greatest spiritual alchemy. It converts a base man into a sterling man, into a divinity and ultimately absorbs him into Godhood. Nature is the great divine factory where this spiritual reclamation is eternally carried out. What the divine touch is capable of, is presented in two different ways by Sri Krishna. He takes a trifling reed and makes a flute with it, which, if trampled on, becomes useless rubbish. But in the hands of the Lord, it fulfils a cosmic function. The melody that He produces with it enchants all beings and draws them in union with Him. An inert reed becoming an instrument in the hands of the Lord can animate the universe. This is the first aspect of the divine touch. Secondly, what the Lord
is capable of doing with the human material is pronounced in the following stanza.

How does the devotee behold the Lord? He beholds Him as his own, even as the Gopis of Brindavan beheld Sri Krishna. Those milkmaids cared not for the cosmic powers of that Great Being. Krishna was their darling and they were satisfied with that. To the Bhakta, the Lord is his innermost Self and he is absorbed in that feeling.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the Sreyas expounded by the Lord? The elucidation comes:—

मन्यन्ता भव मद्भक्ति मधाजी मां नमस्कुर ।
सामेश्चेत्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिज्ञाने प्रयोक्ति मे ॥ ६५ ॥

मद्द-भवः मद्द-भवः मद्द-जाती मां नमस्कुर ।
मानस् एव (इक्षु) एष्ठ-ि सत्यम् ते प्रति-ि (जा)ने ग्रंव: ववि ने ॥
मन्नमानाः भवा मद्भक्ति मद्यांि मां नमस्कृरु ।
मानस् एवि 'स्यानि सत्यांि ते प्रतििनाए प्रयोि 'सि मे ॥

मन्यन्ता: manmanāḥ with mind fixed on me भव bhava be मद्भक्ति: madbhaktaḥ devoted to me मधाजी मद्यांि sacrifice to me भान् māṁ मे नमस्कृरु namaskuru bow down सत्यांि māṁ to me एवि eva even एष्ठि esyasi (thou) shalt come सत्यांि satyaṁ truth ते te to thee प्रतििनाए pratiśaṁ promise ग्रंवि: priyaḥ dear असि asi (thou) art ते me of me

Fix your mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice to Me; prostrate before Me; so shall you come to Me. This is My pledge to you, for you are dear to Me.

Truth and God are identical. Whatever comes from Him must be Truth, even as what emanates
from the sun must be sunny. The gifts of the sun are light and heat, both being indispensable to life on earth. This is the bare truth about the sun. Similarly the Lord declares the bare Truth about Himself and His relationship with the Jīvatman. The sole object of His being embodied is to tell this Truth to the world. The lives of the great ones bear testimony to the fact that whoever follows this teaching emerges as an extraordinary being. The Truth in the Lord's statement is amplified by them as well.

The Lord's statement, 'You are dear to Me' is pregnant with meaning. In fact, all beings are dear to Iswara. When the required purification is effected the all-absorbing love is made evident. The Dvaita, the Visishtādvaita and the Advaita systems are the three typical modes of establishing relationship between the Jīvatman and the Paramatman. Love expresses itself in and through all of these patterns. It asserts the Truth that the Jīvatman and the Paramatmān are ever linked. It is the greatest unifying force. Progress culminates in perfect union. Love leads the Jīvatman to the pinnacle of eternal union with the Paramatman.

We make use of a vehicle when we want to go from one place to another. The vehicle is the means and reaching the place is the end. But in our pilgrimage towards the Paramatman, the means and the end are the same. It is by the grace of the Lord that we get at the Lord. By His grace only we make endeavours to get at Him. The grace of the Lord is the one boon that is ever available to man; but
man is not prepared to avail himself of it. His base mind drags him away from the Divine. This earth-bound mind is very useful to him to procure those things only that are detrimental to spiritual growth. Its vagrant behaviour continues through several births before discrimination dawns on it. When right understanding develops, the mind submits itself to be directed Godward. It is then weaned from the world and dedicated to the Lord. The mind that had erstwhile been the den of base tendencies is converted into the sanctuary of the Divine. And this is a sublime and soul-redeeming turning point in man’s life.

As the devotion to the Lord increases, the devotee imbues the divine qualities of the Lord. In her excessive love of Sri Krishna, each Gopi thought she was herself Sri Krishna. And this is the goal to which pure devotion leads the devotee. While in the process of getting fixed in it a divine madness overtakes the devotee; the Lord in his turn becomes mad for His devotee.

When the love for a person overshadows the love of wealth, all the wealth is willingly sacrificed for that person, even as parents do for their children. To a devotee nothing in the world is dearer than his Lord. His offering therefore as sacrifice all his possessions and ultimately himself too, is but a matter of course.

Prostration is a mark of subordinating one’s individuality to the greatness of another. The devotee delights in prostrating himself before his Lord,
because in doing so he posits the truth about God. The more the prostration before the Adorable Being, the greater is the bliss enjoyed by the devotee.

In chapter nine, stanza thirtyone, the Lord induced Arjuna to proclaim that the devotee never meets with destruction for any reason whatsoever. But at the conclusion, the Lord Himself undertakes to fulfil that solemn mission. He pledges that His devotee is well protected.

A man immersed in water struggles hard for air to breathe. A seeker of God ought to evince a similar restlessness for His realization.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the eternal and life-redeeming message that comes forth from the Lord? It is as follows:

सर्वधर्मान्त्यार्पित्वाय यामेके ध्याण वजन।
बहु त्वा सर्ववानेमोऽक्षयिष्यामि यथा शुचः। ॥ ६६
सर्वधर्मात्वार्पित्वाय माम एकम् सरास्मात् व्रजन वजन।
बहु त्वा मे शरणाम् मोऽक्षयिष्यामि यथा शुचः। ॥

sārvadharmān parityajya mām ekam saranaṁ vṛaja
aham tvā sarvapāpebhya mokṣayisyāmi mā sucaḥ

— Sarvadharmān sarva dharmān all duties parītyajya having abandoned sāmām māṁ to me ekam alone sārāmāṁ saranaṁ refuge vṛaja take bahum aham I

Renounce all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone. I shall liberate you from all sins; grieve not. 66

An embodied being is also an embodiment of
karma. That karma is called dharma which proves helpful to the Jivatman in his Godward progress. On the attainment of Godhood that helpful dharma itself has to be renounced, its purpose being fully served. Surrendering himself to the Lord is the culmination of all the endeavours of the Jivatman. The import of self-surrender requires to be truly understood. It is not the confession of one's inability to discharge one's duty oneself. It is not a supplication for an additional help from the Lord, after the mode of a troop being replenished. But self-surrender is like a stream joining a rivulet, a rivulet having its confluence with a river, and a river making itself over to the ocean. Self-surrender is verily self-fulfilment. The will of the Jivatman merges in the Will of the Lord. The will and the doings of the Jivatman are in reality infinitesimal sparks of the Will of the Lord. Karma yoga raises the sadhaka to the realization of this benign position; it results in self-surrender.

A Bhakta on the other hand is ever depending on his Lord. The good and the evil that befall him are all viewed by him as the Will of the Lord. Therefore he makes no distinction between the good and the evil. He does not contrast dharma with adharma. From the beginning to the end, the Bhakta feels himself as non-separate from the Lord. Rather he loses his individuality in the absorbing love of the Maker. If a man walks in the middle of a busy street through absent-mindedness, he runs the risk of meeting with some accident. But the Bhakta's case is different. In his God-intoxicated state, he is not
aware of the earthly happenings. And Providence mysteriously protects him even in places exposed to dangers and mishaps. Like a baby in the bosom of its mother, the devotee is under the kind care of the Maker. All the same, the good work that is to be done through that devotee is turned out unawares. Intense thought of God is the self-surrender of the Bhakta.

The dawn of knowledge in the Jnāni is also a form of self-surrender or an act of taking refuge in the Lord. The reflections of the good and the bad things may be seen in a mirror. For this reason, the mirror undergoes no modification. The actions known as dharma and adharma belong to the Prakriti. They do not in the least affect the Pure Consciousness, which is the background of the individual. He who identifies himself with the Pure Consciousness renounces all Upādhis or the limiting adjuncts. What persists in him is the great Awareness, which knows no distinctions such as the internal and the external. The attainment of this Supreme State is the act of taking refuge in the Lord.

The state of self-surrender or the act of taking refuge in the Lord achieved by the yogi, the Bhakta and the Jnāni is one and the same. Lord, the one Reality is defined in three different ways, governed by the characteristics of the paths. The yogi merges himself in the Sat aspect of the Reality; the Jnāni waxes as the Chit and the Bhakta blooms in the Ananda aspect of It.
A babe seated on the lap of its mother wields the unconscious power to attract all men and women to its taintless sweetness. This is due to the babe's mind still remaining in its original divine state. It has not yet assumed the artificial modifications and biases known as the nationality, the colour, the language and the social habits and usages. Its inborn tendencies are also still lying dormant. While in this state, the babe is, for the time being, equivalent to the Jñāni. It is therefore attracting all beings to its august presence. It is hard to find one, quite immune to the benign influence of the baby.

The Jñāni is on a par with the baby in the excellence of his mind. It is held that the renunciation of mind is the greatest of all renunciations. Various tendencies and dispositions are clinging on to the mind of the unenlightened. And these tendencies are termed as svadharma. To work out one's svadharma is the only means to outgrow one's svadharma. The best cure that can be effected for a disease is to allow it to run its course; and that is the natural course. But if it be suppressed instead, it reappears in some other worse form. The svadharma of an individual is in this manner clinging to him. To work without attachment and liquidate the karma is the goal of life. When the rain-bearing clouds exhaust themselves with a downpour, the clear sky remains as ever by itself. When all karma is worked out with detachment, Atman as Pure Consciousness remains by Itself.

A thing is said to be pure while it is in its original state. That very thing is said to have
become impure when it comes into contact with and affected by another thing. The impure state of the Jivatman is termed as his having incurred sin. To put it in another way, the Jivatman is a sinner; for, he has assumed on himself what is not his own. Karma which seems inherent in him is actually alien to him. When the Jivatman identifies himself with the Paramatman, he is purged of all sin. It is moksha or liberation when the Jivatman is rid of the Jivahood. He is freed from individualized consciousness and fixed in Cosmic Consciousness, which is without beginning and without end. He is Immortal. He is Bliss and Beatitude. Grief has no place in that State of Blessedness. When a baby is born into the world, it cries. Only a still-born one does not cry. In one form or another crying and grieving continue all through the mundane life. It is in the attainment of Brahma jñāna that grief comes to an end once for all. The Lord assures that Divine Felicity to Arjuna who started his enquiry into yoga with despondency. Brahma jñāna is all Enlightenment. So there is no place in it for the darkness of ignorance. Brahman is Sat-chit-ānandam. On renouncing the mind, what remains of the Jivatman is Brahman.

Arjuna is the immediate recipient of the message of the Lord, which is eternal and universal. It applies to all the souls wending their way Godward. “Cast off weakness; wake up with manliness; discharge your dharma”—with such a commandment the Lord commenced His message. “Renounce all dharma and be in eternal union with Me” is again His conclusion. The intervening teachings are all the means
to cross over from karma to the Beatitude which is beyond karma. His teachings become lucid to all the aspirants who take refuge in Him and seek enlightenment from Him. Self-surrender ultimately leads to the union of the Jivatman and the Paramatman.

What is the state of complete self-surrender? It is like lounging and taking rest after the day’s hard toil. It is free from care and grief. Indefinable Bliss emanates from it.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The yoga aspect of the spiritual message of the Bhagavad Gita is over here. A question may arise as to who are the persons that are fit to study and practise this teaching, universal though it is. The answer comes:

Competency for Following the Gita — 67-71

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभकाय कदाचन ।
न चाच्छृष्टेवे चार्यं न च मां योद्ध्यथ्ययति ॥ ६७

इदं ते न व-नवव-काय न व-भजन-काय कदाचन ।
न च व-च्छृष्टेवे वाच्यमु न च माधु येशस्मातुण्यति ॥

idam te nā 'tapaskāya nā 'bhaktāya kadācana ।
na cā 'susṛṣava vācyam na ca māṁ yo 'bhyaśāyati ॥

इदम् idam this te te by thee n na not अतपस्काय atapaskāya to one who is devoid of austerity n na not अभकाय abhaktāya to one who is not devoted कदाचन kadācana ever n na not च ca and अच्छृष्टेवे asusṛṣava to one who does not render service or who desires not to listen वाच्यम् vācyam to be spoken n na not च ca and माधु māṁ me म: yah who अभ्यासूण्यति abhyasāyati cavils at
This is never to be spoken by you to one who is devoid of austerities, nor to one who is not devoted, nor to one who does not do service, nor to one who speaks ill of Me. 67

The Bhagavad Gita is a symposium of all the principles governing the ethical and spiritual life of man. The Lord's supreme motive is to make these teachings available to all the aspirants. The life of man would rise in stature to the extent these principles are imbibed and put into practice. Still, there are flippant people among whom this sacred science should not be made a cheap affair, serving no useful purpose whatsoever. As an album of beautiful pictures and drawings is of no avail to the blind, the teachings of the Gita do no good to those who are devoid of austerity and disciplined life. Again, a thoroughly disciplined life is not an end in itself any more than merely owning a perfectly made musical instrument is. As music ought to be brought out of the instrument, a perfect life of man ought to be directed to the cultivation of devotion to the Lord. It is Bhakti that sanctifies the human life and renders austerity purposeful. The nature of Bhakti is ever to give unconditionally and never to grab. The devotee expresses his love in the form of service. He delights in serving and not in being served. The best utility to which the human body can be put is a whole-hearted service to others. Finally, all these merits must be dominated by the feeling that it is Divinity that is manifesting itself in all these forms. Any attitude short of it is likely to beget evil and sow
the seed of sorrow in its train. That man who slights Godhood in the creation nullifies whatever good he may do to people. He who is devoid of austerity, devotion, service and faith in the inherent Divinity of man derives no benefit from the pursuit of the Bhagavad Gita.

The word *asurasrūshavah* has two meanings. He who does not render service, is one meaning, and he who does not care to listen and follow is another meaning. Out of conceit, bigotry or fanaticism if one refuses to pay heed to this message, it need not be imposed on such a one.

Rain water does not accumulate on an elevated place. It flows away to a low region. Even so, the grace of the Lord does not descend in the hearts of the haughty and the vainglorious. It dawns in the hearts of the low and the meek.

— Sri Ramakrishna

What is the benefit derived by the one who propagates the teachings of the Gita as an act of service to the Lord? The answer comes:—

```plaintext
y ēdv pariṃ guhā paramaḥ maṇḍakṣetāyāmayatī
lokāśchidāpi māyā pariṇāmaśuddhiṁ svadāśrayanto
dvārakaḥ pātābhijātāyāmayatī svāhā
```
Having done सामू māṁ to me एवं स्व एव even एवं ति एव全面建成 shall come असंस्थ असंस्थ असंस्थ असंस्थ असंस्थ double doubtless doubtless

He who with supreme devotion to Me will teach this immensely profound philosophy to My devotees, shall doubtless come to Me alone.

The good and the beneficial in one increase as and when they are shared with others. Food for example is indispensable and most beneficial to all beings; and it is sought and procured for personal benefit only. But on experiment and observation it may be found that he who procures food for common use prospers better than he who grabs it exclusively for himself. He who eats in company or he who shares his food with others keeps better health and strength than he who eats all by himself. Fostering other lives is the sure means to enrich one’s own life. And this principle is as efficacious at the ethical and spiritual levels as it is at the physical level. By imparting knowledge and wisdom to others one gets ingrained in intellectual clarity. He who teaches others learns better than he who studies for himself. The more one teaches the more that one learns.

By devotedly carrying the spiritual treasures contained in the Bhagavad Gita for the benefit of other ardent souls, the preceptor gets a better grasp. The one who expounds the Gita ought not to assume the role of a master. One ought to feel oneself an instrument of the Lord, in spreading His spiritual message. The role of the master engenders egoism while that of a servant of the Lord promotes devotion to Him. The delight in the propagation of the
spiritual matters among the good and the virtuous increases the steadfastness in the *sādhana*. Bhakti and *Jñāna* are on the increase in such an ardent soul. Spiritual service is therefore another means to gain access to Divinity.

Bhagavan, Bhagavata (the scriptures) and Bhaktas are all identical.

— Sri Ramakrishna

How does the Lord hold the devotee who carries this spiritual message among righteous and the spiritually inclined people? The answer comes:

न च तस्मानमुस्येषु कथितं सन्यस्तम् ।
भविता न च मे तस्मादिन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥ ६९

न च तस्मान मनुष्येषु कश्चिं मे प्रियः क्रत्तमाह ।
भविता न च मे तस्माद अन्यः प्रिय-तरः भुवि ॥

na ca tasmān manusyeṣu kasciṁ me priya kṛttamaḥ ।
bhavitā na ca me tasmād anyāḥ priyataro bhuvī ॥

न ना न च ca and tasmāt tasmāt than he manusyeṣu among men kaccaṁ any me of me priya kṛttamaḥ one who does dearer service bhavitā shall be n na not c ca and me of me tasmāt tasmāt than he anyaḥ another priyatarāḥ dearer bhuvī in the earth

Nor is there any among men who renders dearer service to Me than he; nor shall there be another on earth dearer to Me than he.

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All the happenings, great and small, magnificent and minute, taking place in the universe are verily the doings of Iswara. The universe itself is the revelation of the glory of Iswara. Among all these
manifestations and revelations, the Bhagavad Gita occupies a unique position. It explains the working of the universe and the divinity inherent in it. It expounds the laws governing human life. The Substratum which is the Source of the universe and the beings in it, is lucidly presented by it. Knowledge pertaining to the Divine and the mundane is all contained in it. To put it in another way, the ways and the means of attaining Godhood and also of making earthly life prosperous and fruitful, are all convincingly conveyed through it. The follower of the Gita would very soon become a yogi. For all these reasons the carrying of the message of this great book to the prospective sadhakas is a benign work. No other service is equal to this spiritual mission. The doer of this soul-emancipating service is indeed dear to the Lord, he being instrumental in this solemn act.

The drain pipes on the roof of the house are fixed with open mouths of tigers and lions. The rain water coming from the sky therefore seems to jet out from the mouths of these beasts. Similar to this, the utterances of the holy men appear to be their own, while actually they all descend from the Most High

— Sri Ramakrishna

It is not given to all to do the noble service of expounding the Gita. Still they have a duty by this benign book. That duty is explained as follows:

अध्येयपते च य ह्यं धम्मं संनादमात्ययोः ।
हानयनं तेनाहत्मितः स्यामिति मे मति: ॥ ७०

मह(क)ह-(क्ष)भ-व च य ह्यम् पर्यम् सम्ब्रह्माय-अवशयोः ।
हान-यवेन तेन शाश्व-हस्तः (मन्त-त.)(मह)ह-शाम-हति मे मति: ॥
adhyeṣyate ca ya imaṁ dharmyaṁ samvādam āvayoḥ
jñānayajñena tenā 'ham īṣṭaḥ syām iti me matiḥ

And he who will study this sacred dialogue of ours, by him I shall have been worshipped by Jñāna Yajna; such is My conviction.

Devotedly hearing the exposition of the Bhagavad Gita is one way of learning it; a personal pious study of it is another way of making it one's own. Earnest perusal and pondering provide the means to make spiritual matters one's own. A clear understanding of the spiritual matters is an effective means for the adoration of the Lord. The very purpose of human life is to adore the Almighty through right understanding and right relationship with Him. He who adheres in life to the teachings of the Gita makes an unconscious but very effective propaganda of it. For, the best way to preach Vedanta is to live Vedanta. Practice is always superior to precept; a refined living is superior to a refined exposition of the law of life. Preachers may be had in plenty; but those who practise the precept are but few. Those who study the Gita and try to live up to its teachings are performing jñāna yajna, which is very much pleasing to the Lord. It is again a superior form of the worship of the Maker.
There is another man who is unable to study the Gita. What is the course he should adopt for his emancipation? The path is shown as follows:—

अध्ययनार्तर भूमिकादितीये नरः | ।
सौरये युक्तः स्मारितानामानास्तिवियार्याशक्तिभ्रमणम् ॥ ७१ ॥

अध्ययनः सत्सद्यां: व (स)स्मायुक्तः शिवः नरः ।
सः सत्सद्य: शिवः श्रीमानः हृदिकारः सत्सद्-स्मायुक्तः पुण्यकर्मावधिं ॥ ॥

sraddhārāṇ anasaṇyaḥ ca śṛṇuyād api yo narah ।
so 'pi muktah subhānil lokān prāpnuyat punya ।
karmānāṁ ॥

 ignorance, sraddhārāṇ full of faith anasaṇyaḥ
free from malice ca and śṛṇuyād may hear
api also yah who narah man saḥ sak he āpi
tax also śṛṇyaḥ muktah liberated śrīman subhān happy
lokaṇ worlds śāntaśrī prāpnuyat shall attain punya
karmānāṁ punya karmānāṁ of those of righteous deeds

And the man who hears this, full of faith and free
from scoff — even he, liberated from evil, shall attain
the auspicious regions of the righteous.

The man who is heedless of food is consequently
heedless of his bodily fitness. There is a man who is
well informed of the nutritive value of the food he
consumes and of the digestion and assimilation of it
in his system. There is another man who eats with
gusto but does not know how that food gets absorbed
in him. The one that knows and the ignorant man
derive the same benefit from the food consumed. The
clear exponent of the Gita and the one who earnestly
practises it from mere hearsay obtain the same
benefit. The clarity of understanding is possible both
through earnest expounding and through ardent hearing. The impress produced on the mind is the same in either case. An earnest practice is all important irrespective of the way in which the principles of the Gita are assimilated.

It is but natural for the teacher to enquire of the taught if he has grasped the teaching properly. In tune with this usage, the Lord now asks Arjuna as to how he has received this immortal message:

The Dawn of Knowledge — 72-73

कच्चिदेतच्छुत तपाः त्वंयकाश्रय चेतसा ।
कच्चिदश्यानसमोहः प्रनष्टाः धनञ्जय ॥ ७२

कच्छिद एतत् श्रु-नमू पर्यं तथा एकाश्रय चेतसा ।
कच्छिद भ-श्यान-समू-गोहः (प्र-श्रु-तः) प्रनष्टः ते धन-मु-जय ॥

kaccid etac chrutam pārtha tvayai 'kāgreṇa cetasā ।
kaccid ajñānasamāmohah pranāṣṭas te dhanamājaya ॥

कच्छिद kaccit whether चतुर् etat this शुरुम् सुरुम्
heard पार्थ pārtha O Partha त्यथा tvaya by thee एकाश्रय
ekāgreṇa by one-pointed चेतसा cetasā by mind कच्छिद kaccit whether ब्यानसमिह: ajñāna samāmohah the delusion of ignorance प्रनष्टः pranāṣṭaḥ has been destroyed ते te धनञ्जय dhanamājaya O Dhananjaya.

Has this been heard by you, O Partha, with an attentive mind? Has the delusion of your ignorance been destroyed, O Dhananjaya? 72

The concentration of the mind is the criterion for a comprehensive reception of any message delivered. A distracted or an inattentive mind may or may not grasp all the implications of a sublime
statement. A brief and pointed pronouncement is sufficient to drive home the point to a keen and attentive listener. Here, the deliverer of the message is concerned with the welfare of the taught. Hence this enquiry about the state of mind of the person.

Enlightenment is possible to that mind only which is fixed in concentration. The sunbeams gain in intensity as they get converged. A concentrated light is at once highly self-expressive and capable of revealing things in their native perspective. A concentrated mind understands the Atman and the Prakriti just as they are. Knowledge and ignorance do not co-exist. The former reveals things as they are while the latter distorts them in divergent ways. A figure in dim light is viewed variously by people of various dispositions. A thief passing by it doubts whether it is not a policeman, who in his turn takes it for a thief. A timid man gets frightened thinking it to be a ghost. But a fourth man who has already seen it in broad daylight understands the figure to be a stump of wood. With the dawn of true knowledge all apparitions of ignorance vanish of their own accord. The Lord enquires of Arjuna if he has been blessed with a true understanding of the import of life.

When an ardent disciple is taught by a worthy master, true enlightenment is bound to ensue from it. Arjuna's answer bears evidence to this fact.

श्रुतिस्मृतिभिः स्मरणसाधनेनास्मृत
स्मिरीकृतिः गतसंदेहः करिष्ये वचनं वचः ॥ ७३
naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā tvatprasadān mayā 'cyuta!
sthito 'smai gatasamdehāḥ karisyē vacanam tava

Arrjuna uvāca

Arjuna said:

My delusion is destroyed. I have regained my memory through Your grace, O Achyuta. I am firm; I am free from doubt. I shall act according to Your word.

At the start Arjuna declined to fight and sat dejected on the seat of the chariot. But the man was thoroughly transformed after hearing the life-invigorating message of the Lord. He made himself over entirely to the Maker, which is the last and the best act of the Jivatman. The fuel consigned to fire becomes fire as it should. In that manner Arjuna became an instrument of the Lord. He surrendered his individuality and regained identity with the Cosmic Personality.

The message of the Bhagavad Gītā was delivered for the immediate benefit of Arjuna. But it has become the ambrosia infusing life to all the way-

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worn aspirants. The passage of time does not mar its freshness. It provides the guidance for an abundant life. It cures man of the evil of birth and death. What is prepared for the benefit of one individual often happens to be of no use to him but of immense use to some other person. The rain-bearing clouds for example gather in one place and pour down in another place. Any accident of this kind has not taken place to the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita. The worthy man for whom it was imparted made the best use of it and derived the maximum benefit from it. Indications of that blessedness are in evidence in the very utterance of Arjuna. Every part of it is pregnant with profound ideas. They may be profitably looked into:—

Achyuta is the term applied here by Arjuna to his Master. He who does not deviate from His Supreme State, is the literal meaning of this word; and Sri Krishna is verily the embodiment of that Supreme State. Whoever gives himself over to that Divinity gains It in return. Arjuna has undoubtedly surrendered himself to that Great Being, thereby making himself the inheritor of Divinity.

*Mohah nashīah* is his next statement. "My delusion is destroyed" is the meaning of this utterance. A man in delusion sees stars in the sky in the day-time. A dwarf appears as a giant to him. Arjuna was besieged with a delusion of this kind on his initial survey of the battle-field. Earthly life was beset with problems to him. Life seemed an unbearable burden; he could neither carry it nor rid himself
of it. He would have preferred non-existence to existence. He who was in such a plight is now completely free from delusion. The self-created problems have all melted away as an empty dream. Life and death, duty and its termination, bondage and freedom—questions pertaining to these dualities are all resolved along with the destruction of delusion.

_Smrtih mayā labdhah_ means ‘I have regained my memory.’ A man in epilepsy forgets himself completely. He does not know how he acts and what he utters. He is obliged to learn from others about his behaviour in that abnormal state. People attached to earthly life suffer from a delirium of their own. Their view of life is based on things impermanent and on false premise. Arjuna has now awakened to reality. Memory of himself and of his relationship with the Maker has come back to him. In a purified mind ātmabodha or uncontaminated Awareness dawns of its own accord. That experience is here delineated as regaining one’s own memory.

That the _Jivatman_ is not a mere creature of circumstances, that he has his part to play in the functioning of the Cosmos and that he is part and parcel of the Paramatman are all realized in the regaining of one’s memory.

_Tvam prasādāt_ means ‘through Your grace.’ The Lord’s grace is indispensable to the reawakening of the _Jivatman_ to his original state. A man in swoon is brought back to his normal wakefulness by his face being washed with cold water and by fanning cool air to him. This service rendered to him is not
to be discounted as trifling. It is a great act when its effect is taken into consideration. Arjuna did not regain memory of his Supreme State solely through his self-effort. Sri Krishna had His part to play in this respect; and Arjuna is fully aware of it. He gives expression to his indebtedness. Rather the grace of the Lord is unparalleled. It is impossible to repay that divine act. Arjuna is fully aware of what he was before the grace descended on him and of what he is now after its benign descent. The only thing that he is capable of doing is meekly to admit that he owes his everything to the divine intervention of the Lord. The littleness of the human effort and the greatness of the grace of the Lord are lucid in the mind of Arjuna. He humbly submits that it is the grace of Sri Krishna that has made him what he is now.

Sthitaḥ asmi—‘I am firm.’ This is the third excellence come upon him by the mercy of the Lord. When a tempest and a torrential rain set in simultaneously, all trees, plants and creepers are in commotion. They are either uprooted or broken. The loss caused to them is incalculable. Even the soil that sustained them is all eroded and washed away. But a mountain remains unaffected by this catastrophe. It is firm in its place. Brahma jñāna makes a man firm as a rock. The one fixed in it is a sthitaprajña—a man of steady wisdom. Arjuna has attained that state now. Nothing on earth or in heaven can disturb his understanding. Having gained this jñāna once, the man of wisdom never loses it again.
\*Gita sandehak—’I am free from doubt.’ This is the fourth boon come to Arjuna. No doubt rises in the mind of the one who intuits the Atman. Just as no one doubts one’s existence on earth, the Brahma jnāni does not doubt the Self which he is. His Awareness is self-evident.

\*Tava vacanam karishye—’I shall act according to your word.’ This is Arjuna’s concluding statement. What he declined to do at the start, that he chooses to do subsequently. And this is the result of right understanding. The teachings of the scriptures, the injunction that comes from the enlightened master and the spiritual realization of the sadhaka—all these three never come into conflict with one another; they simply corroborate one another.

The tadpole can live both in water and on land after it sheds its tail. The tail of ignorance drops off from man when he gets enlightened in Brahma jnana. He then becomes a Jivanmukta—liberated soul. He simultaneously lives in the world and rests in Brahman.

— Sri Ramakrishna

The dialogue ends here. Its link with the rest of the events is presented in the following few stanzas.

Sanjaya’s Conclusive Statement.—74-78

\*Sankṣeyya śvacya

इत्यह वातुदेवस्य वार्त्तत्स्य च महात्मनेन।
संवादाद्विष्मश्रीतमहत्तुर्तं रोत्तर्पणम्। ॥ ७४

इति भद्धम् वातुदेवश्च पार्थ्यश्च महात्मा-आदेशम्।
साम-नास्त्युद्गम महाद्व-श्रीपति, अभुवतप्रमु रोम-हर्ग्यनम्। ॥
Sanjaya said

Thus have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Vasudeva and the high-souled Partha, causing my hair to stand on end.

Excitements such as fear, joy and astonishment create horripilation. Men who are perfect in body and mind are proof against fear and such negative excitements. Hair standing on end due to religious fervour augurs well for the _sadhaka_. Sri Krishna the speaker, Arjuna the spoken to and the matter like the _Gita_ are bound to rouse up wonder in any intelligent hearer. It is no wonder that this rare spectacle made Sanjaya's hair stand on end. But history bears evidence to the fact that Dhrtarashtra remained unaffected by all these divine happenings.

By mentioning Arjuna as Mahatma, the great-souled one, Sanjaya makes it plain that he and his comrades are all of the same noble calibre.

A question arises as to how was it possible for Sanjaya to know of this dialogue that took place in 80-62.
the far off battle-field. The answer to this question emanates from Sanjaya himself:—

न्यासश्रादाण्डृतवाचसेरुद्युहसंह पत्रम् ।
योगेण योगेश्वरत्र्क्षणत्सत्साक्षात्कथयत । स्वयम् || ७५

न्यास-प्रकाशानन्दु-सु-तवानु एवत् गुहयं जहम् पत्रम् ।
योगम् योग-ईश्वरानु क्षणादु साक्षात्-कथयतः स्वयम्।

vyāsaprasādāc chruṭavān etat guhyam aham param ||
yogam yogesvarāt kṛṣṇāt sāksāt kathayataḥ svayam

न्यासश्रादान्यासा प्रसा दात through the grace of
Vyāsa छुटवाँ त्रुटत वाण I have heard पत्रः एतात this गुहम्
guhyam secret जहम् aham I पत्रः param supreme योगम्
yogam yoga योगः-वरत् yogesvarāt from the Lord of
yoga क्षणान् kṛṣṇāt from Krishna साक्षात् sāksāt directly
kathayatḥ declaring svayam svayam himself

Through the grace of Vyāsa have I heard the
supreme and most profound yoga direct from Krishna,
the Lord of Yoga, Himself declaring it. 75

The sage Vyāsa blessed Sanjaya with the divine
eye. The powers of clairvoyance and clairaudience
came upon him as a result of this divine gift. It was
therefore, possible for him to intuit all that transpired
there, including the vision of the cosmic form of
Iswara, that was revealed to Arjuna.

That it was a rare privilege bestowed on him is
further reverently declared:—

राजनसृंस्तृत्य संस्तृत्य संवादमिलिततत्तम् ।
केशराज्ञीनां: पुर्णं हुमायुं च मुम्प्रधुप: । ७६

राजन जमायः-त:-य संस्तृत्य समावायम् इमम् भदुःतमम् ।
केशव-वर्ज्यानां: पुर्णस्य हुमायुं च मुम्प्रधुप: मुधुः।
rājan saṃsmṛtya-saṃsmṛtya
samvādam imam abhūtam

kesāvarjunayoh punyam
hṛṣyāmi ca muhur-muhuḥ

राजन् rājan O king संस्मृत्यa having remembered संस्मृत्यa having remembered सम्बादेम् samvādam the dialogue हृष्य म् हृष्य म् abhūtam wonderful केसावार्जुनयोः kesāvarjunayoh between Kesava and Arjuna पुन्य म् punyam holy हृष्य म् hṛṣyāmi (I) rejoice च ca and मुहूः muhuḥ again मुहुः muhuḥ again.

O king, as I recall again and again this wonderful and holy dialogue between Kesava and Arjuna I rejoice again and again.

The delight that Sanjaya~enjoys indicates the sublimity of this scripture. The act of the good and the holy people getting absorbed in the study of the sacred books leads them to an ethereal bliss, which is not given to the ordinary.

तत संस्मृत्यa संस्मृत्यa हृष्यम्यायं हरे: ।
विस्मये मे महान्रजन्न्यायम् च गुनः गुनः: ॥ ७७

tat ca saṃsmṛtya-saṃsmṛtya
rupam atyadbhutam harek

विस्मये मे महान कुजन
hṛṣyāmi ca punah-punah: ॥

तत that च ca and संस्मृत्यa having remembered संस्मृत्यa having remembered हृष्य म् rūpam the form अत्यद्भूतम् atyadbhutam most

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wonderful हरे: hareḥ of Hari विस्मया: vismayaḥ wonder ने me my महान् mahān great राजन् rājan O king हृṣ्यामि hṛṣyāmi (I) rejoice च ca and पुन: punaḥ again पुन: punaḥ again

And as often as I recall that most wonderous form of Hari, great is my astonishment, O king, and I rejoice again and again.

It was by chance that Sanjaya was blessed with the vision of the cosmic form of the Lord, which is rare to be had even by yogis and devotees. Incidental though this vision was, it was a rare gift inducing him to the path of yoga. In fact all the Jivatmās are having at all times an infinitesimal aspect of the vision of the cosmic form of Iswara. But they do not know how to avail themselves of that ray of vision for further spiritual progress. Every individual can recapitulate a sublime vision of Nature, a sublime experience or a sublime state of mind, that came by him in the course of his life on earth. That divine contact is a speck of the vision of the cosmic form. By meditating on that exalted state, he can make rapid progress in his sādhana. The exalted vision that Sanjaya had on a macrocosmic scale is provided on a microcosmic scale to all the discerning sadhakas. Availing themselves of it, cogitating on it, rejoicing at it and being absorbed in it is a means of growing in yoga.

यत्र योगेऽथः क्रमे यत्र पार्थ धनुधेरः ।
तत्र श्रीविन्योहृतिस्तेव नीतिमंतितिमेव ॥ ७८

Yatra yogaha krame yatra partha dhanura
tatra shri vinyo hruhitast ev niti mantimen

Yatra shree vin - nishcaḥ śrutāḥ
tatra shree bina - nishcaḥ śrutāḥ

Sutra: śrutā śrī niti: m (थ) - niti: mām
yatana yogesvāraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanurdharaḥ
tatra sīr vijayo bhaṭūr dhruvā mītṛ mātir māma

yatra wherever यत्र wherever यत्र wherever यत्र wherever as it isPartha, the wielder of the bow, there is Partha, the wielder of the bow, there is Partha, the wielder of the bow, there is Partha, the wielder of the bow, there is Partha, the wielder of the bow, Partha Parth
lives and property would be on a colossal scale. That
catastrophe could be warded off by a change of atti-
tude and a stroke of compromise. But no such wise
course dawns in the mind of the unimaginative and
undiscerning king. The direct action of God Him-
self is not understood by him.

All human endeavours ought to be in tune with
the Will of the Divine, or in accordance with the
Cosmic Plan. In that case the attempts would all
be ethical and conducive to the progress of man.
Subordinating the human will to the Divine does not
mean drifting into pacifism and quietism. Activity
depending on the Almighty is the right approach to
life. And that is what the Pandavas did from the start
to the finish. In contrast with it the Kaurava approach
to life had its defects. It was all totalitarianism and
defiance of the Lord Himself, not to speak of His
grace. This way of life seems all prosperity at the
beginning, but it ends in a tragic crash. A sound
social life provides for enormous human endeavours
based on dharma and faith in the Cosmic Integrity
which is the vibhūti — glory of Iswara.

Sri is prosperity or Rajya Lakshmi. A vegeta-
ting earthly life unbecomes individuals as well as
nations. Thriving and flourishing at all levels are
the signs of robust living.

Leading the weak and helpless into captivity is
no victory. It is the despotism of the demoniac.
Vanquishing the wicked and taming them on the
virtuous path is victory. When the undertakings of
glass and polished metals receive and reflect it brilliantly. Such is also the case with the brilliance of the Divine Grace. It is available to all equally and without partiality. Still it gets best reflected in the hearts of the good and the holy and best availed of by those blessed ones.

The Lord incarnates on earth for the guidance of the good, the devoted and the virtuous ones. Those apostles that accompany an Incarnation of the Divine are either the already perfected ones or those that are born for the last time before their liberation.

— Sri Ramakrishna

इति श्री महाभारते शब्दाशङ्काणं संहितायां बैयासिक्यां भूष्णपर्वणि भूमक्षणपदव्यात्सुपनिपत्तु ज्ञानविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णाजैनसंवादे मोक्षसत्त्वात्योगो नाम अष्टादशोऽध्यायः

iti sri mahābhārate satasāhasryāṁ samhitāyāṁ vaiyāsikyāṁ bhīṣmaparvanī srimad bhagavadgitā- sūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṁ yogasāstre sri kṛṣṇārjuna samvāde mokṣa samnyāsa yogo nāma aṣṭādaśa 'dhyāyāḥ

In Sri Mahabharata consisting of a lakh of stanzas composed by Vyasa, in the section called Bhishma Parva, in the Upanishad of the Bhagavad Gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eighteenth discourse designated:

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THE APPELLATIONS OF ARJUNA

AS DEFINED IN THE GITA

Anagha — the sinless one.
Arjuna — the pure in nature.
Bharatarishabha — the best of the Bharatas.
Bharatasattama —

Bharatasreshta — the conqueror of wealth
Dhananjaya — the conqueror of sleep.
Gudakesa — he whose ensign is a monkey.
Kapidhvaja — the son of Kunti
Kaunteya — he who wears a diadem.
Kunti — the joy of the Kurus.
Kurunandana — the best of the Kurus.
Kurusreshta — the mighty-armed.
Mahabahu — the son of Pandu
Pandava — the son of Pritha, Kunti.
Partha — the scorcher of foes
Parantapa — the tiger of men.
Purushavyaghra — one who could shoot arrows with the left hand also.
Savyasachin —
THE NAMES OF SRI KRISHNA
EMPLOYED IN THE GITA

Achyuta — He who does not deviate from His divine nature.

Arisudana — He who destroys the enemies.

Bhagavan — He who is endowed with power, virtue, fame, glory, detachment and freedom.

Govinda — The knower of the Jivatman.

Hrishikesa — The Lord of the senses.

Jagannivasa — The abode of the universe.

Janardana — He who is adored by devotees for the fulfilment of their desires.

Kesava — He who has beautiful hair. The Lord of the Trinity.

Kesinisudana — He who slaughtered Kesin.

Krishna — The dark one.
The remover of sin.

Madhava — The Lord of Lakshmi.

Madhusudana — He who destroyed the demon named Madhu.

Purushottama — The Supreme Person.

Varshneya — He who belongs to the Vrishni clan.

Vasudeva — The son of Vasudeva.
The Immanent in all.

Vishnu — The all pervading One.

Yadava — He who comes of the Yadu clan.

Yogeswara — The Lord of Yoga.
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