



THE PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS
OF
BHAGAVADGEETA

BY :
D. B. GANGOLLI

PUBLISHERS :
Sri Shankarashram Trust
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Preface.

It is little known that the commentaries on Bhagavadgeeta, which is as popular, if not more, in the whole world as the Bible, are more than on any other Hindu religious text. Even in respect of many words, sentences and their order or sequence, there are many different versions. Apart from those which have been examined by the author of the original source of this booklet, there may be many more old manuscripts of Bhagavadgeeta in museums in our country and abroad too.

Although the famous commentry by Anandagiri and other equally popular commentators have been examined for deciding the real purport of Bhagvadgeeta, which is a Smriti Shastra, the final conclusions and observations mentioned in this booklet have been arrived at only after they are reconciled with the real source for the Bhagavadgeeta, namely, the ten principal Upanishads for which Sri Shankaracharya has written his erudite commentaries. If any topic is taken up for discussion and elucidation, the various commentaries are weighed and examined vis-a-vis the Upanishadic Bhashyas by Sri Shankaracharya, so that there is all-round unanimity and agreement but hardly any room for any ambiguity, much less contradiction of any kind.

The original source for this booklet is the Kannada book - " Shreemadbhagavadgeetabhashya "

written by Sri Satchidanandendra Saraswati Swamiji, of revered memory, the founder of Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarasipur, Hassan District. The original Kannada book with its original text, Sanskrit Bhashya of Sri Shankaracharya, the Kannada transliteration with excellent and illuminating footnotes by the Swamiji and an elaborate index runs, into 1074 pages. In addition, it contains an enlightening 31 page Introduction by the scholarly Swamiji, dealing with the real purport of Bhagavadgeeta. With a view to helping the true aspirant in his study and understanding of the special features of the Smriti Prasthanas, the booklet has been divided into two succinct parts entitled - "The purport of Bhagavadgeeta" and "The Quintessence of Bhagavadgeeta", based on the Introduction of the original Kannada book and the gist of each Chapter written by the revered Swamiji at the end of each Chapter. The author, who has prepared this transliteration more as a labour of love and for propagation, hopes that his humble effort would be of immense value and benefit to the true seeker of Atmavidya.

Bangalore.

D. B. GANGOLLI.

Diwali Day, November 1, 1986

PART I

THE PURPORT OF BHAGAVAD- GEETA

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**The Place of Bhagavad-Geeta Among the Three
Paths (Prasthanā Traya), for Teaching the
Ultimate Truth**

There is a convention of dividing Shankara's extant commentaries (Bhashyas) into three groups called the 'Prasthanā Traya Bhashyas. Scholars have named the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Geeta and the Brahma Sutras as Prasthanā Traya. The Sanskrit word 'Prasthanā' means a path which begins to teach (an aspirant) the knowledge of the Reality. As each of these three paths is of a different kind, they are together called as Prasthanā Traya. The Upanishads, which are mostly to be found in the Aranyaka portion of the Vedas expound the knowledge of the Self to the best qualified aspirants and the techniques of meditation to the middle class aspirants as paths for attaining Liberation or Emancipation. The Bhagavad Geeta takes the Upanishadic lore or texts as the basis for explaining or elaborating on the relationship among the three paths of Karma (Action), Yoga (Meditation) and Bhakti (Devotion) and the goal or destination of these paths, namely Jnana (Knowledge of the Self). The Brahma Sutras confirm the Truth enunciated in the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Geeta by means of logic or a system of dialectics. Thus as the subject generally expounded in the Upanishads is confirmed in a unique manner in the Bhagavad-Geeta and the Brahma Sutras, true aspirants who wish to know comprehensively and convincingly the Truth taught by Vedanta should necessarily study these Prasthanā Traya Bhashyas stage by stage. In this scheme of study the Bhagavad-Geeta Prasthanā occupies the second place.

The Uniqueness of Bhagavad-Geeta Bhashya

Though comparatively Bhagavad-Geeta is small in size, it is very valuable to the aspirants as it is like a veritable ambrosial lake for showing clearly the harmony in essence between the practical and the theoretical aspects (of the Truth). Sri Shankara's commentary is like marble steps around this lake. Comprising only 700 verses and the text being composed in very lilting style, the Geeta has fascinated through its profundity and subtlety of teaching several scholars to attempt writing sub-commentaries on it. Among the commentaries on Bhagavad-Geeta available at present Sri Shankaracharya's commentary is the most ancient, but even before him 'many had written commentaries on Bhagavad-Geeta and in spite of it the people did not know definitely what was the real import of the Geeta'. This is stated by Sri Shankara himself and hence to know what exactly he thinks to be the unique teachings of Bhagavad-Geeta and what defects he points out in the other earlier commentaries has become very essential for the aspirants.

As the pre-Shankara commentaries are not available today, we have to surmise the true nature of those other commentaries from whatever references Sri Shankara has made in his Geeta Bhashya for refutation. As regards the post-Shankara commentaries we have every scope for studying them ourselves directly with a view to knowing the mutual differences. Thus after comparing Sri Shankara's commentary with other commentaries from whatever sources available, we find one important difference standing out prominently and that is, as Shankaracharya has opined, the knowledge of the Ultimate Truth which is propounded in the Bhagavad-Geeta as a path for attaining Liberation is Vastu Tantra (to know the truth as it is, not depending on the will or wish or volitions of the aspirants) like Jnana (cognitive knowledge of the Self) as enunciated in the Upanishads. But the other commentators (Acharyas) have opined that this knowledge of the Self is of the nature of meditations. What Shankara stresses to be the knowledge of one's essence or core of Being

is not accepted at all by the others. Consequently, this has given rise to totally contradictory doctrines being held by these groups in the matter of the mutual relationship among Karma' Yoga, Bhakti and Jnana. But this is not the place for taking up all the various commentaries for analysis. Therefore, we will scrutinise only those other commentaries which have been referred to by Shankaracharya in his commentary and will let the aspirants know the unique method adopted in the present Commentary.

Who are the Vrittikaras ?

One pre-Shankara Vrittikara, who had written a commentary on Bhagavad-Geeta had propounded that by practising both Jnana and Karma, blending them equally, one can attain Liberation. We do not know who this Vrittikara is. Some believe that he is Bodhayana, who is referred to at the beginning of the commentary on the Brahma Sutras by Sri Ramanujacharya. But in Shankara's commentary no basis or evidence is available to prove that this Vrittikara was a Vishishtadvaitin (follower of qualified Monism) Just because the Vrittikara had stated that a blending of Karma and Jnana enables one to attain Liberation we cannot infer from that one reason alone that he must be a Vishishtadvaitin. For, Mandana Mishra, the author of Brahma Siddhi, though an Advaitin, has accepted a blending of Jnana and Karma (for Liberation). Bhartruharyana, a champion of the theory of blending Jnana and Karma who has been off and on refuted by Shankaracharya in his Brihadaranyaka Bhashya, is a protagonist of the theory of Bhedaabheda. Whether this Vrittikara referred to in the Bhagavad-Geeta Bhashya is Bodhayana or not cannot be ascertained conclusively because the belief that during the time of Shankaracharya there were Vedantins who did not accept Advaita in Liberation is itself controversial. In the Geeta Bhashya (13-2) reference has been made to some opponents who opined 'By meditating on Ishwara, the indweller in the body, one can get Sakshatkara (materialisation of the deity) and thereby get established in His Swarupa (essence of Being) to enable him to get rid of the bondage of Samsara'. Thus we cannot know

whether the Vrittikara referred to here and earlier are one and the same person or they are two different persons.

The Doctrines of the Vrittikaras

Whatever it may be, these Vrittikaras were propounding that by blending Jnana and Karma alone one can attain Kaivalya (Liberation). Karmas mean the rituals mentioned in the Shrutis and the Smritis, like Agnihotra etc. The doctrine that one has to perform these Karmas as long as he is alive was accepted by these Vrittikaras, just like the Mimamsakas on the basis of the Shruti utterances. Sri Shankaracharya alleges that this is quite contrary to their own introduction to the Geeta, because these Vrittikaras had accepted Sanyasa Ashrama also, and on this basis we can infer that these Vrittikaras, like the Mimamsakas, had opined that Sanyasa Ashrama was recommended for those persons who did not have the ability to discharge the duties of a householder. Besides, there is a possibility for us to infer that these Vrittikaras had accepted the theory that the persons pursuing other Ashrama Dharmas could blend Jnana with their Karmas to attain Liberation. Anyway it is quite certain that these Vrittikaras opined that if a householder did not perform his Karmas he faced the consequence of Pratyavaya (sin of not discharging one's duties), and so he should not give up his Karmas; if Mumukshus (aspirants for Liberation) performed their duties or Karmas as a devotional offering to Ishwara or God, these Karmas or actions would not bind them. From their interpretation of the quotation, "Brahmaarpanam Brahmahavihi" (Geeta 4-24) we have to infer that they had believed that making a mental offering to Brahman was 'Jnana Yagna'. Thus in their opinion as Jnana meant Upasana (meditation) only, their theory of attaining Liberation through a blending of Jnana and Karma amounted to a practice of combining Karmas and Upasanas for obtaining Liberation. This is evident.

We can easily imagine that because these Vrittikaras had thus given more prominence to Jnana mixed with Karmas they had

literally translated the verse - 'Karma is superior to Karma San-yasa' (Geeta 5-2). In the Sixth Chapter it is evident that they were attempting to relate the teaching of the statement- 'for the aspirant it is Karma and for one who is an adept it is tranquillity (Shama)' - to Karmis (ritualists) only. Thus in their opinion Jnana meant upasana (meditation) and for this reason it can be surmised that their opinion was that the fruit of Jnana that is Liberation, could be attained only after the fall of the mortal coil in due course of time. Besides, in the Eighth Chapter it is described that 'Shuklagati' (Bright Path) can be pursued only by Yogis and those Yogis go through the Sushumna Nadi to reach Brahma Loka and get liberated and this description must have been believed by these Vrittikaras to be in support of their theory of blending Jnana and Karma. As to how these people were interpreting the distinction between Jnana and Vijnana adopted in the Geeta we cannot find any sentences as clues but yet we can surmise that they must have explained that Jnana is a knowledge of Paramatman or Reality as subsidiary to Upasana and Vijnana is the Sakshatkara (materialisation of deity) as a result of Jnana. For, all schools commonly accept that only through Upasana one attains Sakshatkara. So, we will not be wrong if we conclude that these Vrittikaras opined that wherever in the text sentences which describe the Self as He is, have been used, there they signify a form of the Reality to be meditated upon, wherever the sentences mention direct perception of the fruits of Jnana they signify Sakshatkara and wherever the sentences state results of Liberation after the fall of the body there they signify the main Liberation.

Bhashyakara's Opinion : The Relationship Between Jnana and Karma

What Sri Shankaracharya has stated as his opinion about the essence of Geeta is quite contrary to the opinion of the Vrittikaras. In Shankara's opinion, Liberation results only from Jnana and Liberation is not to be obtained after the fall of the body. On the other hand Liberation is attained immediately

tely on the dawn of Jnana and when the person is alive. To yield the fruit of Liberation Jnana does not need any support from Karma. 'On attaining Jnana Nishtha alone through Sarva Karma Sanyasa (renunciation of all Karmas) the bondage of Samsara is destroyed with its roots.' The Karma which is stipulated in the Varnashrama Dharma yields Abhyudaya (all-round prosperity) and is helpful for obtaining positions of heavenly deities. But the same Karma if performed as a devotional offering to God, Ishwara, it helps to purify the mind or the heart and thereafter it becomes a path for Liberation as a Parampara Sadhana (accessory discipline). The Geeta's main purpose is to teach Karma-oriented Pravritti Dharma, Jnana-Vairagya-oriented Nivritti Dharma and the Ultimate Reality (Parabrahma) called Vasudeva. (Pravritti Dharma means religion of prosperity and Nivritti Dharma means religion of renunciation). The quintessence of all Vedas is only this and it is stated here in a brief manner.'

Karma (Ritualistic Activity) Karma Yoga [Yoga of Action] and Karma Sanyasa (Renunciation of Action)

The fact that how Sri Shankaracharya, who reiterates that Liberation or Emancipation (Moksha) results from natural establishment in one's real nature as the Self (Sarva Nishtha) alone through genuine renunciation of all actions (Sarva Karma Sanyasa), has taken the Geeta, which repeatedly advocates action (Karma), as a text for teaching Liberation is a secret not known to many a scholar and aspirant today. But those who have reflected and ruminated over the Bhashyas (commentaries) by Sri Shankaracharya on the Geeta are not at all surprised at this. For, renunciation of action (Karma Sanyasa) does not mean simply giving up action or activity (Karmas). To those who give up Karmas because of the fear of physical strain cannot obtain the fruits of renunciation (Tyaga) and this is stated in the Geeta itself (13-8). The theory advocated by the Sankhyas and others that even Karmas like Yagna (sacrifice), Dana (charity) and Tapas (austerity) etc., have to be given up as they have defects and the theory of the Mimamsakas (followers of the school of

Jaimini's Poorva Mimasa or the Karmakanda portion of the Vedas) that through Karma only one can attain Liberation are both not acceptable to the Geeta. Just like the statements made in the Shrutis like the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that if Yagna, Dana and Tapas are performed without any hankering after their fruits and as a devotional offering to Ishwara, the Lord, those very Karmas through the means of purification of the mind or the heart (Chitta Shuddhi), become the cause for the attainment of Jnana (Self-Knowledge) (Bri. 4-4-22), here also in the Geeta it is stated that from these Karmas (Yagna, Dana and Tapas) one obtains Chitta Shuddhi (18-6). That Jnana Nishtha (establishment in Self-Knowledge) and Karma Nishtha (dedication to one's duties and responsibilities) are meant for aspirants with different qualifications of Sankhya Buddhi (discriminative power of the mind) and Yoga Buddhi (mentality of total surrender), respectively, is propounded distinctly) in the Geeta in the same manner as it is done in the Upanishads (the end portions of the Vedas called the Vedantas which contain the treatises on Self-Knowledge) Yoga Buddhi means : A conviction of the mind which has assimilated the essence of both the view-points of Karma Yoga, which stipulates doing Karma as a devotional offering to Ishwara and its result namely, Dhyana Yoga (Yoga of meditation) ; only to such aspirants with such a bent of mind is Karma taught to be necessary in the Geeta. Sankhya Buddhi means: The conviction of people who have the discriminative knowledge of the nature of the Self or the Ultimate Reality. As there is nothing left for these people to be achieved through Karma, they are advised to be rooted in the knowledge of the Self alone. Although only those who have renounced all Karmas are qualified for achieving Jnana Nishtha, to get the proper ability or capacity for that Nishtha (firm establishment) one has, as a precondition, to perform Karma Yoga, For, Karma Yoga itself is the path for Jnana Yoga, which is the nature beyond the reach or jurisdiction of Karma. Therefore, Sri Shankara's opinion is that though Jnana Nishtha, which is achieved through renunciation of all Karmas, is the direct path for Emancipation, Karma Yoga, by virtue of its giving the proper qualification or ability for that Nishtha, is also an accessory path for Liberation.

To be able to cognize or Intuit the nature of the Self, who is the innermost or the very core of our Being and who is beyond the I-sense (ego), certain conditions of our mind become essential, and they are : 1, Ceasing the identification with the body and the sense organs etc 2 Giving up the desires for the enjoyment of outer objects. 3 Stop hankering after achieving the fruits of efforts in this world or other worlds like Pitru-Loka, Indra Loka, Brahma Loka etc , 4 The discernment that whatever things or results obtained by any efforts are non-eternal : 5 Determination and perseverance in realising the Eternal Reality, which is beyond the concepts of time, space and causation etc

In order to gain these mental purificatory conditions (Chitta Shuddhi) conducive to the intuition of the Self, two kinds of disciplines (Sadhanas) are prescribed in the Geeta. One is called as the Sahakari Sadhana or co-operative means or disciplines and the other the Parampara Sadhana or accessory means or disciplines. For the co-operative means cultivation of qualities like-humility, modesty, non-injury, patience, uprightness, service of the teacher (Guru), purity, steadfastness Self-control, absence of attachment for the objects of the senses and also absence of egoism, perception of evil in birth, death and old age in sickness and pain, unattachment, absence of affection for son, wife, home and the like, and constant equanimity in the face of the desirable and the undesirable things, unflinching devotion to the Lord in Yoga of non-separation, resort to solitary places, distaste for the society of man, constancy in Self-Knowledge, perception of the consummation of the Knowledge of Truth (B.G. 13-7 to 11) is necessary.

These qualities are appropriately described as the co-operative means, for they are helpful : because "they are conducive to Self-Knowledge". The innate and natural tendency of the human mind is to seek the enjoyment of the outer objects and always hanker after them. In fact, the mind is created, as it were by the Lord as at present (before the teaching by the Shastra and the Guru) to be exfrovert only. Thus when the mind is fully preoccupied with these enjoyments and hankerings

it would be impossible for it to grasp the subtle teachings about the real Self as well as to be able to cognize or intuit Him as our true essence of Being. Therefore Sri Shankara says in his Bhashyas : 'What are opposed to these (humility, modesty etc.) viz, pride, hypocrisy, cruelty, impatience, insincerity and the like, is ignorance, which should be known and avoided as tending to the perpetuation of Samsara.

The accessory means or disciplines are Karma Yoga and Upasanas. Karmas are of two kinds secular and Vedic or scriptural. Secular Karmas are worldly duties or family responsibilities, service etc., the Vedic Karmas are Yagna (sacrifice), Dana (charity) and Tapas (austerity). Unlawful or immoral actions are called as 'Vikarma' and they should always be avoided. Negligence or indifference with regard to one's responsibilities and duties are called 'Akarma' and that should be eschewed at all costs. Discharging one's own responsibilities, duties and commitments in life is called 'Karma' and this should be assiduously observed.

Though Pravritti Dharma or Religion of Works, which is a means of attaining worldly prosperity, is enjoined on the several castes and religious orders and it leads the devotees to the region of the Devas (deities) and the like, still when practised in a spirit of complete devotion to the Lord and without hankering after the immediate results, it (Religion of Works) becomes conducive to the purity of the mind (Sattva or Chitta Shuddhi). The man whose mind is pure is competent to tread the path of Knowledge. Thus indirectly the Religion of Works, i.e. Pravritti Dharma forms also a means to the Supreme Bliss. This very idea is implied by the Lord (Sri Krishna) in the Geeta 5-10 and 11.

Let us consider now how Karma can be blended with 'Yoga' method. According to Sri Shankara the word 'Yoga' is used in the sense of 'means' i. e. Karma Yoga is a means to the attainment of Self-Knowledge. This method is four-fold :

1. Giving up the egoistic attitude (B. G. 18-46) :

2. Giving up the hankering after the results or the fruits of actions (B. G. 2-39) :

3. Maintaining an equipoise in the face of desirable and undesirable situations or circumstances (B. G. 2-48) :

4. Surrendering of all actions as an offering to the Lord (Ishwara) wholeheartedly (B. G. 3-33):

All these four disciplines observed while performing one's daily duties and chores convert the ordinary Karmas or actions into Karma Yoga and by this practice of Karma Yoga one gets Chitta Shuddhi or purification of the mind in due course. One who has acquired purification of his mind, according to the teachings of the Geeta, and has developed concentration of the mind by practising Nishkaama Karma, meaning Karma Yoga, and has performed Upasanas (meditations) in the previous births or here, is fit for the direct means of Self-Knowledge viz Shra-vana (listening to the Upanishadic teachings), Manana (reflection on those teachings) and Nidhidhyasana (intuitive contemplation on them). If one is agitated in his mind, he is advised to practice Upasanas i. e. the various kinds of meditations according to the guidance of the Shastra and the Guru. After completing Karma Yoga and Upasanas in the above described manner, one will attain a state of steady, introvert mind which enables him to acquire the co-operative means viz. the qualities like humility, modesty etc. and these will make him fit for Atma Jnana or Self-Knowledge.

Now it becomes necessary to consider the question : What is Karma Sanyasa? 'One does not obtain the goal merely through Sanyasa (renunciation)'--(B. G. 3-4) ; 'One achieves the Ultimate Goal beyond the realm of Karma through Sanyasa (B.G. 18-49) 'The learned say that the renunciation of Karmas done to fulfil some desire alone is called Sanyasa'- (B.G. 18-2). As various such Geeta quotations are seemingly contradictory to one other. what exactly is the Geeta's purport in this regard is a topic which is confounding even great intellectuals and scholars. With regard to this problem what Sri Shankara has stated

is : "In Atman or the Self there are not any kinds of deformations or changes like Janma (birth) etc. He is all pervading and is devoid of destruction, and He alone is our essence of Being : if a person has such knowledge of the Self, there is no possibility of his having any association with any Karma. Because the concept that there is agentship or doership in the Self is born out of ignorance (Ajnana) " (B.G. 18-11 introduction). Hence Paramartha Sanyasa (the genuine renunciation) is giving up Karmas, which are born out of ignorance, by means of the knowledge of the Self : in this Sanyasa there does not remain any Karma to be performed

But before such a (Paramartha) Sanyasa is achieved there is one Sanyasa, which is of the fourth Ashrama (stage or order of life) enjoined in the Shruits, the Smritis and the Puranas (epics) as a subsidiary path to Samyag Darshana (intuitive vision of the Self as He is) This Sanyasa entails on a person, even when he has the sense of doership, the disciplines of renouncing the duties of a householder and stipulates that being endued with Yama (control of the mind) and Niyama (control of the senses) etc., he should practise Yoga Anusthana (Dhyana Yoga). This can be called as Mumukshu (aspirants for Liberation) Ashrama Sanyasa. In the commentary on the Brihadaranyaka it is mentioned that there is a Sanyasa Ashrama which can be practised even by those who are not aspirants for Moksha or Liberation. There it is stated that there is also a Parivrajya (complete renunciation) which entails wearing the sacred thread etc, and further, if these disciplines are strictly observed one can attain Brahma Loka and other results (Bri. Bh. 3-5-1). But there is no mention of this Sanyasa in the Geeta. The Parivrajya which is practised as a subsidiary path for the attainment of Self-knowledge through the Eshana Parithyaga (through renunciation of desires) is the Sanyasa mentioned here. This Vividisha Sanyasa (renunciation prescribed for an aspirant) is suited to a person who has the qualifications of being an introvert and having practised Dhyana Yoga along with the disciplines of Yama, Niyama etc. But for one who does not have these qualifications it is enjoined in this Geeta Shastra to adopt Karma Yoga in order to obtain them. Until one is imbued with Karma Sanyasa and Dhyana Yoga,

Karma Yoga alone is the means. For one who does not have the Self-knowledge Karma Yoga alone is better than even Sanyasa. One who observes such Karma Yoga is also, from one point of view, a Sanyasin only, for he has renounced the hankering after the fruits of Karmas or actions. Thus Karma Yoga has been eulogised in the Geeta. This is a Sanyasa of the nature of renouncing the fruits of actions (Phala Thyaga Sanyasa) : similarly, giving up Kaamyas (rituals performed for obtaining certain results) is Karma Sanyasa, which entails renunciation of some of the desires. Both these are called Sanyasa in a secondary sense.

Refutation of the Theory of Blending Karma and Jnana (Samuchhaya Vada)

Now the readers can easily understand the theory behind the Bhashyakara's (Shankara's) refutation of the blending of Jnana and Karma. What this Acharya mentions about Paramartha Sanyasa is not a kind of Sadhana or practice : but it is a special kind of knowledge by which one can divine and discern that there is no taint of any actions, the instruments of action and the fruits of these actions in Atman or the Self. Hence there is no possibility of any relationship being there between Jnana and Karma in the Self. As it is stated in the Geeta that Janaka and others were performing their Karmas and also because it is seen that many Jnanis are in the Grihasta Ashrama, many people get deluded that it is not that there is no support for the theory of the blending of Jnana and Karma. But it is not mentioned anywhere in the Shastra that there is any Karma for true Jnanis. It is described in the history and the epics that these Jnanis were performing Karmas or actions for setting a good example for the people or society. Thus though from the point of view of the Jnani neither Karmas nor their utility are there for him, from the point of view of others he may seem to be doing Karmas, but even so such Karmas performed as exemplary acts for the benefit of the people in general cannot be really Karmas. All of them (Karmas), from his point of view, are nothing but Brahman. In those apparent Karmas he has neither

any sense of doership nor any hankering after their fruit. Therefore, just as Asthikas (believers in the existence of God), without exception, do not believe that for God, who took the incarnation of Sri Krishna and observed the Dharmas stipulated for Kshatriyas (warriors) only as a display of His Leela (recreation), those Karmas were not real Karmas; nor do they believe that these Karmas were disciplines (Sadhana) for His (Krishna's) attaining Liberation (Moksha), in the same manner, wise people cannot believe that Jivanmuktas (those who have attained the Self-knowledge here when they are alive), who have the firm conviction of the real nature of the Self as being ever devoid of agentship, have the need for blending Jnana and Karma. Especially in the case of a Jnani, who has observed Karma Sanyasa, it is established and evident that because he is devoid of any sense of egoism even those acts or Karmas which he performs necessarily for the upkeep of his body do not truly affect him. Hence it is established that there is no indispensability of any Karma whatsoever for a Jnani

Besides, it is clear that even for a person who is not a Jnani but who has taken Sanyasa as an auxiliary means for attaining Jnana and in accordance with the directives of the Shastra there is no relationship with Agnihotra and other rituals. If it is argued that for such a Sanyasin knowledge combined with the Smartha Karmas (Karmas enjoined by Smritis) will become the cause for Liberation, then it would amount to the Shruti laying a heavier burden on a householder observing Shrauta Karmas (Karmas prescribed in the Shrutis) also: further if it is argued that because the householder has more Karmas he alone is qualified to get Moksha (Liberation), then it would amount to arguing against the directives or teachings of the Shruti, the Smriti, the Puranas and history, along with the Yoga Shastra. Hence, it should be firmly understood that in the light of the directive a Mumukshu should observe renunciation of all Karmas as also the fact that Moksha is not the result of any action: Jnana has never any relationship with Karma.

The tenet that if a person gives up forever Karmas then he

faces the consequence of Prathyavaya (sin of not performing one's duties) is quite opposed to the Shastræ stipulating Sanyasa. Hence it cannot be conceived that a Sanyasin will suffer the consequence of Prathyavaya. Besides, the principle that from the non-entity of not performing Karmas or actions the effect, in the form of Prathyavaya, is produced is in itself illogical. For this reason also the theory of blending Jnana and Karma is not correct. Thus the Bhashyakara has opined.

Yoga and its Fruit

It has already been stated before that because the Vrittikaras and others believed Jnana to be Upasana (meditation) and that Upasana alone has been taught as Yoga in the Geeta they formulated their theory that Liberation accruing from a combination of Jnana and Karma is only possible indirectly after the fall of the body. But in the opinion of Bhashyakara who asserts that Liberation is nothing but the falsification of Samskara, which is the product of ignorance (Avidya) in the form of actions, the instruments of action and their fruits, by means of the true knowledge of the Self and consequently the cognition of the non-existence of Samsara whatsoever, the Liberation which is mentioned in the Eighth Chapter (of the Geeta) and other places as accruing only posthumously cannot be the main Liberation, and this conclusion becomes quite evident by itself. Hence the Acharya's (Shankara's) opinion in this context is that the Liberation which is mentioned in Prashnopanishad and other places in the Shrutis as accruing in due course through Jnana in the Brahma Loka to those who do Nirgunopasana (meditation on formless Brahman) with the aid of symbols like Om and the like, is the same that is referred to here in the Eighth Chapter: and the Upasana of Parabrahman itself is here called Abhyasa Yoga (8-8).

But that the word 'Yoga' has, beside the meaning of 'Upasana', another meaning of 'Nidhidhyasana'—contemplation upon Atman done for obtaining the true knowledge of the Self—is found in the Bhashyakara's explanation and this is a salient

feature. This is ascertained from the fact that Sri Shankara has connoted both these meanings for the word 'Yoga' as it is pointed out that Yoga mentioned in the Sixth Chapter gives the result of finding the identity between Jiva, who is the Kshetrajna (knower of the body), and Ishwara, the Self of all creatures (6-29).

Apart from this, we have to keep in mind that Sri Shankara has pointed out that just as the word 'Sanyasa' has been interpreted with meanings of different shades or gradations, the word 'Yoga' also has been shown with different meanings in the Geeta. In his opinion, Yoga mentioned in the Geeta is really the intuitive vision of the Self as He is and because it is a path towards this goal, Dhyana Yoga and in turn, because Karma Yoga is a path leading to it (Dhyana Yoga), both these latter, in a secondary sense, are called Yoga. With regard to Yogas, in the Sixth Chapter Dhyana Yoga is called Yoga and the Upasana which yields Liberation by stages (Krama Mukti) is called Yoga in the Eight Chapter. Seeing that in both these contexts terminology which is in vogue in Patanjali's Yoga Shastra is used, many have misunderstood that Yoga which is of the nature of the repression of the mental functions is itself referred to here (in the Sixth and the Eighth Chdpters). But there is no cause for such delusion for those who can discern what Shankaracharya has stated in the Brahma Sutra Bhashya, namely: "Because both Sankhyas and Yogis are Dvaitins (dualists), Yoga or Sankhya which do not accept Vedas (as authoritative texts) cannot show the path for Liberation: what the Shrutis have stated that Sankhya and Yoga will give rise to the knowledge of the Truth or Reality are nothing but Jnana and Dhyana in accordance with the Vedic texts, (2-1-3), if it is remembered that in that same Brahma Sutra Bhashya the Acharya has supported that it is not wrong for Vedantins to use whatever aspects of Sankhya and Yoga which are not opposed to Vedic tenets or teachings, then it will be convincing that the method of Yoga found in the Geeta Bhashya will be accept-

able to the followers of Vedas (Vaidiks).

We have upto now elucidated in what respects the Karma Yoga mentioned in the Geeta is different from Karmas which the Mimamsakas and those followers of Mimamsakas who inquire into Vedantic principles mention as well as in what aspects Dhyana Yoga mentioned in the Geeta is different from Yoga enunciated in the Yoga Darshana (of Patanjali).

The Two Types of Dharma Mentioned in the Geeta

According to Sri Shankaracharya's opinion two types of Dharma namely, Pravritti Dharma and Nivritti Dharma, which are enunciated in the Vedas, as well as the Ultimate Truth or Reality called Vasudeva are taught in the Geeta. This has already been stated. Pravritti Dharma means the religion which is stipulated to be practised by people according to their Varnas (castes) and Ashramas (stages of life); for such a religion the fruit is Abhyudaya or all-round prosperity of attaining the celestial world above like Swarga (Heaven) etc. (18-46). Nivritti Dharma means the establishment in the Self-knowledge which is attained through Sarva Karma Sanyasa; for this, Liberation in this very life (Sadyo Mukti), namely, Nishreyas (spiritual excellence or final beatitude), which is of the nature of not being the result of any action or performance of any duty, is the fruit (18-49; Bhashya Portion 4). Although Pravritti Dharma is the cause for Abhudaya, as already stated above, it becomes the cause for Nishreyas also. It is observed with a sense of devotional offering to Ishwara (the Lord) by transcending the limits or distinctions of the pairs of opposites through the stages of Durita Kshaya (liquidation of all sins), Sattva Shuddhi (purification of the mind or Antahkarana), Jnana Nishtha Yogayata) the proper capacity for getting Jnana Nishtha), Jnanotpatti (the emergence of Self-knowledge or spiritual enlightenment), Sarva Karma Sanyasa (renunciation of all actions or duties) and Jnana Nishtha (establishment in Jnana or Self-knowledge) In that order (3-4, 5-5, 5-12, 18-45, 46, 50) Thus the essence of the teachings about Sadhana or disciplines mentioned in the

Geeta is that Pravritti Dharma through Nivritti Dharma and Nivritti Dharma directly are the means for attaining Liberation.

Bhakti Enunciated in the Goeta

We should keep this important aspect in our mind that these Dharmas (Pravritti and Nivritti) are related to the Ultimate Truth or the Self called Vasudeva. If Pravritti Dharma is observed as a sublime adoration of Ishwara or God, it yields the Samsiddhi (super achievement) of Jnana Nishtha Yogyata (the proper capacity for attaining Jnana Nishtha or establishment in the Self-knowledge or Pure Consciousness) - (18-45): and this observance is itself Bhakti Yoga (18-56). Hence what we call Karma Yoga from a Karma-dominated point of view is the same as Bhakthi Yoga, which is called from the Ishwara-dominated point of view. Karma or performance of duties or actions is the external discipline required for raising it to the grade of Dhyana Yoga, while Sarva Karma Sanyasa or renunciation of all Karmas is the internal discipline (6-3). Because it is said that one who worships or is devoted to Vasudeva is the best among all devotees who worship the other deities (6-47) we will have to conclude that Sri Shankaracharya has opined that Karma Yoga, Dhyana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga are higher and more progressive disciplines in that order.

Devotion is of two kinds, namely, the devotion to other deities and devotion to Vasudsva, who is the Self of all. Persons who worship the other deities are also Satvikas (people with pious qualities or virtues)-(17-4) : they will get the Sayujya (becomes one with the deity)-(9-25) But one who contemplates on the Self or Vasudeha as everything is a Mahatma or great man (7-19): because Vasudeva is the Self of all other deities also, the devotees of other deities are also worshipping Vasudeva only : even so, as they do not know this truth, they will only achieve a non-eternal fruit (9-23, 24 7-23). The devotion to God is not relished or liked by sinners (7-15); Artha (distressed), Jignaasu (seeker of knowledge). Artharthi (seeker of prosperity) and Jnani (the enlightened)—these four types of virtuous men worship God (7-16). To the devotees who worship God

without any desire for wealth or possessions but for the sake of His (God's) love alone, He (Vasudeva) gives Buddhi Yoga (Yoga of right knowledge) and being ever present in their hearts He dispels the darkness of their Ignorance with the light of His knowledge (10-10, 11). The Bhagavat Tattava or the Ultimate Reality has two aspects—Sagunaroopa with the adjuncts (of names and forms) and endued with omniscience-omnipotence and Nirvishesharoopa (the Absolute Reality) without any adjuncts (12-1). Between these two it is easier to contemplate upon the Sagunaroopa: God alone uplifts the devotees of Sagunaroopa (12-2: 12-7). Hence, one should direct all his mind and intellect to the Saguna aspect of God and be His devotee performing the duties enjoined by Him only (11-55). This is the best among all disciplines recommended in the Geeta for attaining Liberation (9-84: 11-55: 18-65). But because even this contemplation upon Saguna Brahman has to be practised on the basis of the ignorance which projects the difference between the Self and Ishwara or the Lord (12-13) direct emancipation or Liberation is attained only from the knowledge of Brahman devoid of all adjuncts (13-12: 13-14) 15, 17, 18).

Jnana Enunciated in the Geeta

What is the essential nature (Swaroopa) of Jnana the means for emancipation which is obtained through devotion to God? Because it is stated here in the Geeta by Bhagavan Sri Krishna that the knowledge of Kshetra and Kshetrajna alone is the real Jnana (13-2) and that Kshetra means the body and Kshetrajna is one who objectifies this (13-1) there is a possibility of doubting that it refers to the Sankhyan theory of discrimination between Prakriti and Purusha or the Vaisheshikas theory that it refers to the knowledge of Jivatma who is different from Ishwara and who is the nature of a knower. But the quotation, "Kshetrajna in all the Kshetras is the Lord (Bhagavan) alone" (13-2), in the Geeta is contrary to both these theories and besides in the Geeta no scope is there for the theories of many Atmans or Tatastheshwara (the Lord or the

ordainer who is quite different from the ordained i.e. the world as well as the souls). This has been concluded by Sri Shankaracharya and he has further argued it out that in the Geeta Shastra the Jnana or knowledge of the non-dual Self or Atman alone has been enunciated.

We will give here for the benefit of Jignasus (aspirants for Self-knowledge) a compilation of the main reasons mentioned by the Acharya (Shankara) to substantiate the statement that the non-dual Atman or the Self alone has been propounded in the Geeta.

1, After saying that the 24 elements which the Sankhyas refer to are all Kshetra (i.e. non-selves)-(13-5), the statements like Paramatman or Brahman who is the Kshetrajna in all the Kshetras (13-2) is indivisible although He seems to be divided in all the creatures (13-16), He is the Sakshi (Witness) or Upadrishta (the onlooker) - (9-18: 13-22) go totally against the Sankhyas, who hold the theories of Nirishwara (non-acceptance of the existence of Ishwara) and the existence of many Purushas.

2. The statement that Ichha (desire) and Chetana (sentience) etc. are all Kshetra only (13-6) is contrary to Vaisheshikas' theory or teaching that these are the qualities or characteristics of Atman.

3. It is quite clear that the statement that 'the Self or Atman of all creatures is Myself (Bhagavan) [13-27] goes against their theory of Tatastheshwara.

Even before Shankaracharya, although some people were saying that Advaita is the purport of the Geeta, they were propagating that by blending Jnana and Karma or merely by Dhyana (meditation) the Jiva attains the identity with Ishwara after death [Geeta Bhashya 13-2]. The Jnana that is referred to by these people as well as the other Bhashyakaras [commentary like Ramanuja, Madhva etc] after Shankara is not the Jnana mentioned in the Geeta. The following are the reasons based

on experience to prove that the Jnana which is approved by Shankaracharya is the same that is propounded in the Geeta;

1. Non-entity is not born, an entity is not destroyed—After propounding this truth of Satkaryavada, Bhagavan has clarified that because the body is not eternal it is a non-entity and that because Atman or the Self is indestructible He an entity (2-16 to 18). One who knows that because He (Atman) is devoid of any deformations or changes Atman has no destruction will not perform any Karma (2-21): a Jnani understands that the Karma that is seen in his Swarupa (essential Being) is Akarma or no Karma: in fact, he does not perform any Karma at all. One who knows that Prakriti alone performs the Karmas and not Atman has rightly understood (4-18, 5-8 5-15: 13-29)—such statements denote that Atman is not a doer of Karmas.

2. Jnani is the Self alone of Bhagavan (7-18): A Jnani who has the right knowledge (of the Ultimate Reality) realises the existence of all the creatures in Bhagavan who is his Atman or the Self in all the creatures (6-29, 30): a Jnani after knowing Brahman gets himself merged in Brahman (18-55)—all such statements declare that the knowledge that Brahman and Atman are one and the same is the real Jnana or knowledge. From all such reasons and arguments Shankaracharya has opined that Advaita Jnana or knowledge of the non-dual Self as propounded by him alone is enunciated in the Geeta.

Ajnana (Ignorance) and Maya, which are Destroyed by Jnana

Ajnana [ignorance]. Maya—these two words are used in the Geeta at several places. What significant meanings are given to these words by Shankaracharya is worth determining. Although the Acharya has written that Maya is Ishwara's Shakti (power)—(13-5) just as the other commentators, what he speaks of as Maya is not an entity in the ultimate analysis. In fact, it is Prakriti (prakriti subtlest matter) composed of

Trigunas (the three gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) which creates delusion in the minds of the sinful and ignorant Jivas (3-29 : 7-13). Ishwara has two Prakritis called Aparaa Prakriti (lower primordial matter) comprising five Bhutas (elements), Buddhi, Ahankara (ego) and Avyakta (unmanifested seed form), and Paraa Prakriti (higher primordial matter) which is of the form of Jiva (7-4: 7-5) : Paramatman by virtue of His Maya seems to be born and having a body (4-6); through His Maya He deludes every creature (18-61) : those who realise that Bhagavan Himself is their Self go beyond that Maya (7-14). On the strength of such statements in the Geeta, Shankaracharya has determined that Maya means Prakriti which is of delusive nature and which appears because of Avidya or Ignorance (5-14 : 13-23: 13,34).

Then which is the Avidya or Ajnana that the Bhashyakara is referring to is to be determined, is it not? Avidya, Ajnana—these words have been in vogue with the meaning of ‘absence of knowledge’ or ‘wrong knowledge’. So, it is but natural to understand that the Ajnana or Avidya, which can be destroyed by the Self-knowledge, is the misconception born out of not knowing the Self. There are statements in the Geeta in keeping with these conclusions. They are : 1. ‘Mithya Pratyaya or misconception is born out of a lack of discrimination and that is dispelled by Jnana or knowledge’ (10-11)—In this statement it is implied that Ajnana means Aviveka or lack of discrimination and Tamah means Moha or delusion which is of the nature of Mithya Pratyaya or misconception. 2. ‘As a result of the non-discrimination between Kshetra and Kshetrajna which are of different essential natures, the tendency of superimposing mutually the natures and qualities of these two, called Adhyasa, alone is the union between Kshetra and Kshetrajna: And this itself is of the nature of misconception’. (13-26)—In this statement it is pointed out that by discerning the different essential natures of Kshetra and Kshetrajna one can get rid of Adhyasa [mutual superimposition] or Mithyajnana

In the Sutra Bhashya this Mithyajnana itself has been called Avidya. 3. In the Bhashya on the second verse of the thirteenth Chapter of the Geeta there is an elaborate or detailed discussion about Avidya. In that it is stated that Samsara is born out of Avidya. Agrahana (non-comprehension), Anyathagrahana (misconception) and Samshaya (doubting) —these are the three aspects of Avidya only : it is clarified there that these three are modifications of the Antahkarana (inner instrument or the mind). 4. Empirical and Vedic dealings are all the results of Avidya (2-69). The dealings of cause and effect are in the realm of Avidya alone (4-18). The final authenticity of Self-knowledge sublates or roots out the very dealing of finding the right means of knowledge (2-69) — In these statements it is implied that Adhyasa (mutual superimposition of the natures and qualities) of Atman and not-Atman (the Self and the not-selves) alone is root cause for all dealings like Pramana (the right means of knowledge) and Prameya (the object), the action, the means of action and the results etc. 5. Kartrutva (agentship), Bhokrutva (enjoyership) have arisen from the delusion that oneself is the body, the mind and the senses, just as it happens under the delusion of the dream and magic, in Sushupti (deep sleep) and Samadhi (trance) etc. which are devoid of this delusion, these evils of agentship and enjoyership are not there (18-66)—From these statements it is evident that Shankaracharya's puport of teaching was that Avidya is the same as the delusion of identifying oneself with the body, the mind and the senses, which are not-selves. 6. "Atman is said to be the knower of sound etc. through mental concept called ignorance, the nature of which is a want of discriminative knowledge : by virtue of a mental concept called Vidya, of the nature of discriminative knowledge, Atman is said to be Jnani; just like Avidya, Vidya also is unreal" (2-21)—the Bhashya statement if scrutinised will establish that the opinion of the Bhashyakara (Shankaracharya) is that Vidya and Avidya are of the nature of concepts of the Antahkarana or mind and that they are not related to

Atman. There is no evidence whatsoever available in the Geeta Bhashya to prove that Shankaracharya has accepted any kind of Avidya other than the mental modification which is indicated by words like Agraphana (non-comprehension), Anyathagrahana (misapprehension), Samshaya (doubting), Adhyasa (mutual superimposition of the natures and qualities of the Self and the not-selves), Bhranti (delusion), Mithya Jnana (misunderstanding), Mithya Pratyaya (misconception) pertaining to Atman. But one should keep in mind an important point here. That is—because of Avidya, which is of the nature of Adhyasa of the Self and the not-selves alone, all empirical dealings are conceived of, this dealing of Vidya (discrimination) and Avidya (non-discrimination) also is conceived because of this Avidya (Adhyasa) only. (Meaning, the dealings of the ignorance and the knowledge about the Self is itself in the realm of Avidya or Ignorance).

What is Jnana Nishtha ?

In the Geeta, Jnana (intellectual knowledge) and Vijnana (intuitive knowledge)—using these two words, the intuitive knowledge of Reality is inquired into. In these contexts, Jnana means the Self-knowledge born out of the teachings of the Shastra and the Acharya (Guru) : Vijnana means the supreme intuitive experience of the Self" (3-41 : 7-2)—It is explained in this manner. On the strength of this explanation some people are deluded that Shankaracharya opines that if the knowledge got from the Shastra is repeated properly the right intuitional knowledge is obtained. But that this theory of repetition of the knowledge is not acceptable to Shankaracharya is evident from several statements available in his own works, For instance, in Upadeshasahasri, Brihadaranyaka Bhashya, Sutra Bhashya and Mandukya Bhashya, Shankaracharya has refuted Prasankhyana (repetition of the knowledge) theory which propounds that only after the knowledge, born out of the Shastra statements is practised repeatedly, it will totally remove Avidya as well as the theory of Sakshatkara, which is said to be a new knowledge which really dispels ignorance. In

this present Geet Bhashya itself (18-55) it is stated as follows. by way of refuting through a prima facie argument that Jnana Nishtha is repetition of Jnana : When there is knowledge born of a thing then at that moment that thing is understood definitely and completely through experience and therefore there is no need for repetition of the knowledge of that thing. Hence the statements that one cannot understand a thing, through knowledge [Jnana] and one can know only through a firmness in knowledge (Jnana Nishtha) which is of the nature of repetition of knowledge are contradictory.” In this very context Shankaracharya has explained what he means by ‘Jnana Nishtha’ in the following manner : ‘The Supreme natural establishment in the final intuition is here called as ‘Jnana Nishtha’, the nature of which is the culmination of one’s own intuitive knowledge regarding his true nature as the Self into a firm conviction. After the dawn of this knowledge, when it ripens or matures and gets free from its opposite (i.e. the not-selves), this final stage is here called as Jnana Nishtha. [Ripening of knowledge means just as a common man has identification with his body and thereby has a firm conviction that he is the body, similarly he who is firmly established in his true nature of the Self gets a natural conviction that his real nature is the Self without any hindrance. Getting free from its opposite means: the opposite of the Self is not-self and he who cognises the non-existence of the not-selves remains as the non-dual Self) This Nishtha requires the following conditions : ‘ Listening to the enunciation of the Self from the Shashtra and the Acharya: purification of the mind etc. and practice of humility etc. which are accessory means to get the Self-knowledge ripened : the firm conviction about the unity of Kshetrajna and the Supreme Self which dawns with the help of these above Sadhanas or disciplines (like purification of the mind, practice of humility etc.) : to be endued with Sarva Karma Sanyasa which falsifies the tendency of differentiation into the triple concepts of the agentship, the means of action and the results.’ (18-55). If this above quotation is analysed aspect by aspect, the following things will be clear: 1 To get

knowledge of the Self one has to have listened to (Shravana) the Shastra as well as reflected or ruminated over (Manana) the teachings with the help of a teacher or preceptor (Acharya or Guru): 2. For this knowledge of the Self to be born as well as for that knowledge to get matured or ripened one has to have Chittashuddhi (purification of the mind) etc. as also the supplementary practices of humility (Amaanitva) etc.: 3. Because knowledge (Jnana) is of the nature of indivisible awareness, only after renouncing all Karmas (actions) which are born out of differences and distinctions in the mind, one has to undertake all the above Sadhanas or practices: 4. The firm conviction that what the Shastra purports to signify by the words Kshetrajna and Paramatman (the supreme Self) is the same Ultimate Truth which can be attained only through these Sadhanas or disciplines. This firm conviction itself is Jnana Nishtha. The secret purport or meaning of the statements that by practicing the disciplines, like humility (Amaanitva) etc. the qualification for attaining Jnana Nishtha will accrue and that one in whom these disciplines are naturally or effortlessly established is a Jnana Nishtha (13-7) is this alone. It is for this reason only Shankaracharya has stated that this Jnana Nishtha itself is the fourth type of Parabhakti which is different from the secondary devotion like Aarthabhakti etc and that by this Parabhakti alone the differentiating tendency in the mind that Kshetrajna and Paramatman are different is rooted out without any residue (18-55).

Is the Attainment of Jnana Nishtha Possible?

Shankaracharya's teaching is indeed that Jnana Nishtha or Vijnana means the intuition of the unity of Brahman and Atman. In the Geeta Bhashya the prima facie objection that this Vijnana can never take place is raised in its various aspects or viewpoints and all of them have been convincingly explained. 1. 'Atman or the Self who is unchangeable and devoid of agentship is myself—this knowledge can never be had by any one; if that were possible, then Sarva Karma Sanyasa (renunciation of all actions) would have been possible'. (2-21)—this

objection is raised by Mimamsakas and the Vedantins who follow their method. Only that person who gets the knowledge that 'I am not a doer, nor an enjoyer, can renounce all actions (18-12 says Shankaracharya. Even a Sanyasin, who has renounced the actions or Karmas like Agnihotra etc. stipulated to be performed by a Grihastha or householder has perforce to perform actions like Bhiksha or begging food etc. in keeping with the rules of his Ashrama or stage of life besides unavoidable actions of his body and senses like seeing, hearing, smelling and touching, is it not? In that case, who can get, and how, the knowledge which is without the sense of doership etc. ?— This is the contention of the objector or the opponent. To this, Shankaracharya's answer is: If the Self-knowledge, which is devoid of agentship or doership, were not possible to be attained by anyone, then this Self-knowledge and the Sadhanas or disciplines like Shama (control of the mind) etc. which are recommended in the Shastra for attaining that Self-knowledge will all become futile. Why should not Mimamsakas, who accept that the knowledge of the existence of Dharma (righteousness). Adharma (non-righteousness) etc. is obtained on the strength of the recommendation of the Shastra alone to perform Karmas (rituals) as well as the knowledge of the existence of many births and many Lokas (worlds), accept that through the recommendation of that very Shastra Atmajnana or the Self-knowledge can be attained by the qualified person? Hence, those who acknowledge Shastra as an authority should not raise this objection. 2. There is no instrument to know Atman or the Self: Atman is not an object for any instrument of knowledge, besides He is without form also: hence the attainment of special knowledge or Vijnana about Atman or the Self is not possible—this is another objection. We always know the external objects through the senses. The Antahkarana or the mind has to take the shape of the object which it wants to know. But Atman is not an object, He is the subject: He is not with form, but without form: hence, there is no possibility whatsoever of Atman becoming the object of the Antahkarana or the mind—this is the contention of this opponent. To this the

convincing reply of the Bhashyakara (Shankaracharya) is : (a) "This Atman has to be known through the mind alone" (Bri 4-4-19)—thus the Shruti says and hence the mind alone is the instrument to cognise the Self or Atman ; though the common people have minds, as they have not cultivated the disciplines like Shama, Dama etc. recommended by the Shruti their minds are not capable of knowing (intuiting) the Self or Atman. Hence to say that there is no instrument to cognise Atman is not proper (2-21); (b) for the Vijnana (intuition) of Atman there is no need for Atman to become an object: there is no need also for Atman to be with form: the mind has to become like the object which it wants to know similarly, the mind in order to know Atman should become devoid of any dross, pure and subtle like Atman (18-50) How can at all one endeavour to know Atman who is without form? But it is not possible to conceive anything which is not related with the Pure Consciousness of Atman. Hence, whenever there is any knowledge of any object the knowledge of the object pervaded by the Pure Consciousness of Atman alone is obtained. Hence the Self knowledge is not to be attained afresh. It is enough to give up the Buddhi or intellection which is of the form of the outer objects, then it is like one getting Jnana Nishtha alone (18-50) Because Atman is the real nature of the Pramatra or the agent, as also He is self-established there is no need for any Pramana or means of knowledge or aid to know Him (2-18: 18-50). Even the statement that the Shashtra teaches how to know Atman is only by the process of removing the Pramatrutva or knowership that is imagined or conceived in Him and thereby falsifying the dealing of Pramana (the right means of knowledge) and Prameya (objects of knowledge). It is for this reason only the Shashtra is known as the ultimate or final authority or 'Anthya Pramana'. (2-18): (c) Jnana is also without form : Atman also is without form. Under the circumstances, how can ever the knowledge of the Self or Atmavijnana be possible? This is another objection. To this the convincing reply (by Shankaracharya) is : Because the knowledge of the object is completely under the sway of knowledge itself, it has to be accepted that Jnana or knowledge is completely self-established (not depen-

dent upon anything else for the proof of its existence) : otherwise, the thing that knows this Jnana or knowledge has in turn to have another kind of knowledge to become known and in this manner there will be regressus ad Infinitum. Similarly, it is to be accepted that Atman who is the Jnatru or the knower is ultimately established to exist without any dependence on anything other than Himself : otherwise, to know Him also there will be a need for another knower and means of knowledge and once again there will be regressus and infinitum. Hence, Atmajnana is self-established: only it is necessary to cease or dispel one's identification with not-selves with the help of the teachings of the Shastra and the Acharya or Guru. The fruit of this effort or endeavour (the culmination) itself is called as Jnana Nishtha (18-50). (The effort which culminates in the final intuition of the Self is called as Jnana Nishtha).

The Universal (Dharma) Religion Enunciated in the Geeta

The goal or prime object of the Geeta is to teach the Ultimate Truth called Vasudeva, who is the Self or Atman of all creatures, according to the opinion of Sri Shankaracharya. Because this Truth is self-established it is not correct to say that this Truth can be established on the evidence or strength of any statement in the Shastra alone or believing with full faith any statement by any teacher. The purpose of the teachings of the Shastra and the Acharya or Guru is only to get rid of the wrong notions which we have naturally formed and followed and not to create afresh a knowledge got through right means of knowledge to enable us to objectify this Ultimate Truth or Atman.' On the firm foundation of this Ultimate Truth, which all the qualified people can cognise or intuit taking recourse to universal experience alone, all the truths or moral values needed for the maintenance of Dharma (righteousness) as well as all the devotions and meditations pertaining to Ishwara can be firmly established. Hence what is enunciated in the Geeta is only the Universal Dharma or religion.

But we must determine or discern what is meant by universal (Dharma) religion. It is not possible for any one strong Dharma or religion to convert or transform other lesser Dharmas or religions through various means or manoeuvres just like a whale or giant fish gobbling up many smaller fish and finally remain as the only one Dharma dominating everywhere; nor it is desirable for any one. The noble or profound name of 'Dharma' cannot suit any teachings or tenets preached by a sectarian group who force their own teachings on everyone after thrusting aside their self-freedom. Vasudeva Bhagavan, mentioned in the Geeta, has promised that He would encourage everyone to build up faith in whatever deity he likes and invokes and through his devotion to or propitiation of his respective deity alone He (Vasudeva) would grant all fruits or results of their prayers or wishes (7-21). The conviction of the Jnani who has known the Ultimate Truth which is pervading the universe as taught in the Geeta is as follows: 'Vasudeva who is my Atman or Self alone is the Self or essence of all creatures from Brahma up to a blade of grass. One who has this conviction will not harm in any way any creature (13-28), he will be engaged always in the welfare or well-being of all creatures (5-25, 12-4). In this way if one looks at it, universal love alone is the devotion to or propitiation of Vasudeva, the Lord of the universe : the knowledge of Vasudeva, the Self of the universe, alone is the Sadhana or path for the Parama Purushartha or the supreme purpose or goal of this life ; to reorientate one's own faith or religion as an invocation of this universal Self or Vasudeva through Karma Yoga is itself a means for His knowledge or Self-knowledge. This is the ennobling and felicitous teaching that we have acquired from Shankaracharya's Bhashyas on the Geeta.

"OM TAT SAT"

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PART II

The Quintessence of Bhagavad - Geeta



CHAPTER - I

VERSES 1 - 3.

When Dhritarashtra asked: "What did the sons of Pandu and also my people do when they assembled on the holy plain of Kurukshetra with desire to fight?" Sanjaya replied: "Having seen the army of the Pandavas drawn up in battle array, King Duryodhana then approached his teacher (Drona) and told him: 'Behold, O Teacher, this mighty array of the sons of Pandu arrayed by the son of Drupada, thy wise disciple.

VERSES : 4-6.

"Here are heroes, mighty archers, equal in battle to Bhima and Arjuna, Yuyudhana, Virata and Drupada, each commanding eleven thousand archers. Dhristaketu, Chekeetana and the valiant King of Kasi, Purujit, Kuntibhoja and Sailya, the best of men. The strong Yudhamanyu and the brave Uttamanjas, the son of Subhadra (Abhimanyu) and the sons of Draupadi—all of them were divisional commanders.

VERSES : 7-9.

“ Know also, O best among the twice-born the names of those who are the most distinguished amongst ourselves, the leaders of my army ; these I name for thy information. Yourself and Bhishma, and also Kripa, the victorious in war ; Ashwatthama, Vikarna and also the son of Somadatta ; and many other heroes also, who have given up their lives for my sake, armed with various weapons and, missiles, all well-skilled in battle.

VERSES 10-11.

‘ This army of ours protected by Bhishma is unlimited, whereas that army of their protected by Bhima is limited. Therefore, do ye all, stationed in your respective positions in the several divisions of army, protect Bhishma alone.’

VERSES. 12-13.

“His glorious grandsire (Bhishma), the oldest of the Kauravas, in order to cheer Duryodhana, now sounded aloud a lion’s roar and blew his conch. Then (following Bhishma) conches and kettle-drums, tabors, drums and cow-horns blared forth quite suddenly and the sound was tremendous.

VERSES 14-19.

“ Then, also Madhava and the son of Pandu (Arjuna), seated in their magnificent, chariot, yoked with white horses, blew their divine conches. Hrishi-

kesha (Krishna) blew the Paanchajanya and Dhananjaya (Arjuna) blew the Devadatta, and Vrikodara (Bhima) the doer of terrible deeds, blew the great conch named Paundra. King Yudhisthira, the son of Kunti, blew the Anantavijaya ; Nakula and Sahadeva blew the Sughosha and the Manipushpaka, respectively. The King of Kasi, an excellent archer, Shikhandi, the mighty commander of eleven thousand archers, Dhristadyumna and Virata and Satyaki, the unconquered, Drupada and the sons of Draupadi and the mighty armed son of Subhadra—all blew their respective conches. That tumultuous sound rent the hearts of (the people of Dhritarashtra's party, and made both heaven and earth reverberate.

VERSES 20-23

“Then, seeing the people of Dhritarashtra's party standing arrayed and just at the time of the discharge of weapons was about to begin, Arjuna, the son of Pandu, whose ensign was a monkey, took up his bow and said these words to Hrishikesha (Krishna): ‘ In the midst between the armies, place my chariot, O Achyuta, so that I may behold those who stand here desirous of fighting and on this eve of battle let me know all those with whom I must fight. For, I desire to observe those who are assembled here to fight, wishing to please in battle the evil-minded son of Dhritarashtra.”

VERSES 24-25.

Sanjaya stated : “ Thus addressed by Gudakesha (the conqueror of sleep, i.e., Arjuna), Hri-

shiksha, having stationed that best of chariots between the two armies, in front of Bhishma and Drona and all the rulers of the earth, said : ‘ O Paartha, behold these Kurus gathered together.’

VERSES 26-30

“ Then Partha saw, stationed there in both the armies, fathers and grandfathers, teachers, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons and friends too ; father-in-law, friends in both the armies. Then Arjuna, the son of Kunti, seeing all these kinsmen thus standing arrayed, spoke thus sorrowfully, filled with deep pity : ‘ Seeing these my kinsmen, O Krishna, arrayed and eager to fight, my limbs fail and my mouth is parched, my body quivers and my hair stands on end. The bow of Gaandeeva slips from my hand, and my skin burns all over ; I am also unable to stand and my mind is whirling round, as it were.

VERSES 31-35

‘ And I see adverse omens, O Keshava. Nor do I see any good from killing my kinsmen in battle, for I desire not victory, nor kingdom nor pleasures. Of what avail is dominion to us, O Govinda ? Of what avail are pleasures or even life ? They, for whose sake we desire kingdom, enjoyments and pleasures, stand here in battle, having renounced life and wealth. Teachers, fathers, sons; and also grand fathers, maternal uncles, fathers in-law, grand sons,

brothers and other relatives - all these I do not wish to kill, though they kill me, O Madhusudana, even for the sake of dominion over the three worlds ; how much less for the sake of this earth.

VERSES : 35-37

‘ Killing these sons of Dhritaraashtra, what pleasure can be ours, O Janaardhana ? Sin alone will be our gain by killing these felons. Therefore, we should not kill the sons of Dhritaraashtra, our relatives ; for, how can we be happy by killing our own people, O Madhava ?

VERSES : 38 - 40

‘ Though these, with their intelligence clouded by greed, see no evil in the destruction of the families in society, and no sin in their cruelty to friends why should not we, who clearly see evil in the destruction of the family-units, learn to turn away from this sin, O Janaardana ? In the destruction of a family the religious rites which have come down from time immemorial to that family perish ; on the destruction of spirituality, impiety overcomes the whole family.

VERSES : 41 - 44

‘ By the prevalence of impiety, O Krishna, the women of the family become corrupt and sinful ; and women becoming corrupted and sinful. O descendent of Vrishni Clan (Vaarshneya i.e. Krishna),

there arises intermingling or admixture of castes. (Such) admixture (confusion) of castes leads these slayers of the family and the family to hell, because their forefathers, deprived of the offerings of Pinda or rice-balls and Udaka or water, fall. By these evil deeds of the family, which cause confusion of castes, the eternal religious rites of the caste and the family are destroyed. We have heard, O Janaardana that for those men in whose families the religious practice have been destroyed there is dwelling for an unknown period in hell.

VERSES : 45 - 46

‘ Alas! we are involved in a great sin, in that we are prepared to kill our kinsmen, (prompted) by greed for the pleasures of the kingdom. If the sons of Dhritaraashtra, with weapons in hand, slay me, who is unresisting and unarmed, in battle, that would be better for me.’

VERSE : 47.

Sanjaya stated : “ Having thus spoken in the midst of the battle-field, Arjuna sat down on the seat of the chariot, casting away his bow and arrow, with a mind distressed with sorrow.”

CHAPTER - II

VERSES 1 - 10

When Arjuna, unmindful of Sri Krishna's encouraging statements, pleaded that "can the killing of teachers or preceptors and elders in war be in keeping with Dharma or Religion? My mind does not approve of my taking part in this war. Please teach me the real Truth", Bhagawaan (Sri Krishna) said :

VERSES : 11 - 25

" Oh Arjuna ! Because you have not known the Ultimate Truth of the Self you have got these grief and attachment. Atman or the Self is ever existing and devoid of transformation; hence, as these Bheeshma and others have no destruction from the standpoint of the Self or Atman, there is no cause for grief. A Viveki or discriminative thinker has no cause to grieve about the pairs of opposites like cold and heat which create happiness or misery for Jeevas when they are alive only but which are transient and temporary Vedanas or feelings of the mind. An existing thing or entity cannot be destroyed, a non-existing thing cannot be born-how can one who knows this truth be grief-stricken? Knowest thou that as the Self or Atman is of the essence of Reality, He has no destruction, and as the body etc. are unreal it is but

natural that they are destroyed. Looking at it from the standpoint of the Self or Atman, you have no agentship of killing, nor there is the action of Bheeshma and others being killed. For one who has known exactly what the essence of the Self or Atman is and is himself established as the Self, it is impossible for him to envisage that he is himself killing or is dying as a result of being killed (by somebody) If the clothes when worn out are removed or if new clothes are worn by us, there is no change whatsoever in our essence of being, indeed. Similarly, even if the body undergoes any change there is no possibility of any transformation in the Self or Atman. Hence, do not grieve about this Atman or the Self who cannot be subjected to change in any manner.

VERSES : 26 - 30

“Even if you entertain the common man’s belief that Atman is born when the body is born and dies along with it, then also there is no reason for your grief. If it is the nature of Atman to be born and then die, then why should you grieve for that? But the real fact is not like this. Atman or the Self is indestructible. Hence there is no reason whatsoever for your grief.

VERSES : 31 - 38

“Even looking at it from the viewpoint that to take part in war is your own religion (Swadharma), there is no reason for your grief. For, if you win

you gain the kingdom, and if you are killed in the war you attain Veeraswarga or the heaven enjoined for brave men. Besides, if you abandon your own Dharma you will get disrepute, as also you will incur sin. It is not proper or reasonable to keep on grieving mindful of (the pairs of opposites) like happiness and misery, gain and loss, success and defeat even from the standpoint of Swadharma or one's own Dharma or religious duty ; then where is the necessity to state that it is all the more improper from the standpoint of the Ultimate Truth ?

VERSES : 39 - 45

“ Hitherto whatever knowledge I have imparted to you is about Saankhya. Now listen to what I tell you about the knowledge of Karma Yoga. This Karma Yoga cuts asunder the binding of Karma (Action). In this, whatever is done begets fruit without fail ; there is no taint of evil fruit in this ; even if an iota of this is observed it will, by stages, remove the fear of Samsaara. To those deluded persons who praise only those actions born out of desires and believe that Swarga (Heaven) alone is the Ultimate Reality a conviction about this Yoga will not accrue. Whether one is successful or not, if one keeps his Buddhi or intellect in an equipoise and keep on doing his chores, that alone is the wisdom that is there in this Yoga. Whatever be the action that is enjoined on a person, he should not consider its fruit and keep on performing it with mental equipoise. You also perform your stipulated action

(duty) of participating in this righteous war in this manner.

VERSES : 46 - 53

“ One who performs Karma Yoga can attain better fruits than those who perform actions born out of desires. For, Karma Yogis transcend the (realm of) Dharma and Adharma and by means of obtaining the wisdom of Saankhya get liberated from the bondage of birth and attain the status of Paramaatma alone. That is because through Karma Yoga one gets rid of the dross and the wavering tendency or fickleness in the mind and gets established in the Supreme Knowledge born out of the discrimination between Atman or the Self and the not selves or non-Atman. Thus one who is established in the knowledge (of the Self) is called as a Sthithaprajna (one whose wisdom has culminated in the real nature of the Self or one who is established in the intuitive knowledge of the Self).

VERSES : 54 - 69

“ Listen, I am telling you the essential nature of a Sthithaprajna as well as his empirical dealings. 1. He is fully contented by getting rid of all desires and by the knowledge of the essential nature of the Self or Atman alone ; 2. He does not hanker after happiness, nor does he get perturbed or agitated by misery or unhappiness ; whether it is good or bad, he takes in his stride whatever comes his way without

attachment or hatred ; 3. He gets complete control or mastery over all senses and is fully established (or merged) in the Self or Atman. As he is content with experiencing through his senses whatever things he gets without any attachment or hatred, he attains in his mind tranquillity, peace and bliss ; 4 He does not understand the workaday empirical world, nor does the common people understand the Ultimate Truth that he has known. (From his standpoint the empirical world is a false appearance and its essence is the Self and so it is said that he does not understand i.e. he does not take it as real).

VERSES : 70 - 72

“ This Sthithaprajna alone, who is neither elated nor overwhelmed by any enjoyment nor is tempted by any desire and who experiences without any sense of agentship only so much of the things of this world as is required for him to keep this body going and who is devoid of egoism, is fit to attain Kaivalya or Emancipation. Whenever one attains this state one gets united with Brahman.”

III CHAPTER

VERSES : 1 - 2

In the previous chapter, after instructing about the two approaches or aspects namely, Saankhya approach and Yoga approach, Bhagavan stated that Saankhyas, that is, Jnaanias, will attain liberation by Jnaana Nishtha through Karma Sanyaasa. He advised Arjuna to perform Karma only. Then Arjuna asked him; "If Jnaana is superior to or better than Karma, why do you prompt or prod me to take up or undertake this terrible Karma or action of war? I am not able to understand your opinion at all!" When Arjuna said like this, Bhagavan stated :

VERSES : 2 - 32

" Oh, Arjuna! I have told you previously about two kinds of Nishtha (way of approach) namely, Jnaana Yoga and Karma Yoga. It is my opinion that Sarva Karma Sanyaasa (giving up or renunciation of all action or Karmas) is the cause for Mukti or liberation. But it is not my opinion that merely renouncing Karma this Sarva Karma Sanyaasa is attained. It is also not possible for the ignorant people to give up actions of all types or absolutely. If in a way they suppress or repress or rigidly control their senses, they will only be thinking or brooding about the objects in their mind. Hence there is no use or benefit from such renunciation of action. Performing Karma Yoga alone without any attachment is better than that. The

upkeep of the body is fulfilled by action alone ; the deities on being satisfied by the Karmas only bestow upon the human beings their objects of desire ; the the wheel of Jagat or the universe moves on Karma alone. There is no ill-effect or danger from Karma whatsoever, but there is danger from attachment as well as desire for fruit. See for example : To an Atma Jnaani there is no fruit or result to be achieved from any kind of action or Karma, nor there is possibility of such achievement ; even so, for the prosperity or welfare of the society in general he keeps on performing Karma. Even I myself, who is the Lord, keep on doing Karma for the prosperity of the universe. Hence, realising this, you also perform Karma, being detached and with a sense of devotional offering to Ishwara. Whosoever performs this Karma Yoga, according to my opinion, they will get unbound by Karmas and will attain Naishkarmya (state of absolute freedom from) told you ; and it is certain that those indiscreet people who do not observe this are bound to get doomed.

VERSES : 33 - 39

Karma or desire alone is the cause for people not to behave according to my advice. Because of desire alone they give up their own Dharma (set of duties and moral responsibilities) and take to duties and responsibilities of others. The moment a desire crops up in the mind of a man Rajoguna raises its

head. Then the discrimination about right and wrong disappears. Thus, to those who are full of desires to perform forbidden acts out of a lack of discrimination, how can Atma Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) or Atma Anubhava (final Intuitive Experience of the Self) accrue ?

VERSES : 40 - 43

“ The senses, the mind, the intellect-depend-
ing upon these alone Kaama or desire emerges ;
hence one should conquer these stage by stage By this
way if one knows Atman who is the Witness of even
the intellect, then it stops the havoc (caused) by
desire.”

CHAPTER - IV

VERSES : 1 - 3

Bhagavan, who had in the previous chapter indicated Karma Yoga and Jnaana that is produced from it in a brief manner, mentions the lineage of the Achaaryas who had taught this Yoga and with a view to concluding this teaching states : " Oh, Arjuna ! I had taught in the past this Jnaana Yoga which is obtained from Karma Yoga to Vivaswatha ; he had taught that to Manu and Manu had taught Ikshwaaku. Thus as this Samyagdarshana (Right Vision of the Reality), which was handed down traditionally by Rajarshis (kings who were the seers of the Reality), could not be further transmitted because of a lack of capacity on the part of recent generations, this was not available to the people for a long time. As you are my devotees as well as a dear friend, I have once again taught this very important Yoga, which is a secret, to you."

VERSES : 4 - 9

When Arjuna questions that - " Oh, Sri Krishna, you are born recently. Then how is it that you taught this Yoga to Vivaswatha, who was born in the past ?", Sri Krishna answers : " We all have had many births. As I am Parameswara (Supreme Lord), the Omniscient, I know all of them, but you do not. In truth, I neither have any births nor any

bondage from Karma ; even so, in order to save Dharma and protect the pious people I keep on taking Avataaras (incarnations) by virtue of my Maaya. He who realises this secret of my Avataara he will attain the very essential nature of mine which is devoid of birth.

VERSES : 10 - 15

“ Thus many have attained my essential nature of Being, having been equipped with Jnaana (Knowledge of the Self) and Vairaagya (Renunciation). Although I am ready to bestow this acquisition of the essential nature of Being on all, the people mostly attempt to perform Karmas pertaining to Varna (caste) and Aashrama (stage of life) and obtain their fruits. That is because the fruit of a Karma is obtained quickly. The division of the four Varnas (castes) also is made by Me alone ; even so, that work or action of creation does not cause any bondage to Me, because I do not have the egoism or sense of agentship (of the form of)- ‘I have created this’. Also to those who have understood thus there will not be any bondage or Karma. Having understood thus only, Mumukshus (aspirants for Liberation) of the past have performed Karma. Hence you also do Karma with this wisdom or understanding.

VERSES : 16 - 19

“What is called Karma (action), what is called Akarma (non-action) — to understand this, it is not

easy even for pundits or scholars. It is very essential to know this. Hence listen, I will tell you the essence of it. People have known that - 'we are the performers of Karma; is it not? In truth, there is no Kartruthwa (sense of agentship of action) at all in their true essence of Being; knowing that we are performing Karma (action) is erroneous. Similarly, it is also erroneous to think that to sit quiet without doing anything - that alone is Akarma (non-action). Because, in the thought-' I am sitting quiet,' there being the relationship of the ego, even this sitting quiet also is a kind of Karma alone. Thus as people have understood Karma as Akarma and Akarma as Karma, one who is wise should properly change this (misconception) and understand (properly). Such a man will have achieved what is to be achieved (He attains the goal of Life). Such a person's Karmas do not have at their root any desire or any motive or intention. As his Karmas have been burnt away by the fire called Jnaana (Self-Knowledge), those Karmas cannot yield their respective fruits.

VERSES : 20 - 24

" One who, while performing Karma, acquires this wisdom - he may continue to perform that Karma as before for the welfare of the society. In this context or event he does not truly become a performer of Karma. Because, from the standpoint of Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) his Karma or action is Akarma or non-action alone. One who acquires

this Jnaana (Self-Knowledge), even before he undertakes an action (even before entering the stage of householdership or bachelorship) that person especially will not desire to perform any Karma at all. Having abandoned or renounced all Karmas, he will be doing only so much Karma as is needed for the upkeep or maintenance of his body or physique. To him there is no taint from the action he performs. From the standpoint of the Jnaani there is no Karma at all in him; even if he seems to be doing Karma from the standpoint of others, there is no possibility of any fruit accruing to him from it. Because, in truth, Karma has become Brahman. This alone is the vision or outlook of a Jnaani (because all duality is falsified by the Self-Knowledge).

VERSES : 25 - 33

“ In this world there are some who perform Yagna (sacrifice) invoking deities, some who perform Yagnas which is Jnaana (Knowledge) about Brahman. Except Jnaana Yagna the remaining Yagnas (sacrifices) are of various kinds. To explain, some control or suppress the senses; this is Samyama Yagna (sense control). Some will enjoy only righteous things through senses; this is Indriya Yagna (control of enjoyment). Some after having controlled the mind keep a check on sensual Karmas as well as Praana Karmas (control of organs of action); this is Aatma Samyama Yagna (mind control). Some perform Krichra

(taking meals on alternate days and in between observing fast) and Chaandraayana (fasting on Amaavaasya or no moon day; thereafter he increases his food by one morsel a day and on the full moon day 15 morsels he takes and again decreases the quantum till no moon day) etc. ; this is Tapo Yagna (sacrifice of austerity). some study the Vedas methodically; this is Swaadhyaya Yagna (sacrifice of chanting Vedas). Some control the breath and perform Rechaka (exhalation), Pooraka (inhalation) and Kumbhaka (retention); this is Praanaayaama Yagna (sacrifice of the vital force). Whatever Yagna be performed, there will be redemption from sin by Yagna. The food that is eaten by these performers of Yagna will be called Amrit or ambrosia. One who is a human being will have to be doing some kind of a Yagna, otherwise he will not beget the happiness of this world. But all these Yagnas are imbued with Karma; Jnaana Yagna alone has transcended Karma One who knows this gets emancipated. As in the bliss of Mukti or Liberation all kinds of happiness have merged ; in the fruit of Jnaana Yagna the fruits of all Karmas are hidden. Hence Jnaana Yagna alone is better than materialistic Yagna.

VERSES : 34 - 39

“The path for obtaining this (Jnaana) Yagna is to approach a Sadguru or preceptor who has known the essential nature of Being or the Ultimate Truth

and who is established in It, to prostrate before him, to keep on serving him and to ask questions pertaining to the Ultimate Truth and to obtain proper answer from him. Mere prostrations which are outward disciplines are not enough; in the main, he should have Shraddha (one-pointed dedication), all-consuming interest in Jnaana only and control over the senses. All the delusion of one who has all these qualifications will be eradicated by the Jnaana obtained from the teaching of the Guru or preceptor. The Truth clearly enunciated in the Upanishads that "Parameshwara alone who is the Self of all creatures is my Self" will be embedded in the mind and all Dharmas and Adharmas would be burnt to ashes by this Jnaana. There will also be Liberation from all kinds of bondages of Samsaara.

VERSES : 40 - 42

" One who without knowing the Ultimate Truth and not having faith in the statement of the Guru as well as in the Shaastra (scriptures) keeps on doubting whether or not there will be liberation from Jnaana will be ruined. To one who has doubts even the happiness which is the fruit of the dealings in this world will not accrue; then how can the happiness of the other worlds be obtained? But Karmas can never bother one who has got rid of all doubts by means of Jnaana; one who has transcended all Karmas by the Yoga of Paramaarth Darshana (Intuitive Vision of the Self, the Ultimate Reality) and has remained awake without falling into the

sleep of Ajnaana (Ignorance). The doubt that you now have pertaining to Atman or the Self is caused by Ajnaana. Hence, you cut it asunder with the sword of Jnaana; perform that Yoga which is a means to the Jnaana. For the present take part in the battle, get up.”

CHAPTER - V

VERSES : 1 - 3

“ You are saying once that Karmas should be performed, and at another time you are saying that they should be renounced. Tell me between these two which is good path for me,”—When Arjuna asked thus, Bhagavan replied as follows: “Both Sanyaasa and Karma Yoga are needed for Liberation. But it is better to perform Karma than to give it up. One who performs Karma without attachment or hatred is a Nityasanyaasin (he is always a sanyaasin) ; for him the bondage falls off easily.

VERSES : 4 - 7

“When Samabuddhi (equanimity) etc. are conjoined with Karma, then it is called ‘Yoga’ ; when Jnaana etc. are conjoined with Sanyaasa (renunciation) it is called ‘Saankhya’. These two are not independent paths to Liberation (Moksha); if any one of these is performed properly, then Liberation which is the fruit of both will definitely accrue. Even so, without Yoga true Sanyaasa cannot be attained; one who has achieved Chittashuddhi (purification of the mind or the heart) by means of Yoga gains control over his senses, and having obtained Jnaana attains Brahman Itself, which is Nishkarma or devoid of Karma. Therefore, either to a Karma-yogi or a Jnaani there is no bondage of Karma.

VERSES : 8 - 12

“In truth, a Jnaani does not perform any Karma. Only from the Vyavahaara (empirical) standpoint he is an agent of the dealings or functions, like seeing, hearing etc., that are going on in his body. He has understood that—‘I am not doing any thing’. Then how can he get any taint of Karma ? As regards Karmayogi, as he has been performing all Karmas as a devotional offering to Ishwara and without any sense of attachment, for him also Karma is not binding; Chittashuddhi (purification of the mind) alone will be the fruit of his Karma. Consequently, he gets Jnaana and attains Liberation (Mukti) too. He alone who has hankering after the fruits of Karma is bound down to Samsaara.

VERSES : 13 - 15

“Have I not told that one who is a Jnaani does not have any Karma at all ? Listen, I will tell you his state of mind. Like the others, he does not take it that — ‘ I am the body ’ ; he has realised that — ‘ I am unattached (Absolute) Atman alone who neither performs anything nor gets anything performed by other. “Hence he alone is Paramaartha Sanyaasin, meaning one who has truly given up or renounced all Karmas. In fact, no one has Kartrutva or doership at all; but people who are by nature ignorant think that they are of the essential nature of performing Karmas. From the Paramaartha Drishti or the

transcendental or absolute standpoint, there is no action, because all this is Brahman alone, which is Nishkarma (devoid of Karma) in essence.

VERSES : 16 - 21

“ Jnaanīs have intuited the essential nature of Atman or the Self and have their mind focussed on Him only. For them there is no other thing greater than Atman. In the world all the Jeevas, who are seen differently as Saattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic because of their different gunas, are seen (by the Jnaanīs) as of the form or essence of Parabrahma (the Absolute Reality) alone. In this manner as they have seen everthing to be alike, neither the defect of considering higher people to be lower not the defect of considering lower people as higher will affect them ; because, they have realised the truth that Brahman alone who is without defects is there in the forms of all Jeevas (souls) as well as their own (essential) form. As from this Jnaana whatever is seen has become Brahman alone, there is no possibility at all of their getting overjoyed by seeing anything that is pleasing nor their getting dejected or depressed by seeing anything displeasing. To them happiness means Atman alone ; that happiness has no end at all.

VERSES : 22 - 24

“Therefore, a wise man, having realised that all happiness born out of objects is the cause for misery, should withdraw his senses from the objects;

he should be alert as long as he has the body, not to be caught by the sway of attachment and hatred (Kaama and Krodha). One who has thus withdrawn his mind from objects, who has all his devotion and affection in Atman alone and who has believed that Atman alone is his light and Atman alone is his happiness, such a person has become Brahman while he is alive and later (when the body falls off) attains Brahman alone.

VERSES 25 - 26

“ One who wants to attain Liberation (Mukti) should wash off all sins ; should get rid of all doubts by Vichaara or discrimination ; should keep his senses under control ; should pray for the well-being of all creatures. To such Atmajnaanis, who have won over attachment and hatred, there is Liberation alone in this world also, and Liberation only in the other world too.

VERSES 27 - 29

“ For such Jnaana, Dhyaanayoga alone is the nearest path. A Dhyaanayogi should not think about outside objects, should have control over his body, should be doing Praanaayaama and should exercise control over his senses, the mind and the intellect. Thus if he is performing Dhyaana, Jnaana of the nature of- Paramaatma alone is performing Karmas like Yagna, Daana etc. in the form of a doer, He

alone is the enjoyer of these in the form of the deity also, and He alone is enshrined in the hearts of all creatures and is the Witness of all doers (Kartrus), enjoyers (Bhoktrus) and experiences' -is born in him and he attains Shaanti or Bliss. ”

VI CHAPTER

VERSES 1 - 3

Sri Krishna stated : “ Oh Arjuna, one who performs Nitya Karma (daily chores) without desiring any fruit thereof alone is a Sanyaasin, he alone is a Yogi ; do not think or believe that one who has given up Gaarhapatya etc. type of holy fires and Tapas (austerity), Daana (charity) etc. which are actions which do not need or entail any sacrificial fires is alone a Sanyaasin or a Yogi. As no one who has not given up motives or intentions can ever become a Sanyaasin, Karma which is performed by way of giving up its fruit is to be understood as Sanyaasa indeed. For one who wishes to get the qualification fit for Dhyaana Yoga, Karma alone is the discipline to be practised or Saadhana ; after one is fit for Dhyaana Yoga, if he is truly to be called a Yogaaroodha (adept in Yoga), for him Sanyaasa alone is the Saadhana or discipline to be practised.

VERSES 4 - 9

“One who has given up all intentions or desires without having any association with objects like sound, touch etc. or with Nitya (daily), Naimittika (special pretext) Karmaas is called Yogaaroodha. A wise man should somehow try to be a Yogaaroodha and should emancipate himself from the ills and miseries or vicissitudes of Samsaara, otherwise he will become responsible for his own ruin or downfall. One who has control over his body and senses, who has tranquillity of the mind with a sense of contentment and equanimity, who has knowledge of the Shaastras and the experience in accordance with them, who has equal disposition towards objects and people seen outside and who has no ups and downs in his mental equipoise, is alone the superior Yogaaroodha, a Yukta (one who is imbued or joined with Yoga).

VERSES 10 - 13

“ To achieve this supreme state one should live in secrecy and solitude without possessing anything as his own and keep on performing Yoga exercising full control over his body, senses and mind. In a clean place, one should occupy a seat which is not too high nor too low and keeping the body erect should get his mind engrossed in the Self or Atman alone and contemplate upon Paramaatman alone as the ultimate goal. One who thus performs Yoga constantly attains Paramashaanti or the supreme peace

or Bliss which is the fruit of Yoga. If the Saadhaka or practitioner observes the principle of exercising moderation in food and activities as well as in waking and sleep his Yoga becomes fruitful.

VERSES 14 , 26

“ To a Yukta his mind is established in Atman alone. His mind is contented because of Atma Darshana or right vision of the Self. Having experienced the Brahma Ananda or the Bliss of Brahman or the Self, he does not move away from the Tattwa or the essence of Being ; does not imagine that there is any benefit greater than that ; is not shaken up by any kind of misery outside. One who assiduously endeavours to establish his mind in Atman alone by persevering his efforts with a determined mind, giving up all desires, withdrawing his senses from their respective objects and without thinking about anything else – he alone attains this state.

VERSES 27-32

“ When Yoga becomes Siddhi (Intuitional experience) a great happiness is attained, it will be like reaching Brahman ; he will get a superb Jnaana or knowledge that ‘ in all creatures from Brahma to the blade of grass Paramaatma or the Self alone exists, He alone I am. ‘ In day-to-day life one gets the conviction that like himself all creatures want happiness or misery and develop equal feeling towards all. ”

VERSES 33-36

When Arjuna asks that "Just like the attempt to catch the wind and stop it, it is very difficult to still the mind, without any wavering, in the Self, as it is very fickle", Bhagavaan gave the following reply: "It is very difficult to still the mind, indeed; but by practice as Vairaagya (renuciation) it can be mastered."

VERSES 37 - 45

To questions by Arjuna to the effect : " When to one who is performing Yoga before he attains total Siddhi (Intuitive experience) if he meets with death, then his mind may get shaken up and he may become a Yogabhrastha or a defaulter in Yoga. Even before that, because this Yogi has performed Karma Sanyaasa, he will not get any fruit of Karma, and because Yoga has not matured into Siddhi, he will not attain Jnaana and consequently, will he not get confounded without any future ? " Sri Krishna's answer was : " To such a Yogi here, there is the happiness born out of the practice of Yoga; hereafter the superior lokas which are obtained by the performers of Punya Karma or actions of merit will be secured When he is born again he will be born in a pious rich man's house and enjoy happiness. Or if the Samskaara (subtle impression of past birth) of the practice of Yoga is stronger, he will be born in the house of righteous people who have discrimination and are Yogis, and by virtue of his

previous Samskaaras alone he will practise Yoga. Progressing on this Yoga path and after sufficient efforts, he will get Yoga Siddhi in the next birth and attain Paraagathi or Supreme Bliss.

VERSES 46 - 47

“ A Yogi is greater than Tapasvis, greater than those who have the knowledge of the Shaastras, greater than Karmis (ritulists). Hence, ah, Arjuna ! You endeavour to become a Yogi. There also you try to become a Yogi who dedicatedly invokes Me alone who is Vaasudeva ; because among all Yogis My devotee alone is the best Yogi.”

VII CHAPTER

VERSES 1 - 3

Sri Krishna stated: “oh, Arjuna, if one depends upon Me alone and meditates on Me alone he can surely know My essential nature in totality, one can also intuitively experience It. If this is known it will be like knowing everything. But this is not to be easily attained by everyone.

VERSES 4 - 12

“ Earth, water etc. are five subtle elements. Ahamkaara (ego), Mahat and Avyakta—thus My Jada-

prakriti (insentient primordial matter), which is inferior, is eight - fold. My superior Prakriti, which is of the form of Jeeva, has upheld all this universe. Through these Prakritis alone I have become the cause for the creation, sustentation and destruction of the universe; what the essence of Being in every substance is—know it to be Me alone; all the objects which are born out of Gunas like Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are dependent upon Me alone; I am not dependent upon any of them whatsoever.

VERSES 13 - 19

“ To those who are deluded by Maaya, which is imbued with Gunas, My essential nature is beyond reach. Those who surrender unto Me alone will cross over this Maaya, but sinners who are full of evil or demoniac propensities or qualities do not invoke or propitiate Me. Artha, Jijnaasa, Artharthi and Jnaani -- such four types of people invoke Me. All these are people I like. Even so, a Jnaani is My essential Self alone; he is immensely linked by Me. To become such a Jnaani is the fruit of a great mass of Punya or righteous merits.

VERSES 20 - 23

“Although there is equal amount of fatigue or exhaustion in either serving Me or serving other deities, those full of desires invoke or propitiate only the deities. Such people I encourage them to have devotion towards those respective idols of deities,

and through those deities I alone fulfil the desires which they entertain. But this fruit is destroyed soon. Even so, such fruit alone is liked by fools.

VERSES 24 - 27

“People devoid of intellect believe that I was not existing in the past and am born in recent times. Those people who are deluded by Maaya which is imbued with Gunas do not know that I am without birth and am imperishable or without decay. I know the happening and the passing away of event of the three passages of time viz. the past, the present and the future; but no one can know Me especially. Because, all Jeevas generally are born with the subtle impressions (Vaasanas) of attachment and hatred or likes and dislikes; to them the delusion caused by this is the obstruction or hindrance to the dawn of the knowledge of the essential nature of Being or Truth.

VERSES 28 - 30 ;

“But those who have performed profusely righteous deeds (PunyaKarma) and have acquired the purification of their mind or heart (Chittashuddhi), they will not get caught by this delusion of the pairs of opposites (Dwandwa Moha) and by invoking Me will know well the Brahma Tattwa or the essential nature of Brahman which will enable them to cross over old age and death as well as the essential nature of Pratyagaatma or one’s innermost Self and the Karma Tattwa or the genuine nature of Karma.

those who know Me, who is embellished with Adhibhoota, Adhidaiva and Adhiyagna, such of them can meditate upon Me with an equanimity of the mind even at the time of death.”

CHAPTER VIII

VERSES 1

When Arjuna asked : “Oh, Sri Krishna, what is Brahman ? Which is Adhyaatma ? Which is Karma? What are Adhibhoota, Adhidaiva, Adhiyagna ? In what manner should one contemplate on You at the time of death ?”, Bhagawan replied as follows :

VERSES 2-5

“Bigger than everything, Akshara (thing without destruction) is Brahman ; Its nature appearing as Jeeva in each one is itself Adhyaatma ; Homa (sacrifice) alone which is enunciated in the Shaastra and which is the cause for the birth of creatures is Karma; creatures which are destructible alone are Adhibhoota ; Hiranyagarbha who is the person who is embodied in the sun, and who sustains and patronises everyone’s senses is himself Adhidaiva. I Myself who is the presiding deity for the Yagna performed by the body, am Adhiyagna. Those who contemplate on Me alone at the time of giving up this body will enter unto Me alone.

VERSES 6-7

“With what kind of ideas man is occupied in his mind at the time of his death, that type of birth he will get. What kind of thought is entertained constantly in the mind during one’s life span, that kind of brooding may come over him at the time of death. Hence always be contemplating upon Me alone; then, eventually or in the end you will certainly attain Me alone.

VERSES 8-13

“Thus the Yogi, who always practises contemplation on Me, will control his mind, will be full of devotion, will stage by stage concentrate his (Praana) total mental faculties on higher and higher planes and will bring it to the highest pitch and through Omkaara contemplate on Me alone, full of unique features enunciated in the Shaastra. He will attain a superb or sublime state.

VERSES 14-19

“Thus those who have attained Me by means of constant practice do not get deluded and experience the miseries of Samsaara ; the others, whatever Lokas they might be obtaining, will but fall a prey to Samsaara, for all those Lokas, being within the control or jurisdiction of time, cannot give eternal or abiding happiness. When it is day for Brahman all the creatures are born or created, and when it is night they will merge in Him. There is no freedom from Samsaara for any creatures.

VERSES 20 - 22

“But Paramaatma, called by the name Akshara, is more unmanifested or is subtler than the Avyakta (the unmanifested causal form of the world) which is the state of sleep of Brahman and is the seed of all. He is not limited or circumscribed by time. Those who have meditated on Him with unswerving devotion and have attained Krama Mukti (Liberation attained gradually) will cross over Samsaara.

VERSES 23 - 28

“Karmis (performers of Shaastraic Karmas or rituals) after death go to Chandraloka (world of the Moon) through Krishna Maarga (Path of darkness, and after experiencing the fruit of their righteous deeds, once again return to Samsaara. Only the Upaasakas or meditators on Paramaatman go through Shukla Maarga (Path of Brightness) and obtaining the Krama Mukti enter into Paramaatman. Thus there is a great difference or gap between Karma and Upaasana or meditation on Paramaatman. Vedaa-dhyayana (study of Vedas or the scriptures), Yagna (sacrifice), Daana (charity), Tapas (austerity)—whichever Karma among these even if done properly, (by that) one cannot obtain the fruit that is yielded by meditation on Paramaatman at the time of death. Hence you practise to become a Yogi who performs this kind of Upaasana (meditation or contemplation).”

CHAPTER IX

VERSES 1 - 3

Bhagavan stated: "Listen, I will tell you a secret which is greater than everything else. This is itself Jnaana and Vijnana. If you understand this you will be liberated from the bondage of Samsaara. This is the best among all branches of knowledge, the most sacred and which can directly be experienced or intuited. This can easily be obtained and has a fruit which can never get diminished or worn out. Those who have no faith in this will fall down into Samsaara.

VERSES 4 - 10

"All this universe is pervaded by Me who is of an unmanifested form (Avyakta Roopa). Although all the creatures from Brahma down to a blade of grass are dependent on Me alone, from the (Paramaartha Drishti) absolute or transcendental point of view, they are not in Me; just as the wind is there in space (Akaasha), all the creatures or objects (of the world) are in Me without any contact with Me. Thus during their state of sustentation the objects which are in Me, at the end of the Kalpa (cycle), get submerged in My Prakriti; through this Prakriti I alone create them at the beginning of the new cycle. As I am indifferent to the creation, the sustentation and the dissolution which occur through this Prakriti which is conjured up by Avidya (Nescience or Ignorance of the Self), I have no bondage of any

kind from Karma; in the presence of Me, who is the Absolute Witness (Saakshi), Prakriti is getting modified or transformed into the animate and the inanimate forms.

VERSES 11-13:

“The ignorant people, not knowing that I alone, who is thus of an essence which is eternal and pure (untainted), am the Self (Atman) of all, are full of demoniac propensities and are harming one another. Those who are great souls (Mahaatma), realizing that I alone am the cause for all objects in this world, equip themselves with divine qualities and always invoke or contemplate upon Me.

VERSES 14-19:

“Those people who are of a divine nature realize that I alone exist in the form of the non-dual Brahman, in the different forms of the sun, the moon etc. as well as the form of the whole universe and always invoke Me alone with Jnaana and Yagna.

VERSES 20-25:

“Those who do not know this essential Truth and perform Karmas (rituals) stipulated in the Vedas for attaining the happiness of the Swarga (Heaven) go to Heaven but on the exhaustion of the good merits got by them once again get back to the world of the human beings. I alone will undertake the welfare and well-being of those who serve Me alone without

any desires. People with desires as well as those without desires invoke Me alone. Because, I only am the recipient of all Yagnas (sacrifices) in the forms of the respective deities. Even so, as those with desires do not know this essential Truth, they do not attain the supreme state of Myself, get deluded and fall down into Samsaara. Those who serve deities like Indra etc., Pitrus (Manes) like Agnishwaatta etc., objects like Maatrugana etc., attain the respective deities etc.; similarly, those who serve Me alone will attain Me only. Thus to serve Me there is no great effort needed.

VERSES 26-29:

“There is no need of any great material requirements to invoke Me. Even if one among these, namely a leaf, a flower, a fruit, a little water, is offered with devotion, from that much alone I will get satisfied. Hence what you naturally or habitually do and eat, that you offer to Me; the Homa (sacrificial offering in the fire), Daana (charity), Tapas (penance or austerity)—these what you perform, offer them to Me. Consequently, you will go beyond Paapa (evil deeds or demerits) and Punya (good deeds or merits), will get liberated from the bondage of Karmas and will attain or reach Me alone. I deal with everyone alike (or have equal dispensation towards everyone); but My devotees are established by nature in Me alone; I exist in them only.

VERSES 30-33;

“Let a person be with the worst type of propensities and behaviour, but if he begins to invoke Me with one-pointed or absolute devotion, such a person by the strength of that devotion gets a good behaviour and obtains Shaanti or Bliss. Even if those who are born as a woman, a Vaishya (trader), a Shudra (heathen) as a result of unrighteous deeds seek refuge in Me, they will attain the supreme state; then, is it to be gainsaid that Brahmins those who are kings as well as Rishis, who have got good births and become My devotees, will attain a supreme state? This human birth is non-eternal, there is not an iota of happiness in it, but it is possible to obtain in it that devotion which enables one to attain the summum bonum of life. You who is born as a Kshatriya in this human birth, which is very difficult to get, keep your mind engrossed in Me alone, be a devotee of Mine and be invoking and prostrating before Me alone. If you are like this, you will reach Me alone.”

CHAPTER X**VERSES 1-11:**

Bhagawan stated: “Arjuna, listen, I am telling you once again so that you should benefit by it. Neither the deities nor the Maharshis know My

beginning; because, I am Myself the beginning for both of them. Those who know that I am birthless and beginningless. One who bestows upon all the creatures of the world faculties like intellect etc., that creators, like Maharshis and Manus, are created by My mere Sankalpa (will or wish), will get rid of Paapas or evil deeds or demerits and will obtain a steady Bhaktiyoga. I will be in their hearts and bestow on them as a fruit of that Yoga the light of Self-Knowledge which will rid them of Moha (delusion) itself that is born out of Ajnaana (Nescience or Ignorance).”

VERSES 12 - 39

When Arjuna displayed his curiosity to know Bhagawan's Vibhooti (Power of manifesting in diverse forms) as well as Yoga (to make something impossible as possible Bhagawan, who is ever unchangeable, appears Himself as the universe in a detailed fashion), then Bhagawan stated as follows: “My dear, there is no counting of My diverse manifestations as so many only; therefore, I will let you know only these which are the main. I, who is established in everyone's heart, am their Self only; I am the cause for the creation, the sustentation and the dissolution of all. I am the Aditya called Vishnu, the Sun, Mareechi, the Saama Veda, Indra, the Mind, the Chetana Vritti (sentience), Shankara, Kubera, Paavakayasu, Meru mountain, Brihaspati, Skanda, Saagara, Bhrigu Maharshi, Omkaara, Japayagna,

Himalaya, Ashwatha, Naarada, Chitraratha, Kapila, Uchhaishravas, Iraavata, the King Vajrayudha, Kamadhenu, Manmatha (Cupid), Vaasukhi (gigantic serpent), Anantha, Varuna, Aaryama, Yama, Prahalada, Kaaya, Mrigendra, Vainateya (Garuda), Vaayu, Dasharatha Raama, Makara, the river Jaanhavi (Ganges) --- contemplate that I am all these. I alone am the beginning, the middle and the end of all creations. Adhyaatma Vidya, Vaada, Akaara, Dwandwa, Kaala, Dhaata (creator), Mrithyu (Death), Kalyaana Kaarana (cause for auspiciousness), heavenly damsels like Keerti, Brihatsaama, Gaayatri Mantra, the month of Maargasheersha, the season of Vaasantha, the sport of gambling, Tejas, Victory, Nischaya (determination), Sattva, Vasudeva, Arjuna, Vyaasa, Shukraacharya, Danda, Rajaneeti (political science), Mouna silence), Jnaana (Self-Knowledge), cause of all objects - all these are Myself, meaning My Vibhooti or diverse manifestations.

VERSES 39-42 :

Nothing at all can exist apart from Me. Because there is no end to My diverse manifestations. I have told you a little. Believe that whatever thing in this world is endowed with Vibhooti (glory), Sri (prosperity), Utsaaha (enthusiasm), they are all born out of a part of My Tejas (splendour). Or why all this? Know that I have become this whole universe from only one part of Myself."

CHAPTER XI

VERSES 1-4

Listening to Bhagavan's statement, after He had described His Vibhootis (diverse manifestations), that all the universe is only one part of His, Arjuna wanting to see that Vishwa Roopa (His manifestation of the world as a part of Himself) pleaded: "Bhagawan, is it possible for me to see your IshwaraRoopa (manifestation as the Lord of this universe) just as You have stated ? In that case, please show me that form."

VERSES 5-13

Then Sri Krishna showed His Vishwa Roopa stating thus: "Paartha, look at these varied forms of Mine. Look at the deities like Aditya etc., being in Me as well as the whole universe being in one part of Me. Behold, I have given you Divya Drishti (divine or sublime visual power)," In that, innumerable mouths, eyes, terrifying visions were seen by Arjuna. Bhagawan, who had put on the form of Vishwa Roopa, had worn various heavenly ornaments; had held assorted weapons; having worn divine clothes, was adorned by exceedingly fragrant flowers and perfumes etc.; was full of excessive light (brilliance). The whole universe itself was being seen in the body of that Devadeva (Lord of all lords, deities).

VERSES 14-31

Then Arjuna saw--the deities like Brahma etc., Risnis, different kinds of creatures being in Bhagawan's body, Bhagawan pervading everywhere and He being without beginning or end being seen; the bold

warriors entering His mouth and He munching them and enjoying it with a sound of the mouth; deities and siddhas trembling out of fear of Him and invoking Him; looking at His fearful form, the world as a whole getting flabbergasted -- and without any peace of mind and being confounded, Arjuna begged of that Parameshwara, an embodiment of resplendent light, who was burning out the whole of the universe, as follows : "Oh, Lord, please be gracious towards me. Who are You ? Why have You incarnated here? Kindly tell me."

VERSES 32 - 46

Then Bhagawan stated : "Arjuna, know that I am Time (Kaala) who has come to destroy this world. Whether you participate in this war or not, none of these alien brave men are likely to survive. Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna--that all such people of whom you have been afraid should be liquidated is My intention. Therefore, you become only instrumental in killing these brave men who are destined to die and obtain glory (fame), certainly you will meet with success. Having won over these people, be ruling happily over the kingdom." Arjuna, shivering to the core and repeatedly bowing, prostrated before Bhagawan and begged of Him as follows: "Oh, Bhagawan, Thou who are the Self of all, it is in the fitness of things that this whole world on mere hearing the recitation of Your (divine) qualities gets bloated with elation and becomes full of adoration towards You ; it is also worthy that

demons run away fearing You and Siddhas prostrate before You. Because, You are that sort of a Mahatma (super being), You are the one who created Brahma, the creator of this universe, Lord of all deities, the substratum of all this universe. In truth, You are the one who knows all this; the thing to be known also is nothing other than Yourself. You alone is the Supreme State which the liberated attain. Oh Lord, Thou who are pervading all deities, prostrations unto You ! Without knowing that You are full of such glories I, having lost my presence of mind, out of familiarity born out of friendship, called You such as --“Aye Krishna, Aye Yaadava, Aye chum ! ” and spoke to You nonchalantly, please pardon me. You are the patriarch of this world, worthy of being invoked, and the Guru. You have no equals, and who is there greater than You, where is he ? You should pardon all my crimes committed with regard to You, Please wind up this form of Yours and reviving Your previous human form, bless me.”

VERSES 47 - 55

Then Bhagawan stated : “Arjuna, having been pleased by you, I have shown this resplendent Vishwa Roopa out of My Yoga Mahima (glories of Yoga) only for your sake. Do not be afraid. Look here, see thou my previous form only !” Thus satisfying him (Arjuna), once again stated : “Oh, Paandava, even deities are hankerjng after seeing this Vishwa

Roopa shown to you. Veda, Tapas, Daana, Yagna--from any of such saadhanas or practises it is not possible to see Me with this form; it will be possible to enter unto Me by knowing Me through (constant) Bhakti or devotion alone and obtaining Saakshaatkaara (materialisation of divine form). One who performs all Karmas for My sake only, believes that I alone is the refuge, has supreme devotion unto Me, has no attachment towards the objects of this world and is full of love towards all creatures--such a person alone will attain My Saayujya (identity)."

CHAPTER XII

VERSES 1

After seeing the Vishwa Roopa, Arjuna questioned as follows: "Oh, Bhagawan, those people who always meditate with their mind immersed in the Vishwa Roopa alone, which you have shown just now, and those who meditate on Akshara Brahma devoid of any adjuncts, which you have been here and there teaching till now- between these two classes of people who are the better class of Yogis ?"

VERSES 2-5 :

Then Bhagawan stated thus: "Oh, Arjuna, only those who meditate upon the Vishwa Roopa are the greater Yogis. Those who meditate on Akshara

Brahma attain or reach Me alone, but as that Brahman is not within the reach of the senses for those who have the body consciousness (the sense that 'I am the body') it cannot be easily attained. To those who meditate on Me who is the Vishwa Roopa I alone become a guide and will lift them from the ocean of Samsaara.

VERSES 6-12

"Therefore, you establish your mind and intellect in Me alone who is the Vishwa Roopa. If it is not possible to establish (your mind and intellect) at one attempt, you practise it with Viveka (discrimination) and Vairaagya (renunciation); even if that seems to be difficult, then perform only such Karmas which are done as an offering to please or propitiate Ishwara; even if that becomes difficult for you, taking refuge in My Yoga, you make an attempt to renounce or give up fruits of all Karmas.

VERSES 13-19

"But those who are meditators on Akshara are extremely dear to Me. Listen, I will tell you their characteristics; they cannot hate any creatures; being friendly with every one, they will be showing compassion. Without having or entertaining the senses of 'I' and 'Mine', without having ups and downs (in their mental states) in the face of happiness or misery, pardoning or forgiving even if

harm is done (by anyone), being satisfied with very little, having controlled their senses and mind, with complete determination, they have surrendered or offered their mind and intellect to Paramaatma alone. They will live without causing any perturbation or anxiety to others an account of themselves nor will they also get perturbed or become anxious because of others; anger, intolerance, fear, anxiety--without any of these they will live. Without expecting anything at all, being very pure and clean, doing whatever work that comes their way, with prompt attention, without taking the side of anyone (holding any brief for any group), without repentance, they will not be doing any work for their own sake. If good comes their way they will not get elated (unduly), if evil or bad comes their way they will not hate it, they will not weep or cry if anything is lost, they will not aspire to gain anything, they have transcended Paapa (sinful) and Punya (meritorious) Karmas. Mine, others'; fame, ignominy; happiness, misery--tolerating such pairs of opposites, being steady, they will live without being attached to anything whatsoever. Whether people scold them or praise them--without having any ups and downs in their mental poise, without having any strict rules or conventions with regard to food, clothes, living place, they will get their mind established in Pararthā (the Ultimate Reality) alone.

VERSE 20

“This their behaviour will also be in keeping with Dharma and will be the cause for Liberation. Because they are devotees who with extreme Shraddha (dedication) believe that I alone am the final refuge (paramagathi) and behave like this, they are extremely dear to Me.”

 CHAPTER XIII

VERSES 1-2

Bhagawan stated: “Oh, Arjuna, this body itself is Kshetra (region, sphere); Atman Himself, who knows this, is Kshetrajna (subject). The indweller in all the kshetras is Myself alone. The discrimination between Kshetra and Kshetrajna itself is the knowledge of the Ultimate Truth.

VERSES 3-6:

“Listen, I will tell You the essential nature of Kshetra, the essential nature of Kshetrajna and the means essential to know these properly. The eight-fold Prakriti (primordial matter of the universe) comprising Avyakta (unmanifest seed form), Mahat, Ahamkaara (ego), Pancha Bhootas (the five elements) and 16-fold Vikriti (modification) comprising eleven

senses and five objects together are called Kshetra. Attachment and hatred etc. --- such qualities of Antahkarrana (mind) are also included in the Kshetra.

VERSES : 7-11

"Before telling you about the essential nature of Kshetrajna, I will tell you the means by which that can be realised or intuited. Amaanitwa (humility), Adambhitwa (modesty), Ahimsa (non-injury), Kshaanti (patience), Aarjava (uprightness), Achaarya-yopaasana (service of the Guru), Shaucha (purity), Sthairya (steadfastness), Aatmavinigraha (self-control or mind-control), renunciation of enjoyments or pleasure of the objective world, Anahamkaara (absence of egoism), continuously reasoning about the miseries and defects in birth, death, old age any affliction, Anaasakti (unattachment). Anabhishwanga (absence of affection for kith and kin), mental equipoise (in the face of the pairs of opposites), unswerving devotion, Viviktadeshasevitwa (living in solitary places), Arati in Janasamsarga (distate for the society of common men), Adhyaatmajnaananittyatwa (constancy in self-knowledge), Tattwajnaanarth Darshana (insight into the essence of the knowledge of the Ultimate Truth) - such twenty means or disciplines are needed for this Jnaana or Self-Knowledge. Instead of these if qualities such as Maanitwa (egoism), Dambhitwa (pride) etc. are there, Ajnaana or ignorance itself will be aggravated or increased and one will have to be suffering in Samsaara. There-

fore, one who is a Mumukshu (aspirant for Liberation) should necessarily acquire discipline for Jnaana like Amaanitwa etc.

VERSES 12 -18

“Listen, now I will tell you the real essential nature of Kshetrajna. If it is understood or realised. Liberation is attained. That is the eternal Parabrahman (Ultimate Truth); It is quite different from all objects perceived by the senses which can be ascertained either as existing or non-existing. It has everywhere hands and feet, eyes, head, face, and ears; It pervades everything. Although It can display the function of all the senses, It does not really possess any senses. It has up held and supported everything without even touching any one of them. Although It has no Gunas or qualities Itself, experiences gunas or qualities. Not only does It exist internally and externally in all the creatures, It exists as the very essence of the bodies of all animate and inanimate creature. Even so, because Its ultimate essential nature is very subtle, It is not know to the ignorant and exists as if It is somewhere far away; but to the wise persons only it is very near. Although It is immutable and non-dual; It appears as if It exists differently in every Jeeva (individual soul), It is the cause for the creation, the sustantation, and the dissolution of all objects, It is the light of lights and is beyond darkness. What has been said so far

about the Jnaana (Knowledge) of Amaanitwn etc. and the knowable and the Jnaana which is of the nature of the fruit ---- all these exist in everyone's heart.

“In this manner, Kshetra, Jnaana Saadhanaa or the means for obtaining Jnaana and the essential nature of Kshetrajna which is knowable -- all these three have been stated in brief, indeed; My devotee, having known this, will attain My essential nature alone.

VERSES 19-23

“Prakriti and Purusha or Kshetra and Kshetrajna---these two are Parameshwara's or Supreme Lord's Prakritis or primordial matters; from these alone the creation of all objects has taken place; inasmuch as all that is of the form or nature of cause and effect is born out of Prakriti (primordial matter); experience of happiness and unhappiness is born out of Purusha. Purusha gets the attachment with Gunas or qualities of Prakriti owing to misconception and having agentship gets born from good or bad (superior or inferior) wombs and is suffering. But this Purusha Himself, who is in the body, in His ultimate essential nature, as the all--witnessing Pure Consciousness (Chaitanya Maatra) alone, is sustaining all the functions of the body and the senses and is the cause for all only by virtue of His presence (Sannidhi) alone. He is the Maheshwara or the Great Lord who rules

over all of them. Thus one who analytically understands or discriminates between Prakriti and Purusha, as also Samsaara born out of Gunas--- such a Jnaani will have no rebirth.

VERSES 24 - 25

“In order to attain the right vision of this Paramaatma (Ultimate Truth or Self), some use Dhyaana, some Saankhya Yoga and some other Karma Yoga; some others, as they do not know any means or path what soever, meditate upon Bhagawan as directed by great men only. All these will attain Liberation.

VERSES 26-30

“The cause for birth and Samsaara is the mutual superimposition (Anyonyaaphyaasa) between Kshetra and Kshetrajna. One who realises or understands that Kshetras (the embodied things) are destructible but the Self (Atman) who exists in these alone is truly the indestructible Parameshwara (the Ultimate Lord or Truth), One who knows that Paramaatma existing in all Kshetras alone is himself, will not commit like the others suicide or killing of his own Self out of ignorance; he will attain from it the final Beatitude (Paramagati) itself. When one who understands that ‘Prakriti itself is performing all Karmas. I am Paramaatman or the Ultimate Self or Truth who is a non-doer or non-

agent'-- and further knows that all objects are born out of that Paramaatman alone and are sustained by His support only, then he will become one with Brahman alone.

VERSES 31-32

"As this Paramatman is beginningless and devoid of qualities, He is without or devoid of destruction. Even if He exists in the body, neither does He perform any Karmas nor does the fruit of any Karma affect or taint Him. Just as Akaasha or space, despite being everywhere, is not affected or touched by the gross things because it is a very subtle entity, in the same manner, although this Paramaatman exists everywhere in the body He is not affected by its defects. Just like the sun who alone lits up the whole world, Paramaatma, who is of this form of Kshetrajna, keeps litting up all the Kshetras and remains without being affected or tainted by them.

VERSES 33

" Thus those who understand the difference between Kshetra and Kshetrajna and know the means) of liquidating Prakriti which is the cause for all objects they will attain or reach Parabrahma Himself."

CHAPTER XIV

VERSES 1-4

With a view to teaching the method by which the world is born out of the Prakritis, namely Kshetrajna, the manner in which one is bound by the association of Prakriti made up of the three Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas), and the method of overcoming these Gunas, Bhagawan stated : "Oh Arjuna listen, I will tell you that thing, the Jnaana (knowledge) by which the Ultimate Goal of Liberation will be attained. Myself and My Prakriti--with the association of these two only the world is born. All the celestial beings like deities etc., also are born out of this association. To them My Prakriti is the material cause and I am the efficient cause.

VERSES 5-9:

"Every Jeeva is bound the three Gunas of Prakriti. Among these, Sattva binds the Jeeva with the taint of of happiness (Sukha) and knowledge (Jnaana); Rajas binds with hankering (Trishna), attachment with objects (Vishya Sanga), and with actions (Karma Sanga); Tamas Guna binds with Ignorance (Ajnaana) arrogance (Pramaada); lethargy (Aalasya), sleep (Nidra).

VERSES 10-30 :

“ Among these three Gunas when each one surpasses the other two and raises its head or becomes itself predominant, then that (Guna) binds the Jeeva with its own qualities. When the effects of any Guna are excessively seen in the Jeeva then it should be decided or determined that Guna is outstanding or has raised its head.

VERSES 14- 18 :

“In accordance with that effect of a Guna which is predominant in the Jeeva at the time of death, after death the Jeeva will attain either Sattvic, Rajasic or Tamasic world (Loka). In any case, in this birth or other births to come, in this world or other worlds, everywhere from Satva; Jnaana etc., from Rajas, agreed etc. and from Tamas, ignorance etc.--thus regularly the respective fruits are accruing.

VERSES 19-20 :

“As long as the Jeeva understands or believes that he himself is the doer (Kartru) as well as enjoyer (Bhoktru): so long he is not rid of the bondage from these Gunas. When he attains the Jnaana or Knowledge that ‘Gunas are themselves doers (Kartrus), I am unattached’, then he achieves the essential nature of the Ultimate Truth (Paramaatma Swaroopa) Itself. He also gets liberated from the miseries of rebirth etc. Such a person alone is a Jeevan Mukta (one who is liberated when still alive in this body).

VERSES 21-25 :

“Listen, I will tell you the characteristics of one who has thus transcended the three Gunas and has become liberated; Whether the effects of the Gunas like Jnaana etc, come and go, he will remain without any ups and downs on his mind. Understanding that the Gunas themselves are carrying on their respective functions, he will not get shaken up in the least by the effects of the Gunas and will remain unattached only. Whichever of the two--happiness or unhappiness, comes his way, he will be without any bother or brooding. Without entertaining ideas like ‘I want this, I don’t want this’, he will have equal attitude towards a mass of earth, stone and gold, and be indifferent. He does not have foes or friends; elation or depression caused by respect or disrespect, respectively. He does not undertake any work for his own sake.

VERSES 26-27 :

“If the state of transcending these three Gnnas is to be achieved, an aspirant (Saadhaka) should not only acquire all the qualifications mentioned above but also mainly contemplate upon Me, the Parameshwara, with total devotion uninterruptedly : such a person alone will transcend these Gunas and become one with the essential nature of Brahman. Because I (who am Brahman ever devoid of all adjuncts) am the substratum for Brahman (Brahman with His Maya is the universe), for Jnaana needed to attain that as well as the eternal Bliss(Nityasukha) that is to be obtained from Jnaana, I alone am the support (Aashraya),”

CHAPTER XV

VERSES 1-3 :

Bhagawan stated; "This tree called Samsaara is born from extremely subtle and sublime root called Brahman, has grown downwards and spread all over without ever withering away. This Samsaara is protected by the leaves called Vedas. Its branches have spread out downwards and upwards. They have grown from Gunas, budding out from objects. Because of Karmas this has side-roots (i.e. Vaasanas) blossomed in the world of human beings (Manushya Loka). This is of the form of an appearance, having no end, beginning and middle.

VERSES 4-6:

"Jnaanis cut asunder this tree by the strong weapon of Asanga (detachment), search out the Parama Purusha or the Ultimate Reality or Self, who does not return to Samsaara and is the cause for everything, and surrendering unto Him, they get rid of all mental defects and attain immutable and self-illuminating Vishnupada or state of Vishnu (all-pervading Reality).

VERSES 7-11

"Although Jeeva is, from the transcendental or Absolute standpoint, My own part and is eternally

pure, conscious and liberated, he does not know his essential nature of Being and being attached to the objects (of the world), is suffering in Samsaara. These, who get cleansed of sin, who practise observing disciplines like Shama (control of the mind), Dama (control of the senses) etc., will through those efforts achieve Jnaana (Knowledge of the Self) and will intuit this his absolute essence of Being.

VERSES 12-15 :

“As my essential nature of Being is the Self of all, It not only carries out all dealings in the forms of sun, moon, fire, earth, Soma (nectar juice), Vaishwaonaraagni (the energy for carrying out all metabolism) in the stomach, but also It exists in the hearts of all creatures in the form of their Self; From Me alone (faculties like) memory; knowledge, disappearance of knowledge are functioning in every one. The thing known, the knower and the knowledge (concept) are all Myself only.

VERSES 16-19 :

“The whole lot of existences (existing things) or entities can be divided into three groups. All these three are called Purusha. Among these the materialistic world seen outside, of the form of the cause and the effect (the elements and their effects) is one group. This is known as ‘Kshara Purusa’, because it is ever changing and finally gets destroyed’

The seed form which this Kshara attains at the time of Pralaya (dissolution of the universe) is the second group. That is called Akshara Purusha, because it exists in its Maaya Roopa (form of appearance or apparent form) without being destroyed as long as Samsaara exists (or till Self-knowledge dawns). Paramaatma or the Absolute Self alone, who is illumining these two, namely Kshara and Akshara, who is providing or proffering existence to them from His own Existence or Being and who is their essence without having any deformation (change of form), is the third group which is of an extremely different nature other than these two. As Kshatra and Akshatra have borrowed existence, both those groups are being called Purushas only in a secondary sense (in a manner of speaking). As I, who is their Self alone, am the real Purusha, I am the Purushottama (the Supreme Purusha). For this reason only in the Vedas as well as in the world I have the popular name of 'Purushottama'. One who knows this as it really or actually is, will obtain the feeling of seeing the Self or Atman everywhere or in everything (Sarvaatma Bhaava) and will contemplate upon Me as being everything and become omniscient.

VERSE 20 :

“This alone is the inner secret of Shaastra. One who has understood this alone is a Jnaani, one who has attained the ultimate goal of his life (Krita-

kriyata). Because, after having known the Purushottama Tattwa or the essential Truth of Purushottama, the Supreme Self, there is nothing else remaining to be known or done.”

CHAPTER XVI

VERSES 1 - 4 :

In order to enumerate the Daivisampat (divine qualities) needed for a Kritakriya (one who attained the ultimate goal of life) who has been liberated by Jnaana Bhagawan stated: “Being fearless having purity of the heart or mind, being established or rooted in the Jnaana or Yoga, doing Daana (charity), having Dama (control over the senses), performing Yagna (sacrifice), having Vedaadhyayana (study of the scriptures), doing Tapas (penance), having Rujute (straight-forwardness), practising Ahimsa (noninjury), speaking Satya (truth), being Akrodha (without anger), practising Sannyasa (renunciation), having Shama (control over the mind), be without the habit of calumny, having compassion towards other creatures, being without uncovetousness (unwavering in mind), having Mridutwa (polite or docile attitude), Lajja (having a sense of shame), being without Chapala (fickleness),

being Pragalbha (bold, resolute. eloquent), having Kshama (forgiveness), having Dhairya (bravery), having Shibhitwa (cleanliness), having Adroha (absence of hatred), having no Abhimaana (pride) --all these are to be found in one who is born with Daivee sampat (divine propensities). Dambha (ostentatiousness), Derpa (arrogance), Atyabhimaana (excessive egoism), Krodha (anger), bitter or carping tongue, Ajnaana (ignorance)--- all these are to be found in one who is born with Assuresampat (demoniac propensities).

VERSE 5 :

“Between these two, liberation is achieved through Daivesampat or divine propensities. through Aasuresampat or demoniac propensities bondage is caused. As you have Daiveesampat you need not worry or bother.

VERSES 6-18 :

“All the creatures created in this world have one of these Sampats (set of propensities). Listen, as only when one gives up the Aasurisampat he can acquire the means for spiritual betterment, I will tell you about those (Aasurieesampat) propensities. Persons with Aasurieesampat do not know what should be done, what should not be done. In them there is no cleanliness, no discrimination, no honesty. They believe that all the persons in this world are

dishonest; it is their belief that all the persons in the world are born because of lust and not that there is a cause (for their birth) of Dharma or Adharma (good or bad deeds) or that there is an Ishwara (Lord) who bestows fruits according to these (Dharma or Adharma). Following this viewpoint, they give up all means of acquiring spiritual progress and with a fissiparous tendency of the mind indulge in dangerous acts which will bring about the destruction of the world. Their desires are never to be fulfilled. They are full of arrogance, power intoxication and vain pride, and with evil intentions or motives they trek the sinful path deliberately. Their imagination is limitless; that does not get exhausted till their death. Desire alone is their main Purushaartha or purpose or goal of life. Being caught by the force of hundreds of ropes of desires, being rooted in desires and anger alone, and earning money or wealth illegally only, they hanker after enjoyments. "This wealth is acquired, this is to be acquired yet; I will achieve fulfilment of this my plan; I have conquered these persons, must conquer the rest; I have killed this foe, will kill the rest, I rule over all, I am experiencing all enjoyments, I am Siddha (Lord), strong, happy, wealthy and am born in a good family, who is there equal to me? I will perform sacrifice (Yagna), charity (Daana), will get happiness" ---- thus with ignorance they admire themselves in all kinds of ways and full of various ideas and being engrossed in enjoyments alone, get

doomed. Their acts done with (the help of) their wealth, sense of pride and arrogance are ostentatious acts. For them egoism, strength, arrogance, desire and anger --- these are their refuge. As their nature is only to hate Me, they will be doing some thing not good either for themselves or for others.

VERSES 19-20

“Thus those evil persons who hate Me I will make them get born over and again or repeatedly in suitable demoniac births. To them there is no Paramaatma Praapti or attainment of the Ultimate Self or Reality whatsoever. By and by they will be born in more and more evil births till finally they get Adhamagati or the worst state of doom.

VERSES 21-22:

“ Desire (Kaama), Anger (Krodha), greed (Lobha)—these three are the condensation of Aasuri Sampat or demoniac propensities which are the cause for Naraka or Hell. Hence a discrimination person should reject these three and should perform the Saadhanas which lead to Emancipation”.

VERSES 23 - 24 :

In the Shaastra, what should be done, what should not be done — this has been stated. Hence that should be known and Karma should be performed. For those who give up the injunctions

of the Shastra and behave as they like there is no happiness here, nor any betterment hereafter. Therefore, it is better for you to perform Karma as stipulated in the Shaastra.”

CHAPTER-XVII

VERSES 1 - 6

Hearing Bhagwan's statement that one should perform as per the stipulations of Shaastra, Arjuna said : "Oh Bhagawan, as regards the Karmas of those who do not know the injunctions of the Shasatra but who perform them with faith and in accordance with a code of conduct, will they be Saatvic, Raajasi cor Taamasic ?" To this, the reply given by Sri Krishna Bhagawan is : "The faith that is born in people in accordance with their innate nature may be of these three types. Therefore, the nature of each one should be determined in accordance with his respective Shraddha or faith. That is like this: Saatvikas contemplate upon deities, Raajahsikas on Yakshas (demigods) and Raakshas (demons), Taamasikas on evil spirits (Bhoota Preta). Without heeding the method mentioned by the Shaastra, full of arrogance and egoism, those who perform great Tapas (penance) sustained by their desires and attachment

alone and hurting their body should be understood to be of demoniac determination.

VERSES 7-22 :

“ Food, Yagna (sacrifice), Daana (charity), Tapas (penance or austerity)—all these will be of three types according to one’s level or grade. That is like this : Saatvikas will relish food which will enhance one’s span of life, essence, strength, health, happiness and affectionate nature and which is nutritious, jiddu (viscous), hard and pleasant; Raajasikas mostly relish food which is bitter, sour, salty, hot, spicy, dry, burning to the tongue and which causes misery ; Taamasikas will relish such bad food which is eaten and left by others, stale, putrid and decomposed. Similarly Saatvikas will perform Yagna (sacrifice) without hankering after its fruits and because it is enjoined in the Shaastra. Raajasikas will do it with expectation of its fruits and with arrogance. Taamasikas, without faith and without heeding the Shaastra, will perform Angavaikalya Yagna (defective sacrifices). Tapas is of three types, physical, voral and mental. Those who do these three types of Tapas with extreme faith and having no expectation of their fruits are Saatvikas ; those who do these with a sense of pride and ambition of getting honoured, fame and admiration (deification) are Raajasikas; those who are not knowing the truth, without heeding his own risk or danger or doing them with the intention of causing harm to others

are Taamasikas. Those, who perform charity (Daana) with only one reason of giving it at the proper time and place and to the deserving people as also not expecting any return for it, are Saatvikas. Those, who expect returns or hanker after some kind of fruit, do charity reluctantly or grudgingly, are Raajasikas; those, who do charity without considering the factors like proper time, place and people and humiliate the recipients or those whom they give, without any courteousness (and compunction), are Taamasikas.

VERSES 23-28:

“ By performing Yagna, Daana and Tapas, by means of reciting the three names, Om, Tat, Sat, of Brahman, they will overcome their defects in their sacrifices as a result of the merits of the recitation of the names ; their sacrifices are transformed into meritorious things. But for this, Shraddha or faith is mainly needed. Yagna, Daana and Tapas done without faith are said to be Asat or not real ; because, such Yagna, Daana and Tapas will yield no fruit whatsoever either here or hereafter.”

CHAPTER-XVIII

VERSES 1-12

When Arjuna asked : "Oh Hrishikesha, oh Madhusudhana, please tell me distinctively the essence of Sanyaasa and Tyaaga (renunciation)," Sri Bhagawan stated : " Oh Arjuna, giving up the fruits of all Karmas is called Tyaaga. For both words Sanyaasa and Tyaaga, there is the same meaning of 'giving up'. A Mumukshu, who is not an Aatma-jnaani (Knower of the Self) also should give up Karmas, some say; he should not give up daily Karmas e.g. the types of Yagna, Daana and Tapas, some others say. In this context, My verdict is that one should not give up Yagna, Daana and Tapas ; if they are done without attachment and without hankering after their fruits, one achieves the purification of his mind or heart. If those Karmas are given up without discrimination, that becomes Taamasa Tyaaga; if they are given up because they are strenuous, that becomes Raajasa Tyaaga; if they are done without attachment and an anxiety for fruits, that becomes Saatvika Tyaaga. A Saatvika will not hate evil Karmas, will not develop attachment for good Karmas. One who observes this Saatvika Tyaaga attains Jnaana, stage by stage; as for one who has identification with his body it is impossible to give up Karmas completely; a Saatvika Tyaagi alone is called a Tyaagi. Because, after he attains Jnaana, Paramaatha Sanyaasa (the real or genuine Sanyaasa) is obtained and fruits of

Karmas of the types of 'unwanted', 'wanted' or 'mixed' will not taint him in the least.

VERSES 13-17:

“ For any Karma the body, the doer (agent), instrument (sense), the functioning of the vital force (Praana Vyaapaara), Daiva (deities like the sun who patronise the sense organs) --- these five are the causes. As Atman or the Self is pure and unattached, He has no relationship or contact whatsoever with Karma. An ignorant person does not know this. But because a Jnaani, who has transcended the ego, knows this, though he seems to be doing any Karma from the empirical standpoint, he is not tainted by it. For that reason alone he has no bondage of Karma.

VERSES 18 - 39 :

“For Karma, Jnaatru (the knower), Jneya (the thing known), Jnaana (knowledge); Kartru (the doer), Karma (the action done), Karana (the instrument of action)— such a triad of knowledge is necessary. Whether it is Jnaana, Kartru or Karma, because they are of the nature or essence of three Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas), a wise man (who discriminates) should attain Saatvika Jnaana, be a Saatvika Kartru (doer) and perform Saatvika Karma alone. The knowledge that everywhere the non-dual Parameshwara (the Ultimate Lord) alone exists

is Saatvika Jnaana; one who is without attachment, without egoism and is full of steadfastness and enthusiasm is a Saatvika Kartru; what is done without any hankering after the fruit and without likes and dislikes is Saatvika Karma. Similarly, Buddhi (intellect), Dhriti (Self-command or steadfastness)-- these also should be Saatvika. What happiness one wishes for also should be Saatvika; Pravrutti (what should be done or pursued), Nivrutti (what should not be done or pursued), Kaarya and Akaarya (injunctions and prohibitions), fear and and fearlessness -- an intellect (Buddhi) which can distinguish between (such pairs of opposites) and know them is Saatvika; the Dhriti or steadfastness or firmness which invariably controls through Yoga the functions of the mind, the vital force and the senses is Saatvika; the happiness of mental equipoise, which in the beginning seems to be unhappiness and finally gets established in bliss and which is gained by practice alone, is Saatvika. In any case, a person should believe that his body, his senses and the outside objects are all of the essence or nature of the three Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) and there is nothing whatsoever which is not included in or affected by the three Gunas and should aspire to pursue only that which is Saatvika.

VERSES 40 - 48 :

“ In the Shaastra the Saatvika Karmas are taught through the division or classification of four

Varnas or castes. Shama (control of the mind) and Dama (control of the senses) for the Brahmin, bravery etc. for the Kshatriya, agriculture and protection or tending of the cows etc. for the Vaishya, Paricharya or service (of others) for Shoodra -- these are stated in the Shaastra in accordance with their Gunas and karmas ; those, who perform their respective Karmas with a belief or attitude of worship of Parameshwara (the Ultimate Reality) who is all-pervading and is the cause for all prosperity, will get Beatitude or the final Bliss. Hence, one who is a Mumukshu (aspirant for Liberation) should not dabble in the Para Dharma or religion of others which yields bad fruits or results and should perform his own Karma(duties) uninterruptedly in this manner.

VERSES 49 -55 :

“ The Siddhi (resultant state) of Karma is Chittashuddhi or purification of the mind or heart. From that Chittashuddhi one attains a supreme state of Naishkarmya (freedom from all actions) through Sanyaasa. One who has obtained the Siddhi (resultant state or fulfilment) of Kaama, having control over the mind with steadfastness and having withdrawn it from outside objects, being without likes and dislikes, observing moderation in food and recreation, being engrossed always in Dhyaana Yoga (contemplation on the Self) in a solitary place, being without the notions of ‘I’ and ‘Mine’ will become a deserving person for attaining the essential nature of

Brahman (Brahma Swaroopā). For one who has attained the identification with Brahman, his mind will be clear or propitious (well-disposed or appeased). Sorrow and desire will be driven away. With a sense of equality born towards all objects he will attain Paramabhakti or the supreme devotion for Paramaatma or the Ultimate Truth or the Self. This is called Jnaana Nishtha (natural establishment in the real nature as the Self). This Parama Bhakta will come to know the essential nature of Paramaatma as well as His glory. He (the Parama Bhakta) will have become one with Paramaatma alone.

VERSES 56-62:

“ Howevermuch a person may be Duraachaari or given to wicked or evil ways, if he takes refuge in Bhagawan he will get Sadgati (State of Bliss). Therefore, surrendering all the Karmas unto Me, you always keep your mind in Me only. By this you will transcend or overcome all kinds of difficulties or troubles. Otherwise, if you do not listen to My advice you will be ruined. Even if you say you will not do Karma, your innate nature of a Kshatriya (Kshatriya Prakruti) will invariably make you do it. This is Ishwara’s (the Lord’s) Maaya-vilaasa or Maayic sport which is found in everyone’s heart; hence, surrender unto Him alone with all your faith; then through His grace you will attain Bliss and eternal state (of the Self).

VERSES 63-66 :

“Look here, I have told you the most secret Jnaana. Think over it and do as it strikes you. I will tell once again the supreme secret, listen; it will be beneficial to you. Always keeping your mind rooted in Me alone and doing Karmas alone, be My devotee; I swear that by this you will attain My essential Being alone. Renouncing all Karmas you surrender unto Me alone; I will rid you of all sins. Do not grieve.

VERSE 67 :

“Arjuna, do not teach this Shaastra to one who has not performed Tapas (penance, religious austerity), one who is not a devotee (of Me or God), one who has not served a Guru. You should not teach this particularly to one who shows hatred (Asooya) when he sees Me.

VERSES 68- 71 :

“One who teaches this supreme secret to My devotees, he will be having Paramabhakti or supreme devotion for Me; he will certainly attain Me alone. There is no person dearer to Me than him. One who reads this auspicious or sacred dialogue, he will become one who has worshipped Me through Jnaana Yagna (sacrificial offering of Jnaana). One who listens to this dialogue without any hatred towards

Me and with faith, he also will be liberated and will attain heavenly abodes.

VERSES 72-73 :

“Oh Arjuna. did you listen to all this attentively ? Has the fog of ignorance passed away ? ”—thus when Bhagawaan finally asked, Arjuna replied: “Oh Achyuta, by your grace the delusion has vanished. I do not have any doubt now. Henceforth I will behave as you say”.

VERSES 74-78 :

After narrating all this to Dhritaraashtra, Sanjaya stated thus: “Oh Dhritaraashtra, I have heard this magnificent dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna through the grace of Vyaasa. When I remember this as well as that wonderful Viswaroop of Bhagawaan I get repeatedly into ecstasies. Wherever there is Yogeshwara Sri Krishna, wherever there is Dhanurdhaari (who holds the bow of Gaandeeva) Paartha, there Siri (wealth) and victory and prosperity and very good political system will be established—such is my opinion.”

Om Tat Sat.
