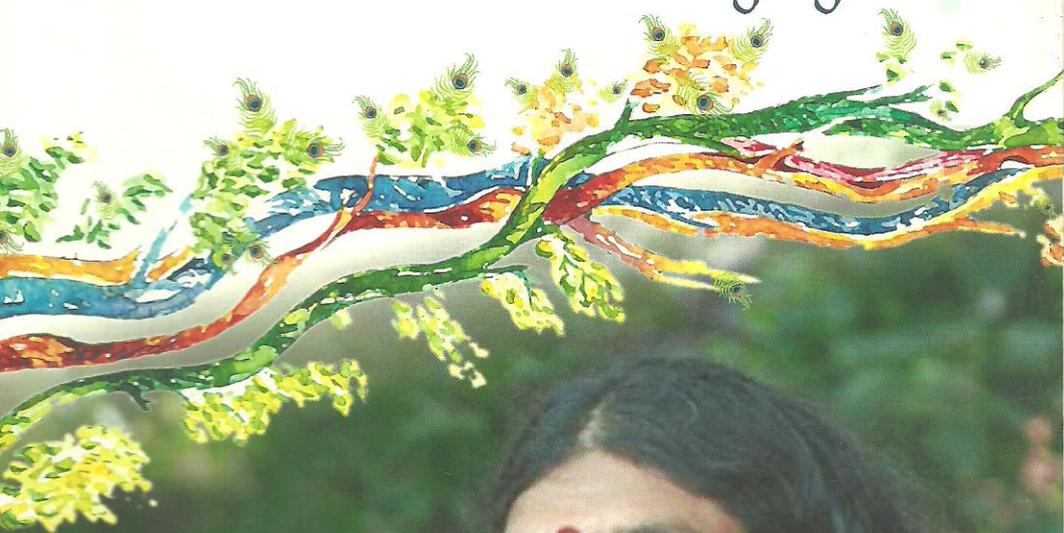


BhagavadGita

commentary by

N i t h y a n a n d a

The Indian Community system



BhagavadGita

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Bhagavad Gita Demystified

Nithyananda

Discourses delivered to Swamis and Ananda Samajis
of the Nithyananda Order all over the world

Beyond Scriptures

Indian Community System

CHAPTER 7

All living beings are caught in the duality of attachment and aversion. The great Master Krishna explains how to move out of this bondage.

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Bhagavad Gita: A Background

Bhagavad Gita is a sacred scripture of the *Vedic* culture. As with all scriptures, it was knowledge that was transmitted verbally. It was called *sruti* in Sanskrit, meaning something that is heard.

Gita, as Bhagavad Gita is generally called, translates literally from Sanskrit as the 'Sacred Song'. Unlike the *Veda* and *Upanishad*, which are self-standing expressions, Gita is written into the Hindu epic Mahabharata, called a *purana*, an ancient tale. It is part of a story, so to speak.



As a scripture, Gita is part of the ancient knowledge base of *Vedic* tradition, which is the expression of the experiences of great sages.

Veda and *Upanishad*, the foundation of *sruti* literature, arose through the insight and awareness of these great sages when they went into a no-mind state. These are as old as humanity and the first and truest expressions in the journey of man's search for truth.

Unlike the *Vedas*, which were internalized by the great sages, or the *Upanishads*, which were the teachings of these great sages, Gita is part of a story narrated by Vyasa, one of these great sages. It is narrated as the direct expression of the Divine.

No other epic, or part of an epic, has the special status of the Gita. As a consequence of the presence of Gita, the Mahabharata epic itself is considered a sacred Hindu scripture. Gita arose from the super consciousness of Krishna, the Supreme God, and is therefore considered a scripture.

Mahabharata, literally the Great *Bharata*, is a narration about the nation and civilization, which is now known as India. It was then a nation ruled by King Bharata and his descendants. The story of this epic is about two warring clans, Kauravas and Pandavas, closely related to one another. Dhritrashtra, the blind King of Hastinapura and father of the 100 Kaurava brothers was the brother of Pandu, whose children were the five Pandava princes. It is a tale of strife between cousins.

Pandu was the King of Hastinapura. A sage cursed him that he would die if he ever entered into physical relationship with his wives. He therefore had no children. Vyasa says that all the five Pandava children were born to their mothers Kunti and Madri through the blessing of divine beings. Pandu handed over the kingdom and his children to his blind brother Dhritharashtra and retired to meditate in the forest.

Kunti had received a boon when she was still a young unmarried adolescent, that she could summon any divine power at will to father a child. Before she married, she tested her boon. The Sun God Surya appeared before her. Karna was born to her as a result. In fear of social reprisals, she cast the newborn away in a river. Yudhishtira, Bhima, and Arjuna were born to Kunti after her marriage by invocation of her powers, and the twins Nakula and Sahadeva were born to Madri, the second wife of Pandu.

Yudhishtira was born to Kunti as a result of her being blessed by Yama, the God of death and justice, Bhima by Vayu, the God of wind, and Arjuna by Indra, God of all divine beings. Nakula and Sahadeva, the youngest Pandava twins were born to Madri, through the divine Ashwini twins.

Dhritharashtra had a hundred sons through his wife Gandhari. The eldest of these Kaurava princes was Duryodhana. Duryodhana felt no love for his five Pandava cousins. He made many unsuccessful attempts, along with his brother Dushashana, to kill the Pandava brothers. Kunti's eldest son Karna, whom she had cast



away at birth, was brought up by a chariot driver in the palace and by a strange twist of fate joined hands with Duryodhana.

Dhritharashtra gave Yudhishtira one half of the Kuru Kingdom on his coming of age, since the Pandava Prince was the rightful heir to the throne that his father Pandu had vacated. Yudhishtira ruled from his new capital Indraprastha, along with his brothers Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. Arjuna won the hand of Princess Draupadi, daughter of the King of Panchala, in a *swayamwara*, a marital contest in which princes fought for the hand of a fair damsel. In fulfilment of their mother Kunti's desire that the brothers would share everything equally, Draupadi became the wife of all five Pandava brothers.

Duryodhana persuaded Yudhishtira to join a gambling session, where his cunning uncle Sakuni defeated the Pandava King. Yudhishtira lost all that he owned - his kingdom, his brothers, his wife and himself, to Duryodhana. Dushashana shamed Draupadi in public by trying to disrobe her. The Pandava brothers and Draupadi were forced to go into exile for 14 years, with the condition that in the last year they should live incognito.

At the end of the 14 years, the Pandava brothers tried to reclaim their kingdom. In this effort they were helped by Krishna, the King of the Yadava clan, who is considered the eighth divine reincarnation of Vishnu. However, Duryodhana refused to yield even a needlepoint of land, and as a result, the Great War, the

War of Mahabharata ensued. In this war, various rulers of the entire nation that is modern India aligned with one or the other of these two clans, the Kauravas or the Pandavas.

Krishna offered to join with either of the two clans. He said, 'One of you may have me unarmed. I will not take any part in the battle. The other may have my entire Yadava army.' The first offer was made to Duryodhana, who predictably chose the large and well-armed Yadava army, in preference to the unarmed Krishna. Arjuna joyfully and gratefully chose his friend and mentor Krishna to be his unarmed charioteer!

The armies assembled in the vast field of Kurukshetra, now in the state of Haryana in modern day India. All the Kings and Princes were related to one another, and were often on opposite sides. Facing the Kaurava army and his friends, relatives and teachers, Arjuna was overcome by remorse and guilt, and wanted to walk away from the battle.

Krishna's dialogue with Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra is the content of the Bhagavad Gita. Krishna persuaded Arjuna to take up arms and vanquish his enemies. 'They are already dead,' says Krishna, 'all those who are facing you have been already killed by Me. Go ahead and do what you have to do. That is your duty. Do not worry about the outcome. Leave that to Me.'

The Gita is the ultimate practical teaching on the inner science of spirituality. It is not as some scholars



incorrectly claim, a promotion of violence. It is about the impermanence of the mind, body, and the need to destroy the mind, ego and logic.

Sanjaya, King Dhritharashtra's charioteer, presents Gita in eighteen chapters to the blind king. All the Kaurava Princes as well as all their commanders such as Bhishma, Drona and Karna were killed in battle. The five Pandava brothers survived as winners and became the rulers of the combined kingdom.

This dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna is a dialogue between man and God or *nara* and *Narayana* as they are termed in Sanskrit. Arjuna's questions and doubts are those of each one of us. The answers of the Divine, Krishna, transcend time and space. Krishna's message is as valid today as it was on that fateful battlefield some thousands of years ago.

Nithyananda explains the inner metaphorical meaning of Mahabharata thus:

'The Great War of Mahabharata is the fight between the positive and negative thoughts of the mind, called the *samskaras*. Positive thoughts are the Pandava princes and the negative thoughts are the Kaurava princes. Kurukshetra or the battlefield is the body. Arjuna is the individual consciousness and Krishna is the enlightened Master.

The various commanders who led the Kaurava army represent the major blocks that the individual

consciousness faces in its journey to enlightenment. Bhishma represents parental and societal conditioning. Drona represents the conditioning from teachers who provide knowledge including spiritual guidance. Karna represents the restrictive influence of good deeds such as charity and compassion, and finally Duryodhana represents the ego, which is the last to fall.

Parental and societal conditionings have to be overcome by rebelling against conventions. This is why traditionally those seeking the path of enlightenment are required to renounce the world as *sannyasin* and move away from civilization. This conditioning does not die as long as the body lives, but its influence drops.

Drona represents all the knowledge one imbibes and the teachers one encounters, who stop short of being able to take us through to the ultimate flowering of enlightenment. It is difficult to give them up since one feels grateful to them. This is where the enlightened master steps in and guides us.

Karna is the repository of all good deeds and it is his good deeds that stand in the way of his own enlightenment. Krishna has to take the load of Karna's *punya*, his meritorious deeds, before he could be liberated. The enlightened Master guides one to drop one's attachment to good deeds arising out of what are perceived to be charitable and compassionate intentions. He also shows us that the quest for and experience of enlightenment is the ultimate act of compassion that one can offer to the world.



Finally one reaches Duryodhana, one's ego, the most difficult to conquer. One needs the full help of the Master here. It is subtle work and even the Master's help may not be obvious, since at this point, sometimes the ego makes one disconnect from the Master as well.

The Great War was between one hundred eighty million people - one hundred ten million on the Kaurava side representing our negative *samskaras* - stored memories - and seventy million on the Pandava side representing our positive *samskaras* - stored memories - and it lasted eighteen days and nights. The number eighteen has a great mystical significance. It essentially signifies our ten senses that are made up of *gnanendriya* - the five senses of perception like taste, sight, smell, hearing and touch, and *karmendriya* - the five senses initiating action like speech, bodily movements etc., added to our eight kinds of thoughts like lust, greed etc. All eighteen need to be dropped for Self-realization.

Mahabharata is not just an epic story. It is not merely the fight between good and evil. It is the dissolution of both positive and negative *samskaras* that reside in our body-mind system, which must happen for the ultimate liberation. It is a tale of the process of enlightenment.

Mahabharata is a living legend. Bhagavad Gita is the manual for enlightenment.

Like Arjuna many thousand years ago, you are here in a dialogue with a living enlightened Master in this book. This is a tremendous opportunity to resolve all questions and clear all doubts with the Master's words.

Introduction

In this series, a young enlightened Master, Paramahansa Nithyananda comments on the Bhagavad Gita.

Many hundreds of commentaries of the Gita have been written over the years. The earliest commentaries were by the great spiritual masters such as Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva, some thousand years ago. In recent times, great masters such as Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharishi have spoken from the Gita extensively. Many others have written volumes on this great scripture.



Nithyananda's commentary on the Bhagavad Gita is not just a literary translation and a simple explanation of that translation. He takes the reader through a world tour while talking about each verse. It is believed that each verse of the Gita has seven levels of meaning. What is commonly rendered is the first level meaning. Here, an enlightened master takes us beyond the common into the uncommon, with equal ease and simplicity.

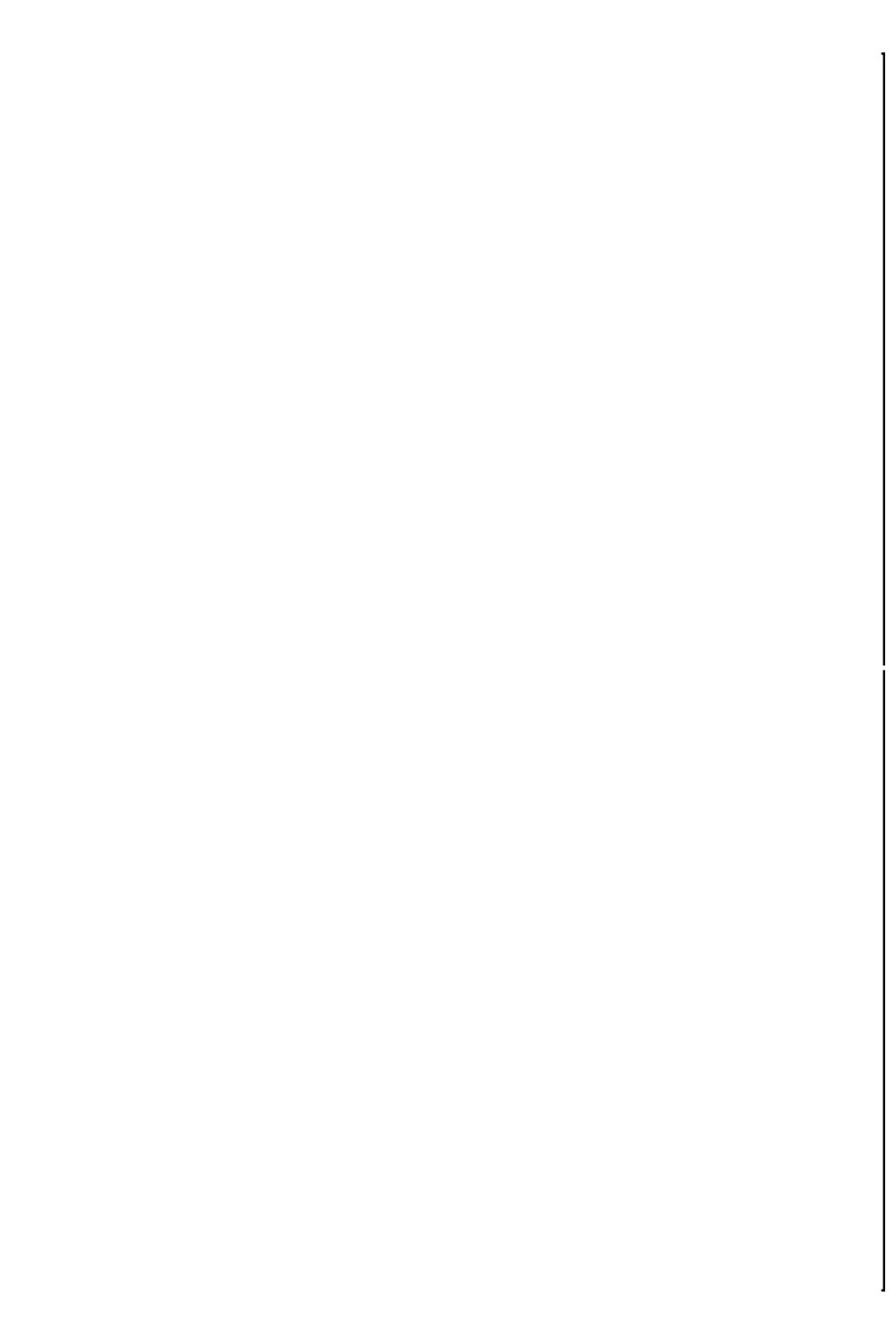
To read Nithyananda's commentary on the Gita is to obtain an insight that is rare. It is not mere reading; it is an experience; it is a meditation.

Sankara, the great master philosopher said:

'A little reading of the Gita, a drop of Ganga water to drink, remembering Krishna once in a while, all this will ensure that you have no problems with the God of Death.'

Editors of these volumes of Bhagavad Gita have expanded upon the original discourses delivered by Nithyananda through further discussions with Him. For ease of understanding for English speaking readers, and to cater to their academic interest, the original Sanskrit verses in their English translation have been included as an appendix in this book.

This reading is meant to help every individual in daily life as well as in the endeavour to realize the Ultimate Truth. It creates every possibility to attain *nithyananda*, eternal bliss!



The Indian Community System

To begin with, let us see why Krishna has given us this chapter. Again and again Krishna speaks the same truth. Nothing else is spoken, just the same truth. Then what is the need for so many chapters?

People can say that Krishna is repeating Himself. How many times must He say that the spirit is indestructible, or that all work must be done without expecting returns or that one must surrender to Him to reach salvation?



People ask me, 'Master, how many days will it take for us to learn meditation?'

I tell them: 'To learn meditation, two minutes are enough. To learn what meditation is not, you need ten days.'

Krishna knows that Arjuna is just like us. He represents the sum total of humanity. Arjuna is the quintessence of humanity. To explain to a man or woman what needs to be done, and why it is right is not enough. The human mind will find a hundred reasons why a hundred other things are just as good. The Master must tell why the other ninety-nine things are not right, and why we must stick to those things the Master prescribes.

That is exactly what Krishna does in Bhagavad Gita. Again and again, the great Master explains patiently why the ninety-nine other options are not really options at all. He does this to prove that the one option He does outline sinks deeply into Arjuna's consciousness. As a result, this truth also sinks into the consciousness of every man and woman who reads Bhagavad Gita.

In life, we do many things that are not meditation. To unlearn all of these, it takes time. When we express the truth logically, our mind always goes to the other end of the logic. So we need to understand the truth from both ends.

There is a beautiful philosophy in India, *nyaya shastra*, or the scripture of logic. According to this system, any

statement has two lines of logic. The first kind of logic is regular logic, regular *nyaya*.

For example: All men have one head. Socrates is a man. We can easily conclude that the third statement will be: Socrates has one head. This is simple logic.

There is another kind of logic, a higher-level logic. For example: 'There are two doors.' This is the first statement. The second statement says, 'One door is open.' An average person immediately jumps to the conclusion that the other door is closed. However, in this kind of logic we cannot jump to conclusions based on the first two statements. The second door may also be open. We don't know. The two statements do not provide a specific conclusion. We cannot come to any conclusions unless we see that the second door is closed, or we are told that the second door is closed.

In order that the listener, reader and disciple do not misunderstand and make mistakes, the Master ensures that we know which door is open and which door is closed. It is not an assumption made on the basis of the disciple's intelligence. If the Master does that, assuming that the intelligence of His disciple is low, He would be right too!

But the Master does not explain for that reason alone. When the truth sinks into us, it should sink without a trace. It should sink without resistance. However, when something is not fully explained and our mind detects options, such as figuring out which of the two doors is



open, it starts its own trip. It moves away from what is being explained. When this happens, instead of focusing on the substance of what is said, the mind is constantly distracted and gets tired. A tired mind makes mistakes.

Usually, in life, we make mistakes when we jump to conclusions using the first kind of logic when we should have made those decisions using the second kind of logic. The moment somebody makes a statement, 'You don't have compassion,' we immediately become defensive and say, 'Do you mean to say I am cruel? You mean I am violent?'

We don't have to jump to such a conclusion. He made a statement, 'You are not compassionate.' We don't have to immediately think, 'You mean I am cruel? You mean I am violent?' When we jump to conclusions, we create trouble not only for ourselves but also for others. Many times we make this mistake.

When we handle our mind without awareness, again and again, we make this mistake. The words that we repeat inside our system create our whole life. The words that we repeat inside our system *are* our life. The totality of the words we repeat internally to ourselves, in our mind, is our life. Our life is nothing but words or thoughts in our mind. If our mind jumps to illogical conclusions like this, conclusions that are not straight, naturally we create trouble for ourselves and problems for others. When we are unaware we always jump to these types of conclusions.

Ordinary Masters express their philosophy or their experience with the second kind of logic, which is why there is so much misunderstanding. There's a possibility of missing their message. However, Krishna is a *jagat guru* (Master of the Universe). He's not an ordinary Master. He's the Master of the whole universe and He knows the minds of all kinds of human beings. He knows the problems of logic.

He's delivering this message in such a way that we cannot jump to conclusions, and we don't have to assume any statement in the flow of the logic. He makes all the three statements. He is clear. He says, 'There are two doors, the first door is open, and the second door is closed.' He makes all three statements, so there is no need for us to assume. He protects us from ourselves.

If we are allowed to assume, if we are allowed to jump to conclusions, we miss the truth. Not only do we miss the truth, we miss the whole message. Here Krishna does not allow us to jump to conclusions. He makes all three statements. What is supposed to be done, what is supposed to be avoided, why it should be done, and why something else should not be done. He's clear with the whole thing. That is why He repeats the same truth in each chapter, from a different level of logic each time. He makes the same statements, but from a different logic level so that the people who hear it will not miss the message.

In this whole chapter, *Gnana Vignana Yoga*, He speaks about the same message from a different view.



One in a Billion Reaches Me!

7.1 Krishna says,

*Arjuna, Listen to Me, you can know
Me completely and without doubt
by practising yoga in true
consciousness of Me,*

With your mind attached to Me.

*7.2 Let Me explain to you in detail
this phenomenal and absolute
knowledge along with its
realization;*



By knowing which, there shall remain nothing further to be known.

7.3 Out of many thousands of men, hardly one endeavors or strives to achieve the perfection of self-realization;

Of those so endeavoring, hardly one achieves the perfection of self-realization, and of those, hardly one knows Me in truth or reaches that state of oneness with Me.

7.4 Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego

All together these eight constitute My separated external energies.

7.5 Besides these external energies, which are inferior in nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine.

This comprises all the embodied souls of all the living entities by which this material world is being utilized or exploited.

Again and again people ask me, 'Master, why did you choose to speak on Bhagavad Gita? Why didn't you choose books like Ashtavakra Gita, Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, Brahma Sutra or the Upanishad? Why did you choose Gita?'



I tell them that Gita expresses the truth in totality. Krishna has created keys for all kinds of human beings. For every kind of person, He has given a key. Krishna fulfills every need of every human being.

He says 'Listen, Arjuna, how by practising yoga in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, without doubt.' In this statement, Krishna uses the word 'Me' three times. Having read that, a psychologist will conclude that Krishna is egoistic. According to psychology, if we use the word 'I' or 'Me' three or more times in a statement, we are egoistic. We need treatment.

Otherwise how will psychologists make money? They need money. More than us needing treatment, they need money! Anyhow, for a normal man, it sounds egoistic. A person who hates Krishna feels Krishna is egoistic.

Again and again, He declares, 'Surrender to Me. I am everything.' We should understand here that He is expressing His glory. For a normal man, it may sound egoistic. A person who hates Krishna thinks He is egoistic and misses the truth or spirit expressed by Gita. In the same way, a person who loves Krishna gets caught up in His form and misses the juice of Gita.

A person who hates Krishna thinks He is egoistic and misses the whole juice of Gita. A person who loves Krishna is caught in the form of Krishna and misses the whole juice of Gita, the whole spirit of Gita. Please be very clear, whenever people are caught in the form, when

they worship the form, they slowly start saying, 'Gita is great. Krishna is God. He can express all these things, but surely it's not for us. It's not practical.' In this way, they slowly create a distance between themselves and Krishna. They worship Gita, instead of practising it.

If we have a pot full of milk and we worship it but never drink it, will we get the benefit of the milk? Understand, unless we drink the milk, we will never get the benefit of the milk.

Unless we imbibe Krishna, we cannot get the benefit of Gita. That's why I always tell people, Jews have avoided Christ by crucifying Him, by putting Him on the cross, and Hindus have avoided Krishna by worshipping him and putting Him on the wall. Please be very clear, hanging on the cross and hanging on the wall are one and the same. When we don't imbibe Krishna's teachings in our lives, when we don't work towards experiencing Krishna, worshipping Krishna is nothing but crucifixion. It's a cunning method of escaping.

The people who crucified Christ at least carry the guilt that they made a mistake, but these guys who hang Krishna don't even carry that guilt. Hindus don't even carry that guilt. In a nice, cunning way they have escaped from Krishna. Worshipping without following or worshipping without imbibing is the worst form of crucifixion.

People who hate Krishna think He is egoistic. And people who love Krishna are caught up with His form



and think they should surrender to the Krishna who came down in human form. Only a person who experiences Krishna realizes Gita. Only people who have experienced Krishna can understand Gita.

The people who hate Krishna and the people who love Krishna, both of them miss Gita. If we are caught in the form of Krishna, we become fanatics. We only become fanatics! I have seen many people who get caught in the form and become fanatics.

The gist of this chapter is about *how* human beings approach the Divine, *why* they approach the Divine, and *at what level* they approach the Divine.

There's a beautiful saying in the Bible: 'God created man in his own mold.' But I tell you, 'Man created God in his own mold.' The truth is, man created God in his own mold. We approach the Divine in the way we want. According to our maturity, we approach the Divine.

At what level do we approach the Divine? How do we worship? What do we receive? How do we grow in maturity? Krishna gives the answers in this chapter. Here He says, 'Out of many thousands among men, *one* may endeavor for perfection, and out of those who have achieved perfection, hardly *one* knows Me in truth.'

Beautiful! Here He says, 'out of thousands'. He should say 'out of billions'. He should change the statement. In those days, the population must have been less, which is why He makes the statement 'out of thousands'. Now we

should say, 'Out of billions, *one* may endeavor for perfection.'

*manushyanam sahasreshu kaschid yatati siddhaye
Yatatamapi siddhanam kaschinmam vetti tattoatah.*

Among millions of men, one man may endeavor for perfection, and out of those who achieve perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth. Out of millions, there are only a few; out of billions there are even fewer who enter into the path of seeking. Out of the few, only one or two achieve the ultimate experience.

There are millions of people out there, but only a few hundred are present today to listen to this Gita discourse. And out of these few hundred, only a few will listen as it is expressed. We may sit here. We may even hear, but do not think we actually listen! Never think that we listen.

I request people to never repeat what I have said to someone else. If you do repeat it, then please don't say, 'Master told me these things.' Be very clear, you heard those things. Tell them, 'I heard these things.' Never say, 'Master said'. Many times we miss much of what is said. Modern scientists say that we observe hardly two percent of the things that happen around us. If a hundred things happen around us, we observe only two! We imbibe only two percent.

It's as if you have a hundred-page storybook, and somehow you lose the whole book except for two



random pages. All the other ninety-eight pages are lost. If you try to reconstruct the whole novel with only those two pages, how true will it be to the original? In the same way, you remember hardly two percent of what I say. With that two percent, if you try to reconstruct this whole discourse, naturally it will be your discourse, not mine. Please be very clear. You might sit here, however, it doesn't mean that you listen. If you want to tell people what I spoke, please always say, 'I heard Nithyananda say this.' Never say, 'Nithyananda said...'

Because of your assumptions, because you jump to conclusions, and because of your inner chatter, you miss what is actually being said.

The Master is always ready to share his experiences, always ready to teach. That is his mission in life. The infinite compassion that fills an enlightened being is forever bursting to be let out to share, to teach, to guide. That's why Krishna says that He is now ready to explain.

The question is whether or not Arjuna is ready to listen. Even if Arjuna was ready to listen and he became enlightened, are we ready to listen today, now?

Why does Krishna say that few even try, and of those who try, few succeed? Remember that He is talking about Self-realization, about understanding who we are. Why is it so difficult even to try?

We do not want to try because we are afraid. We are restless in any form of silence. If I am silent for a few

minutes after I sit down before an audience, the entire audience becomes restless; they fidget.

Why do we find it difficult to meditate? After all, all we do in meditation is close our eyes and remain silent. Why is it difficult? We give appointments to everyone else every day of our lives, willingly and unwillingly. Why is it so difficult to give half an hour a day to ourselves?

Why would we rather watch television, knowing fully well that it is an idiot box and nothing of value will come out of watching it? Why would we rather read the same old newspaper again and again to avoid facing ourselves?

Why are we afraid of facing ourselves? What is it that we are afraid of? We must ask and answer these questions of ourselves.

If Self-realization means going back to where we came from, and where we came from is a state of bliss and divinity, then why are we afraid?

The truth is that we have forgotten where we came from. Nothing in the way we are brought up and 'educated' tells us that we come from bliss and we can regain that bliss. Society has its own self-interest in not letting us be aware of this truth. Whether in the form of religion, government or family structure, the truth of our bliss is obscured. If we realize how easy it is to be blissful and return to our original state, no one can control us. That is what liberation means. We are free. But society operates on the principle of control. Religion



operates on the principle of control. So do political and family structures.

The moment we realize who we are and we are liberated, these institutions cannot make us do what they want us to do. So they give us carrots and they wield the stick. They tell us that we will go to hell if we do wrong and we can go to heaven if we do whatever they tell us is right. They give us recipes in the form of commandments and laws.

From childhood we are conditioned to avoid looking too deeply into ourselves because if we do, we may find the truth and be liberated. Then there will be no need for our churches and temples, priests and politicians. They are afraid that there will be anarchy if they do not control us. They make us afraid that there will be anarchy if we do not obey their directives.

Why would there be anarchy if we realize the truth about ourselves? Why would there be anarchy if we realize we are God? It is because we will be filled with awareness and whatever we do in that state of awareness will be right. Such awareness will remove all fear and greed. We will no longer need external inducements to make us happy. No one and nothing can control us. We will be liberated. That is a great threat to society.

Do not for a moment imagine that anyone, I mean *anyone*, is concerned about you. This may sound like heresy. The truth is that no one cares. They only pretend

that they do. Our governments, churches, society, friends and even our family do not care.

Shankara says beautifully in Bhaja Govindam, *ka te kanta, kaste putraha...* Where is your wife, where are your children when you finally depart? You leave alone. You came alone and you will leave alone. Even your wife, who loved you dearly, is afraid of you once your body becomes cold.

All love as we know it is conditional. The only true love is that of the Divine and that of the Master. Such love comes out of infinite compassion. It expects nothing in return. What can we offer God, and our Master?

We must look after ourselves. We must be selfish. We need to be selfish to enter into this path of Self-realization. However it is not a selfishness born out of the usual material nature. It is selfishness born out of the desperate need to be *selfless*. When we reach our center or our core, we become one with humanity. Then there are no differences between us.

That is why even our spouses will be unhappy if we realize ourselves, because they cannot possess us any more. At that point they must share us with humanity. But the love of Self-realization is so infinite that there is no reduction in sharing. There is only growth in sharing.

The path to Self-realization is the path of aloneness. It is not a lonely path; it is an alone path. When we are alone, we are not lonely. We are all in one; that is what



being alone means. From being fragmented, we become whole. From being islands, we become the universe.

This is the knowledge that Krishna offers humanity. Out of His deep compassion He says, 'Please listen to Me and realize your Self and be liberated.' One in a million may heed His words and start on this path.

He then says that only one in a million who start on this path will eventually find his own Self, and thus find Me. Is the path so difficult?

No, it is not. Why then does it seem so difficult? We find the external world so attractive that we rarely stay on course in our internal voyage of self-discovery. It is easier to wallow in self-pity and complain about other people than to accept the fact that we need to change. It is easier to eat like a pig and stuff multi-colored pills than to exercise self-control in eating and exercise.

Our mind is a like a loose cannon. Buddha compares it to a monkey, always jumping from point to point. This is where we differ from animals. Animals and plants also have intelligence and emotions. Scientific experiments have established that very well. However they do not have monkey minds, even monkeys don't!

Animals and other species work with Nature. They eat when they are hungry; they sleep when they are tired. That is why they do not need refrigerators and alarm clocks! Human beings, on the other hand, have a powerful tool with which they can either redeem

themselves or destroy themselves. Invariably they choose the latter!

Throughout Gita, Krishna talks about how to control the mind. He gives specific instructions on what to do and what not to do. All we need to do is to follow the guidance of this Universal Master. Without any doubt, surely we can then become that one in a thousand or one in a million. But to follow Him, we need to understand Him.

In these verses Krishna explains who He is. Krishna explicitly separates Himself from His manifested energies in these verses.

What we perceive as manifested energies - the five natural elements (*pancha bhoota*) and the three inner elements of mind, intelligence and ego - are His energies no doubt, yet they are not Him.

Purusha and *prakriti* are considered the operative principles of the Universe in the Hindu philosophical systems of Sankhya and Vedanta. *Purusha* and *prakriti* are unmanifest energy sources, *purusha* being inactive and *prakriti* capable of being active, so to speak. Everything else arises from these two elements when they operate together.

Prakriti gives rise to the cosmic and individual intelligence and the five natural elements. The *Taittreya Upanishad* explains that the cosmic energy gave rise to etheric energy or the energy of space, *akasha*, which



pervades the Universe. This is the largest quantum of energy that pervades the Universe, and the subtlest. From etheric energy the energy of air arises. It is this energy of air, or *vayu*, that sustains us in our body-mind system as the carrier of *pranic* energy.

From the energy of air arises the energy of fire, *agni*. In ancient times, being the first visible form of energy, *agni* was celebrated as the most powerful deity. Many salutations in *Rig Veda*, the first of the Hindu scriptures, are addressed to *agni*. Almost all Vedic rituals are performed for the fire god, *agni*. This is also true of many ancient cultures. Fire provided light and heat, essential for our sustenance and day-to-day living.

Aapah, the energy of water, arose from the energy of fire. *Prithvi*, the energy of earth arose from the energy of water. The *Taittreya Upanishad* goes on to say that from the earth energy, plants, herbs and food were created, from which came human beings.

Within the human being is the intelligence that is a hologram of the cosmic intelligence. The energy cycle is now complete.

This energy tree, from its subtlest beginning to the grossest manifestation, is also the story of creation. Ten thousand years ago, sages of our ancient Vedic culture propounded these truths with no external devices to aid them. They intuited them, as they looked inward rather than outward.

Our *Vedic* rituals were full of meaning. Today they are condemned as old fashioned and meaningless activities because we lost the link to their meaning. Spirituality is nothing but spirit infused into rituals.

The fire rituals such as *homa* and *yagna* are methods to transfer the energy from *akasha* to earth, from the cosmos to the individual. Through the power of *mantras*, sound energy that activates the *akasha*, the etheric energy is transferred through air to the fire in the sacrificial pit. The water stored in pots around the fire pit collects this energy. The energized water is then poured onto the earth, a deity or individuals to transfer this energy to them.

Of the energies in the five natural elements, we can directly access the energies of earth, water, fire and air. We eat, drink, warm ourselves and breathe with these energies. However, we cannot directly access the etheric energy of *akasha*. Our ego, our mind, becomes a barrier to our absorption of this energy.

Meditation is the key to imbibe the etheric energy of the cosmos, the largest and subtlest energy source. Vedic fire rituals are mass meditation processes: meditation for dummies, if you will! We just need to be there to absorb the energy, even if we do not have the capability to meditate.

The cosmic intelligence is reflected in the human as the mind. Mind in turn uses the senses, the *indriya*, to access



the external world. Each of the senses - sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch - are related to the natural elements.

Akasha or ether is linked to sound or the ears; *vayu* or air is linked to touch and the skin; *agni* or fire is linked to color and form, and so to sight and the eyes; *aapah* or water is linked to taste and the tongue; *prithvi* or earth is linked to smell or the nose.

The mind receives information through the senses of perception, and executes decisions through the senses of action. When the senses are denied access to the external world, which is their sustenance or *aahara*, the mind shuts down. Thoughts cease.

Ego is a creation of the mind. Ego is also an illusion. It is an illusion because it is not permanent; it is not truth. True realization of Self is achieved when the ego is shed and when the mind stops. Inner intelligence awakens to cosmic intelligence.

Here, Krishna refers to ego as *ahankara*. *Ahankara* is what we direct outwards. It is our identity that we project outwards. This is always in excess of what we think of as ourselves, as we seek to create an impression on others, as we seek attention from others. There is another side to our ego, called *mamakara*, which we project inwards. This *mamakara* is always lower than what we think ourselves to be. Internally we have a lower opinion of ourselves.

This perpetual gap between *ahankara* and *mamakara* creates stress, suffering and dis-ease within us.

When we realize our Self, we realize that we are divine and nothing less. Anything that we think about ourselves that is lower than that evaluation is low self-esteem. What Krishna says is true for all of us. We are above the energies that constitute us. We too are the energy that constitutes our body-mind system.

All that we lack is the awareness of this truth. Our natural state *is* to know ourselves. Once we realize the truth that we are God, there is no difference between Krishna and us. We are enlightened. That is what Krishna came to prove. He has no need to prove that He is God. He is, and He couldn't care less if we know it or not. His mission was to enlighten Arjuna, and through Arjuna, the rest of humanity. His mission is to prove to us that we too are God!

Q: Master, You said that our natural state is bliss and that we have lost that state through our upbringing. How can we restore the awareness of our original state of bliss and oneness with the Divine?

While growing up, what we have lost is the innocence and curiosity of the child, and the ability to be nonjudgmental and carefree. Along with that we have lost our natural state of being in bliss.



Fortunately, we have not lost everything. Our inner divinity is not lost and cannot be lost. Hence it does not have to be found or restored.

We have only forgotten, so it is only a question of remembrance. It is in the deepest core of our being: call it truth, God, bliss, beauty. All these things indicate the same phenomenon. There is something eternal in our beings, something immortal and something divine. We know it deep inside. That is why no matter how much we seem to enjoy all the material pleasures, a gnawing feeling of emptiness, a feeling that this is not all there is to life, nags us.

All we need to do is go deep, dive deep into our being, and see. Realize and recognize. Hence the journey is not really a journey. We are not to go anywhere. We need to simply sit silently and be.

Money does not help in this journey. Power and prestige are of no help either. From the beginning, we must be aware that love is the only treasure to be sought.

We search for the home to go to. We miss something. We are not certain what it is, yet the feeling is there within everyone that something is missing. And we go on accumulating things - money, power and prestige - hoping that by gaining these things the haunting feeling will disappear. We hope that the gap will be filled, and that the emptiness will not be there anymore so that we do not hurt anymore. However, nothing from the outside fills

the gap because money cannot enter our being; neither can power or prestige.

Nothing from the outside is of any help. Hence the more we have, the more the feeling becomes a constant haunting; we feel it more and more.

There seems to be a paradox. The richer a society is, the more searching there is for a home, the more searching there is for roots. It is not an accident that only affluent societies become religious. It is caused by what I call the depression of success. We have everything that we have sought and yet we are unhappy. We do not know why we sought what we sought.

Spirituality need not be divorced from materialism. It need not conflict with material possessions. The poor search through money, a good home, family, this and that. By the time they have arranged these things, they suddenly become aware that life is gone and they are where they have always been: as empty as ever, as hollow as ever. Then a great frustration sets in. They have missed life. Nothing from the outside fulfils the search. It is in the inner space that we learn to live life. It is here that we find God.

Life in all its agony and all its ecstasy - both are ours. The ecstasy cannot live or exist without death, and joy cannot exist without sadness. That's how things are. Nothing can be done about it.



That's the nature, the *Tao* of things. Similarly life is bliss and misery intertwined until we transcend both.

People are unaccustomed to bliss. To be blissful is strange. People are well acquainted with misery. They live in it and wallow in it. Whenever we meet someone blissful we are uncomfortable. We think that this person must have gone mad because sane people are miserable. Most people are miserable. Only once in a while do we see an insane person enjoying himself. Once in a rare while there is a Buddha, a Krishna. The rest of the world looks at them as if they are mad. Buddha was thought to be a madman in his own day for the simple reason that he was so blissful.

People understand misery since this is what they are used to. That is their language. Bliss is not their language. Most people experience temporary happiness. Their happiness is superficial. It is more or less a pretension, a deception. They deceive others and deceive themselves. Maybe it is a strategy to hide misery, to cover up their wounds.

Jesus calls the life of bliss the kingdom of God. It is within us. No army is needed; we are not expected to conquer anybody. It is a strange victory. It happens at the innermost core of our being; no army, no enemy and no arms. And suddenly one is victorious; one has conquered life because one has known life. To know is to conquer.

When we know ourselves we reach our natural state that has always been within us. We experience bliss. We are in *nithyananda*.



I Am the Thread!

7.6 Know for certain that everything living is manifested by these two energies of Mine.

I am the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of them.

7.7 O conqueror of wealth [Arjuna], there is no truth superior to Me.

Everything hangs upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.

7.8 O son of Kunti [Arjuna], I am the taste of water, the radiance of the sun and the moon, the sacred syllable Om in the Vedic mantras.



I am the sound in ether and ability in man.

7.9 I am the original fragrance of the earth, and I am the heat in fire.

I am the life of all living beings, and I am the penances of all ascetics.

‘I am the thread,’ He says. ‘I am the thread, the *sutra*, on which all Existence is strung.’

What a beautiful analogy! That is why He is the *sutradhar*, the controller and director of the cosmic play! Nothing moves, nothing can move without Him. Nothing can be created, sustained or destroyed in the absence of His energy.

People often ask me why I call myself Swami. They question me as to why I like to dress up or be photographed in many ways. I tell them that I do not even identify with this body. This skin itself is alien to me. So what is the difference between this skin and other coverings? What does it matter?

I look at myself the way you look at me, or the way you and I look at an idol. If this body is dressed up well, I feel good - the same way you feel good seeing it dressed up, that's all. I am just a witness.

To all of you God is a mere concept; it is an idea. It is another play of your mind. You think of God and attribute various concepts to God. It is the same manner



in which you would talk about a friend or relative, perhaps more glowingly or less glowingly depending on your inclination at that point in time.

To you, your identity and your identification with your body-mind is real. Without this identity you are lost. You are rudderless. If someone does not recognize you, you suffer. The moment someone praises you, you are in seventh heaven. Your identity is your reality. 'I' is what makes you alive.

To me, God is the only reality. I live with God every minute, every moment. The body, mind and the body-mind identification does not exist for me. Therefore, when I refer to myself, I refer to that body-mind the same way you refer to it. I too call it Swami or whatever.

I cannot move a finger without permission from *Parashakti*, that Parabrahma Krishna. You may think, 'What nonsense He talks. He says He is enlightened and then He says there is nothing He can do. He can only do as Existence dictates.'

Nonsense or no nonsense, this is the truth. Whether you understand it or not, accept it or not, this is the truth. What makes me move, talk, see and do all that you do is what the Universe dictates.

My disciples know that when someone with deep faith in me comes with a problem, I say, 'I'll take care.' If it is someone who is yet to have that faith in me, I say that I shall meditate or pray to Anandeshwara for them. They go away happy.

My disciples know that when I say, 'I'll take care,' the result is definite. When I say, 'I shall pray,' something may or may not happen. When I say I shall take care, there is nothing special I do. I just pass it on to *Parashakti*. It is for Her to take care. Because I have that immense faith in Her, She always obliges. Things happen.

My disciples know that the *mala* that they wear, the string of *rudraksha* or red sandalwood beads, is not a mere *mala*. They see me in it. I tell them it is their hotline to me. When someone is desperate, he holds onto the *mala* and prays. Results are instantaneous.

All this has nothing to do with me. It has to do with Existence. The moment I feel that it is a result of my penance, it will stop happening. There is nothing that 'I' can do. There is nothing that this energy cannot do.

That is what Krishna talks about here. The great Master says, I am not what you see. I am not the energy that is manifested. It is not this six-foot Krishna with flute and peacock feather that makes things happen. It is the formless energy beyond Vasudeva Krishna (Krishna, the mortal being, the son of Vasudeva). It is *Parabrahma* Krishna (Krishna, the Cosmic Energy).

When we see a necklace or garland, do we notice the thread? If it is a pearl or diamond necklace we may get it threaded in gold, still we rarely notice the thread. We delight over the pearls or diamonds, yet never think about the thread unless it snaps and all the pearls and diamonds spill on the floor. Then, we blame the thread.



Krishna says He is the unseen thread without which no *mala* can exist. He says He is the unseen essence without which there can be no substance. He says He is the unseen energy without which there can be no universe.

Have you ever wondered how this universe operates? There are billions of planets like ours, millions of solar systems, thousands of galaxies and many universes. There is nothing that anyone can see controlling this universe. We need traffic lights and policemen to control traffic on our roads. In the Milky Way there are no policemen to control the movements of planets and stars. Yet they move unerringly, and we can predict thousands of years in advance what they will do.

Can you imagine the intelligence that controls multiple universes? How is there such discipline and order in that seeming chaos that no one is in charge of? No one is responsible, or is someone?

On the other hand, within this puny body of ours we try to control everything. We control the food we eat, how much we exercise, how much we play, etc. Yet we can predict nothing about it. Despite all the order that we impose, there is chaos.

Control does not bring about order, it never can. Freedom brings about order. Chaos is freedom. Chaos is choice. The ultimate chaos is *Parabrahma* Krishna; He is also the ultimate order.

Krishna illustrates what He said earlier with specific examples.

The beauty of Krishna's teaching in Bhagavad Gita is the depth to which He goes to make everything crystal clear to Arjuna. He makes no assumptions, takes nothing for granted. It is as if Arjuna is a child and He is the parent or teacher. For the Lord of the Universe to take the trouble to ensure complete understanding shows the depths of His compassion as well.

I explained earlier that in the five natural elements, the *pancha bhoota*, the essence of ether is sound, of air is touch, of fire is form and heat, of water is taste and of earth is smell. Krishna explains that He is the essential quality in each of these elements; also that He is the *pranava mantra Om* and the radiance of the Sun and Moon.

Life, any form of life in this and any other planet, cannot exist without this cosmic energy of *Parabrahma* Krishna. But living within this energy field we lose sight of this energy. We become energy-unconscious. Kabir, the mystic poet said hauntingly, we are like fish that are immersed in life-giving water yet cry out saying, 'We are thirsty.' Kabir advises: fool, become aware! You cannot be a fish in water and be thirsty!

This is an incident from Ramakrishna's life.

Ramakrishna asks his disciple Vivekananda, 'Narendra (his secular name), what would you do if



you were a fly and you sat on the edge of a pool of divine nectar, *amrit*?’

Without hesitation Vivekananda responds: ‘I shall sip from it, of course.’

Ramakrishna says, ‘Fool, you should fall into that pool and drown. How can you fear drowning in life-giving nectar?’

We are afraid, always afraid. We have no trust in ourselves and therefore no trust in Existence.

If God were to come in front of us in any form other than what we recognize as Him, we would ask for His identification. Our intelligence is limited to visualizing Krishna in His yellow dress (*pitambara*), with His flute and a peacock feather stuck in His hair. If Krishna comes covered in ash, with a snake around His neck, the *Vaishnavite* fanatic will throw stones at Him. ‘That is Shiva,’ he will say, ‘I do not worship Shiva; Shiva is my enemy.’ There are people who claim to have imbibed Gita, understood every word the Lord says, and yet have questioned me as to how I can worship Shiva when I say Krishna is the ultimate.

It is for such ignorant fanatics that Krishna goes into such depths to explain that He is everything and above everything. He is the Creator Brahma, the Sustainer Vishnu and the Rejuvenator Shiva. He is not either/or; He is all and above all.

Q: Is the thread that Krishna refers to the cosmic energy?

In a metaphorical sense, yes, absolutely.

Strangely or perhaps not so strangely, in the recent developments in atomic or quantum physics, there is this concept of string theory. They say that the ultimate expression of subatomic particles, the minutest of the minute particles, is in the form of a string. No longer do they say that these particles are atoms or waves, but strings. It is a string constantly in motion. It does not have any fixed location at any given time. There is only a set of possibilities. However these possibilities are infinite. The string is the connection of all those infinite possibilities. Some call it the Tenth Dimension.

They do not know that there are a few more dimensions!

That is what Krishna is. He is a set of possibilities. He is a set of infinite possibilities. What the scientists say about subatomic particles is what ultimately applies to the cosmic energy, because we now know that energy and matter are the same, in time as well as in space. When the frequency is within our range of sensory or visual perception, we see it as matter. When it goes above or below this range, we sense it as energy; that is all.

When Krishna brings Himself to the level of Arjuna's visual frequency, Arjuna sees Him as his dear friend and



mentor. When Krishna goes into His *vishvaroop*a form, the Cosmic form, Arjuna needs third-eye perception to 'see' Krishna's energy.

The thread is always there. Without the thread, there can be no coherent matter. Whether the thread is visible or not depends on one's level of perception. A *yogi*, a truly evolved being, is constantly aware of that thread. The *yogi* constantly meditates on that thread. To such a person, only the thread exists. What exists around the thread, what the thread links together, is of no consequence to the *yogi*.

Once we catch the thread, nothing else matters. My disciples are used to my suddenly telling them, 'Ok, now you have caught the thread.' It is not an idle comment. It means that they have truly grasped the energy behind that statement. It means that they have experienced the truth of that statement. The rest are mere words that mean nothing.

One who controls the thread, the *sutra*, is the *sutradhar*, the controller. Krishna is the ultimate *sutradhar*. He is truly the one who controls everything in this universe.

I Am Eternal

7.10 O son of Pritha, I am the eternal source of all creatures, the intelligence of the intelligent, and the brilliance of all those who are brilliant.

7.11 I am the strength of the strong, and I am the procreative energy in living beings, devoid of lust and in accordance with religious principles, O lord of the Bharata.

7.12 All states of being - be they of goodness, passion or ignorance - emanate from Me.



I am independent of them but they are dependent on Me.

7.13 The whole world is deluded by the three modes (goodness, passion and ignorance), and thus does not know Me.

I am above the modes and unchangeable.

7.14 My divine energy, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome.

But those who surrender unto Me can cross beyond it with ease.

7.15 Those miscreants who are foolish, lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by Maya (that which is not real), and who have taken shelter in demonic nature, do not surrender unto Me.

What Krishna says here will make many monks see red.

‘I am the procreative energy,’ says the Lord. ‘I am the seed of all living beings.’ He makes no excuses, no apologies.

He says, ‘I am that procreative energy but without the fantasies of lust.’ How can one be a Creator, if one cannot procreate?

Many of our great sages in the past, the *rishis* and *maharishis*, such as Vashishta and Vyasa were *grihastas*,

householders, who were family men with wives and progeny. Yet they were realized souls, enlightened. Other than Hanuman and Ganesha all our deities are married! Krishna is reputed to have had 16,008 wives!

How can the life form continue without procreation, without the sex act? Not everyone can have a virgin birth.

To imagine that to reach the Divine and realize the Self one must be celibate is the height of foolishness. To impose that as a precondition for anyone to even move into that path of spirituality is utter madness.

The desire for celibacy must happen before puberty. The first spiritual experience must happen before adolescence, so that the life-giving sex energy moves upwards as transcendental spiritual energy rather than descend as sexual and procreative energy. People who have this spiritual awakening because of their *prarabdha karma* (desires we are born with) are the *Paramahansa*. That is their nature. Celibacy happens to them naturally.

To force celibacy after adolescence is difficult. It can be done but must be done with great caution and under supervision. Otherwise the so-called renunciate monk, the *sannyasi*, will pretend to follow *brahmacharya*, celibacy. Inside he will be a hotbed of fantasies ready to explode.

I have often explained that the word *brahmacharya* does not mean celibacy. It means 'moving in reality.' That is a very different connotation, if you study the meaning.



It is said that Krishna was crossing the river Yamuna with His flock of *gopis*, women devotees. The river was in spate. Krishna said to Yamuna, 'If it is true that I am a *brahmachari*, part and let me walk across.' The river parted and Krishna walked to the other bank.

A *sannyasi* who watched this was dumbstruck. 'Krishna, a *brahmachari*? He walks with these women who are His lovers, and He says He is a *brahmachari* and the river parts for Him! How can this be?'

That is what Krishna explains here. I am the procreative energy, but without lust, without attachment and without fantasy. I am the ultimate reality!

Fantasies are the root cause of our problems. With each fantasy coming true, more fantasies arise. We can never be in reality. To be in reality one must be in the present moment. When you are in the present moment you are Krishna.

When we hanker after the past and speculate about the future, we slip into fantasies. We are no longer within the boundaries of our body. Our mind has moved away from our body into another world, the world of fantasy. This trip can have only one effect, that of sorrow. I tell my disciples, all you need to do is to renounce your fantasies to be blissful. You do not need to renounce what you have now.

Enjoy your wealth, enjoy your work, and enjoy your spouse and children. You have earned what you have.

Enjoy what is your due. Just stop fantasizing about what you do not have. Stop running after more acquisitions; stop and take time to enjoy what you have acquired.

Move into the present, here and now, into reality, and you will be a *brahmachari*!

Krishna talks about the *gunas*, the natural attributes, in these verses. Later on He devotes a chapter to this subject.

Prakriti has three elements called *gunas*. When *prakriti* is in equilibrium, it is pure potential energy. When it is disturbed, the *gunas* come into operation. Like building blocks, they combine in many ways and create, sustain and destroy.

Rarely is one *guna* present in a person. It is almost always a mixture. The three *gunas* that Krishna refers to are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, commonly translated as goodness or calmness, passion or aggression and ignorance or inaction.

The interplay of the *gunas* creates the functioning of the mind and through the operation of the mind, activity. *Guna* does not refer to the state a person is in. *Gunas* causes that state to happen. *Sattva* by itself is not goodness or calmness. It is the building block that leads to calmness.

No living being influenced by the mind is beyond the influence of the *gunas*. When one transcends the *gunas*, as



Krishna says about Himself, one becomes a *triguna rahita*, one who has transcended the three *gunas*. Such a person is no longer influenced by the mind and its actions.

I have said this elsewhere. Even an incarnation, an *avatar*, an enlightened energy being reborn into this planet on a mission, needs to initially be born with some *guna* infused into that being. It is like this: we cannot make jewelry out of pure gold. We must alloy it with copper.

In the same way, even an energy source that has transcended the three *gunas* needs to have some *sattva guna* infused in it to be born into this planet. The same is true of Krishna. As Vasudeva Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, He has some *guna* at play in Him.

Remember that Bhagavad Gita is rendered by *Parabrahma* Krishna and not by Vasudeva Krishna. So He says boldly, I am beyond the *gunas*. He says, I am the *parama purusha*, who sets *prakriti* into play, and I am beyond its influence. Krishna is the creator of Nature, which is even beyond *prakriti*, and is therefore beyond the vagaries of Nature.

We can see the interplay of the *gunas* as people move through their spiritual path. Most of you operate in the material world and generally you are in a state of *rajas*, with various proportions of *sattva* and *tamas*. *Rajas* is needed to create, to make things happen, and is the predominant *guna* of action.

Especially when you move into an *ashram* environment, committed to a life of renunciation and detachment, many fall into a deep state of *tamas*, inaction. It is not a state of ignorance, but one of inaction where all your suppressed opposition to your earlier life of meaningless activity surfaces and forces you into sheer inactivity.

You may sleep long hours, far more than normal, disinclined to do anything. However, this is a passing phase. All these suppressions surface and dissolve. Let them. You then move into *sattva*. To many, it is surprising that one falls into *tamas* before moving into *sattva*, yet it is a reaction to one's earlier lifestyle.

On the other hand, a person steeped in *tamas* is the person Krishna refers to as one who does not surrender to Him. Such a person is in deep darkness and ignorance. He is unaware of his potential. He is no better than an animal. In fact, an animal is better because it knows how to live in Nature, with Nature. An animal has no fantasies.

Unfortunately, a human being can distort his perceptions to such a point that he can deny his rightful nature. *Maya*, illusion, is also the interplay of the *gunas*. In fact, it is a basic interplay born out of the *gunas*. *Maya* is virtual reality and a collection of our fantasies. Just as darkness needs light to destroy it, we need awareness to destroy *maya*. Otherwise *maya* destroys us.



In Bhagavatam (the Hindu epic that describes Vishnu's various incarnations, and especially His incarnation as Krishna), there is this story.

Narada is the greatest devotee of Vishnu. He forever sings His praise and has nothing else on his mind. Over time Narada became conceited about being the most celebrated devotee. This happens to all devotees, including mine.

As a true Master, Vishnu took action. He called Narada and asked him to fetch a pot of water. Narada rushed out. Suddenly he was in front of a house asking for water. A beautiful maiden came out with water and Narada fell instantaneously in love with her. He married this girl and they raised children together.

One day there was a great storm. The house and the entire surroundings were flooded. The rushing water carried Narada and his family away. Soon they were separated and his family died. Narada wailed and screamed for help.

Suddenly he heard a voice, 'Narada, where is my water? What happened to you?'

Narada awoke, as if from a great sleep, and saw Vishnu smiling at him. He said, 'Even my greatest devotee is not immune to *maya*!'

As long as the mind is active, no one is immune to *maya*.

Q: Master, education emphasizes knowledge, whether it is the traditional Eastern or modern Western system. However, education does not seem to lead to happiness as it should. Why?

In the traditional *gurukulam* system of the *Vedic* culture, education was different from what it is today. It was not a commercial operation. It was a spiritual journey. The Master was not merely a teacher imparting book-knowledge. He was a spiritual guide who set himself as an example of how to live life.

We have degraded our educational system, even in India. British colonizers destroyed the *gurukulam* system because that was the only way to subjugate the people, by removing the tool that led to awareness. They replaced it with logical, scientific 'education' that has captivated our intellectuals.

Logic can never help with happiness, if happiness is to be a permanent experience. Logic comes from the mind and the mind is influenced by the senses. Spirituality is not an intangible concept. Spirituality is the total well-being of mind, body and spirit. Being controlled by the mind cannot lead to happiness. Transcending the mind leads to happiness. Transcending the senses leads to happiness. To transcend the mind and senses, one must give up logic.

Spirituality is about wisdom, whereas knowledge is about logic. Wisdom is rare but knowledge is cheap.



Knowledge is available everywhere. We gather it from books, from schools, from teachers. It is a simple process of feeding our bio-computer, the brain, with information. The brain goes on accumulating it. The brain is a sophisticated complex instrument, the most sophisticated. Man has yet to make computers as complicated as the brain.

A single man's brain cells can contain the information available in all the libraries in the whole world. Yet you remain the same. Your memory grows but your being remains a cipher.

Wisdom occurs through the growth of one's being. Knowledge happens with the growth of the mind. Forget knowledge and go deeper and into wisdom. Obviously, nobody can teach it to you. You must open your heart in deep trust to the wind, rain, and sun, to the whole of Existence. And in that opening, wisdom arises. In that very opening, in that surrender to the whole, one sees. One is no longer blind.

Man tries to be a master. He is not satisfied being a student. His life is an effort to attain mastery, power and prestige. He tries to accumulate money to be powerful, to have fame, or to make a great empire. This is the worldly man's effort. This is how Alexander the Great moved.

There is a totally different approach to life that is available for us to learn. Look at the lives of Buddha or Christ. They didn't try to be masters of the world. On

the contrary, they tried to become servants of the world. The miracle and paradox is that Alexander dies a beggar and Buddha, the beggar, lives like an emperor and dies like an emperor. The paradox is that those who try to be masters are reduced to servants and those who try to be servants become masters.

Logical education teaches us to become masters, because that is all it can see. That is what logic leads us to, step-by-step. It is limited to what the senses see. Our education is about how we can succeed materially in this world. Our measurement of happiness is defined by possessions. It is defined by acquisitions, not by enjoyment.

Only when we go past the logic of such education can we realize true happiness. Then we experience that happiness lies in giving up: giving up control, possessions, and giving up our mental and emotional bondages. Happiness is when we serve others, when we become servants of others. Our current educational system cannot help us learn this. We need to change the system so that it shows us the path to true happiness.



Four Pious Men

7.16 O best among the Bharata [Arjuna], four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me.

They are: the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and those searching for knowledge of the Absolute.

7.17 Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge and ever united with Me through single-minded devotion is the best.



I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me.

7.18 All these devotees are indeed noble; one who knows Me, dwells in Me.

Being engaged in My mission, he attains Me.

7.19 After many births and deaths, he who knows Me surrenders to Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is.

Such a great soul is very rare.

Krishna now goes deeper. He talks about the Indian community system.

Before entering into this subject, I bow down to the system that has been created by the *rishis* (sages), which has made the whole spiritual science a reality. I bow down to the community system which kept our scriptures alive, the spiritual science alive.

In these modern times, abusing our community system and abusing the social system created by the *rishis* has become a fashion! Bashing our *Vedic* system or abusing our *Vedic* system has become a fashion. Especially in Southern India, abusing the *Vedic* system and abusing *swamis* has become the trend. If you want to show you are educated or an important person, abuse our *Vedic* system. You can immediately gain popularity. There will be at least ten fools to listen to what you say. It's an easy and cheap way to gain popularity.



Not only have we not understood our *Vedic* system, we have also started disrespecting this great system created by our ancient Masters. Please understand, only because of our *rishis* and because of the system that they created, the spiritual culture in India is alive today, and India itself is still alive!

The other day I read Paramahansa Yogananda's autobiography. There's a beautiful reference in the *Book of Genesis* where Abraham prays to God. He requests God not to destroy a particular piece of land. God says, 'If I find ten good people in that land, I will not destroy that land.' He tells Abraham, 'If I find ten good people in that land, I will not destroy that land.'

Only after reading that statement, I understood why India is alive. India being alive is the greatest miracle of God. India is still alive and that's the greatest miracle of God. And it's all because of these ten people.

No other culture survived or lived for such a long time. All other cultures that came into existence along with or after the Indian culture - Babylonian, Roman, Greek, etc. - knew how to fight, how to build empires and big cities in a professional way. They knew how to protect themselves. They were great warriors! Yet they were unable to survive. Today we see only their relics. These cultures are not alive today. Of the Indian culture, the Indian system, we have at least 10,000 years of recorded history.

There's a beautiful book written by Swami Prakashananda Saraswati. The book is a comprehensive history of religion in Indian culture. He has recorded Indian history in a beautiful way. According to him, the Indian culture is trillions of years old. Anyway, we can be sure of one thing - that we have at least 10,000 years of recorded history of the Indian culture.

No other country has been invaded as much as India. India has been invaded by practically every culture, every country. There is nobody who has not invaded Indian soil. Yet, no country has been invaded by India. India has never invaded any country. It never went out to destroy or fight with another country. India stayed within its boundaries. India was again and again invaded, but it never invaded anybody. At the end of the day, this is the only culture that is still alive! It has not died. It's alive! Only because of this community system is Indian culture alive today.

Another important thing we need to understand when we read these things is this: 'Man cannot live without creating a community.' Man is a social animal. He creates some form of community or other. You cannot say that the United States does not have some form of community system. In other countries also the community system is there. However, these community systems are based upon money.

When I went to Brazil, I gave a discourse to a large company called Petrobras. One guy asked, 'How do you



justify the community system in India? The high caste people look at the low caste people in a disrespectful way. How do you justify this?’

Of course, there are a few issues in Indian culture also. Indians also made mistakes. We missed the spirit with which the community system was developed, and started following the letter. Some mistakes happened. That’s true. However, the whole community system cannot be labeled wrong because of a few mistakes.

For example, if someone has a tumor in his body, the tumor must be operated on and removed. You cannot straightaway kill the person! The operation must be done and the tumor removed. We can’t abandon the whole person.

And it is we who committed mistakes, and now we are abusing the whole system.

I told him, ‘Yes, one or two mistakes happened. But look at the developed countries or so-called cultured countries. If you enter an airplane and walk to economy class past first class, watch the way first class passengers look at you. Have you observed how passengers in first class look at you? Just by observing, you see how disrespectfully they look at you.’

Don’t think there is no community or class system in other countries. In every country, there is a community and class system. The *Vedic rishis* at least created the community and caste system based upon intelligence and

wisdom. With *rishis*, the community system was created based upon intelligence, based upon knowledge, based upon wisdom. In other cultures, the community system was created based upon money and power.

In countries where the rulers are *kshatriyas* (warrior class), they are the ones who create the community system. The more powerful someone is, the more respected he is. In other countries, people who do business, the business class, control the whole system. There the more money someone has, the more he is respected.

India is the only country where people who respected intelligence and wisdom created the whole system. The system was created based upon intelligence, based upon wisdom. So that is why, in India, the more wisdom a person carries, the more he is respected. The more spiritual he is, the more he is respected.

The whole social system was created based upon sharing. Man must contribute something to the community.

Let me describe the spirit with which the whole system was created, and how we abused it. Of course, we abused it; we did not imbibe the true spirit completely. If we had imbibed the whole spirit completely, we wouldn't have fallen into this state. Let us first understand the spirit with which the whole system was created. Then we will understand where we made



mistakes. Then we should understand how we can revive it and practise it again in our life.

First, the whole system is *not* based upon our birth. It is based upon our character. Krishna says again and again in Gita that it is based upon our *gunas* (nature), based upon our attitude towards life. A person who works based upon fear, or works out of fear, belongs to the working class, *shudra*. A person who works out of greed, belongs to the merchant or business class, *vaishya*. A person who works to get attention or to prove that he is superior, belongs to the *kshatriya* community. A person who works out of gratitude, expressing his bliss, is a *brahmana*.

Everybody must contribute something to society. A person may share his time if he has nothing else; he has only one thing and that is time. A person who shares his time is a worker, a *shudra*. He belongs to the working class.

A person who shares products has time and a little bit of intelligence to create products. He creates products and shares the products with society. He's a *vaishya*, a merchant. These people belong to the merchant or business class.

The person who shares confidence, gives courage to the community, gives confidence to the whole community, is a *kshatriya*, a warrior! He unites the whole group as a community in a solid way by giving confidence, by sharing his confidence.

The person who shares his knowledge, bliss or spiritual wisdom, is a *brahmana*.

It is completely based upon our role, the role we are supposed to play in the community, which is based upon our character. In no way is it related to our birth.

Please be very clear that this is the spirit with which the whole system was created. This is the spirit with which *Vedic rishis* designed the system. Here nobody is higher and nobody is lower. Be aware that no one is higher and no one is lower as it is practised today. In the course of time, one or two mistakes happened. But because of that we can't say the whole system is wrong. We can't say the whole system is a failure. We can't say the whole system is a failure because of one or two mistakes.

*Chaturvidha bhajante mam janah sukrino'rajuna
arto jignasurartharathi gnani ca bharatarshabha*

'O best among the Bharata, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me: the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and he who searches for knowledge of the Absolute.'

Here Krishna talks about those who approach the Divine and the ways in which they approach the Divine. Man is centered on seven basic emotions. Basically we live and work based upon these seven emotions: greed, fear, worry, attention need (name and fame), comparison and jealousy, ego (thinking that your ideology is you, the



identity which you show to the inner world and the identity which you show to the outer world are you) and the last one, the seventh emotion, deep discontentment.

These are the qualities with which man lives. These are the qualities with which he is working. Man is centered on these seven different emotions.

At some point or another, we work based upon these seven emotions. In every moment, if we scan our life, we work based upon these seven emotions: out of greed, fear, worry, attention need, jealousy and comparison, ego or deep discontentment. Man is centered on these seven different energy centers. These seven emotions are seven energy centers that supply energy for us, fuel for us. We are being fueled by these seven emotions. If we analyze and look deeply into it, the work that we do in life, everything that we do in life, is rooted in one of these seven emotions.

If we are centered on greed, we approach God in the same way. Goddess Lakshmi (Goddess of wealth) appeals to us. We want Lakshmi because we are completely centered on greed. Or we continuously run behind Kubera (Lord of wealth) and perform Kubera *yaga*, Kubera *yagna* (fire rituals related to Kubera), Kubera *pooja* (worship of Kubera); we continuously repeat the concept of Kubera.

Please understand that when we feel we are missing something, we try to get fulfilment by creating our own God and approaching the Divine in that mold. We try to get fulfilment by approaching the Divine in the same

mold and with the same emotion, the same feeling that we miss in our being. If we think we are poor, if we think wealth is the most important thing in our life, we run behind Goddess Lakshmi.

One more thing: when we become mature, when maturity happens to us, we approach the same Lakshmi as Gnana Lakshmi (Goddess of wisdom as wealth). We pray to the same Devi to give us wisdom, to give us knowledge. As we grow and mature, we approach the same God but we approach in a different way.

We approach or create God in our own mold. According to our maturity we project and see the Divine. We approach those gods that appeal to us most. If we are centered on greed, if our thoughts are centered on greed, we go to the god who gives us boons, who makes us feel fulfilled, who gives us what we want. A person who is centered on greed feels happy and comfortable approaching Goddess Lakshmi. He doesn't want any other god. Of course, we can approach Lakshmi from various levels, yet when we approach with greed, we start at the first step. It's not that we should not approach the Divine from greed. There's nothing wrong in approaching the Lord from greed.

There's nothing wrong in starting our life with prayers for boons. However, ending our life with prayers for boons means something is seriously wrong. It's a good start, but a bad end! There's nothing wrong with starting at this level.



Vivekananda says beautifully, 'It's good to be born in the church, but not to die there.' Before we die, we should grow out of it. We must become mature; we must realize other dimensions of the Divine, other dimensions of our being.

I say, 'In prayer, we pray to God; in meditation, we become God!' See, prayers give us immediate results and as we know, anything that gives immediate results has side effects. This is with respect to prayers. Praying to that higher principle or to the Divine is not wrong, yet it is not enough. Whereas in meditation, we become that higher principle or the Divine to which we constantly pour out our prayers. And this is permanent.

The Divine is nothing but a mirror; we see our own reflection. We see our reflection! And whatever we do to the Divine comes back to us. The more we understand, the more we grow and relate with the Divine in a more mature way. Otherwise we are confused and caught like a drunkard.

A small story:

A man returns home very late, completely drunk. He's not able to walk. He somehow makes his way into the house, stumbles over a table and breaks a piece of glass. Not only does he break a piece of glass, the glass cuts him badly on the back. He goes to the bathroom and tries to bandage himself, looking in the mirror. Then slowly, without making a sound, he enters the bedroom and falls asleep.

The next morning, his wife starts her enquiry:
'What happened? What did you do last night?'

He replies, 'I didn't do anything. I am ok.'

The wife says, 'No, tell me why were you late?'

He says, 'No, no, I went and had a few drinks.'

She says, 'That's ok, but did you hurt yourself?'

He says, 'No, no, I did not hurt myself.'

She asks, 'Then why did you put so many bandages on the mirror?'

This guy, instead of putting the bandages on himself, put the bandages on the mirror.

If we are drunk, if we are unaware, we do the same thing! We do everything to the mirror. We miss where we are supposed to work. Catching the mirror and catching the form is one and the same. Catching the form is nothing but catching the mirror. If we put the bandage on the mirror, we can never be healed. The mirror should be used to find out where to put the bandage on us. We cannot heal ourselves by putting bandages on the mirror.

In the same way, we should use God or the Divine like a mirror to find out where we have a problem. The healing work should be done on us, not on the mirror. Don't miss and try to do the healing work on the mirror. If we do that we miss whole thing.



A man who is centered on greed, is stuck with Lakshmi, stuck with prayers.

This reminds me of another story, a true incident.

A small-time astrologer used to visit the Bangalore *ashram*. Suddenly, one day he came to the *ashram* in a car. In India, owning a car is a luxury.

I asked, 'What happened? Suddenly you have a new car. Did you win a lottery?'

He replied, 'No Master, it's the grace of *Lakshmi yantra* (*yantra* means instrument and *Lakshmi* means wealth; so *Lakshmi yantra* refers to an instrument giving wealth). It's because of *Lakshmi yantra*.'

I asked him, 'Who gave you the *yantra*? I have never heard of something called *Lakshmi yantra*. Who gave it to you?'

He said, 'Nobody gave it to me Master. I give it to people!'

Whether the person who received *Lakshmi yantra* became rich or not, the person who made money selling it became rich!

When you are caught in greed, it is easy for others to exploit you.

So be very clear: starting life with prayers is ok, it's a good start, but it's not the right place to end.

At the next level, the person is centered on fear and worships gods who will protect him. He is continuously centered on fear. Continuously he does *Sudarshana homa* (*homa* refers to making offerings into a consecrated fire and *Sudarshana homa* refers to *homa* done for general protection), continuously he does *Mrityunjaya homa* (*homa* done to avoid untimely death and improve longevity) for gods who will protect him. He goes around the *navagraha* (the shrine of the nine planets collectively known as the *navagraha*, found in most Hindu temples). He circumambulates the *navagraha*. This *graha* (planet), that *graha*, this *pooja*, that *pooja*, this *dosha* (defect), that *dosha*; he continuously goes around the *navagraha*. It's ok, nothing is wrong, but it's not the place to stop. The second level is worshipping the Divine based on fear, approaching the Divine because of fear.

Approaching the Divine out of greed is the first step. Approaching the Divine out of fear is the next step.

The third level is, approaching the Divine because of worry. Again worry is nothing but fear and greed. The mixture of fear and greed is worry. We approach the Divine the same way. We pray to the Divine: 'Please help me stop worrying. Please help me come out of these worries.' At this point, we may do *yoga* or meditation for the sake of peace - not for spiritual enlightenment, but to calm our mind, to get a little peace and give rest to the mind.

The next level is based on attention-need. It is based on name and fame, i.e. we approach the Divine for the



sake of name and fame. Not only do we pray to the Divine, we gradually start representing the Divine. I have seen many people who start representing the Divine. If you go to India, you see that people who run temples behave almost like God. It's a big problem. The person who runs the temple thinks he is God because he takes care of the whole thing. He knows the tricks of the trade. He thinks, 'I am everything. When I know the whole thing, why not use the situation to my best advantage?' That's a big problem.

I tell people: unless you are mature, never take up the task of running a temple. One person asked me, 'I don't believe in spirituality, I am not a spiritual person. However, I want to run a temple as a social service. I want to do it as a social service. Shall I do it?'

I told him, 'Never make that mistake! Never do it. If you are not spiritually mature and you enter this work, surely you will trouble yourself and you will trouble others. By and by, it will become a pure name-and-fame game! And naturally you will not only hurt yourself, you will hurt others. Never take up the responsibility unless you are spiritually mature.'

There's a beautiful ritual performed during the installation of a deity in a temple, called *prana pratishtha*. The scriptural instruction is that the person who installs the deity must be enlightened. Otherwise, the person who installs the deity receives the collective negativity of people who pray in that temple. It's a frightening idea.

It may be a frightening idea, but don't think it's a lie. It has meaning. The person who takes up this job without spiritual maturity will naturally end up with name and fame problems. He creates problems for himself and others. He starts representing the Divine. He puts himself in the place of the Divine and acts on behalf of the Divine.

The people who stand and pray in front of God, the deity, are gullible because they are caught in fear and greed. You can easily exploit them. You can make them do what you want them to do because they are already in trouble. They wait for a solution. They search for a solution. So naturally you can take them for a ride. That is the reason why again and again and again, it is emphasized that only an enlightened person should run a spiritual organization. Enlightened persons run all the major temples of India.

Often we are told that if we give a business project to a monk, he destroys it since he will be unable to do it. If we give a spiritual project to a householder or businessman, he turns the whole thing into a business. He makes the whole thing into a matter of accounts. The Divine cannot be brought under accounts and mathematical calculations! The whole thing loses its spirit. The spirit is lost. The original spirit and inspiration with which the whole thing was created will not be realized.

That is why Masters emphasize again and again that we need spiritual maturity before we enter into these activities. Spiritual maturity is the basic need. Don't come



to the Divine for name and fame. You miss it and you mess it.

The next is comparison and jealousy. This is an extreme step. It's an extreme step. People always compare. People feel jealous of others' position, their status or their wealth. A person who compares and is jealous can never rest. Look into what makes us run in our lives. Why do we feel like running, running, running continuously? Why are we in a hurry? Why do you think we run?

There is a beautiful verse that says, 'Just as a monkey-charmer makes a monkey dance using a stick, *Parashakti* (the Universal intelligence) or *maya* makes us dance with a single stick called jealousy.' With one stick, She makes us dance. We all dance all kinds of dances because of one stick! The moment we think somebody has more than we do, we hurry. We are in a hurry!

A small story:

A man enters a bar and orders five drinks. Without pausing, he gulps down all five glasses.

The bartender asks, 'Why are you in a hurry?'

The guy replies, 'You would also be in a hurry, if you had what I have.'

The bartender asks sympathetically, 'What is the problem? What do you have?'

The guy says, 'I have only 50 cents.'

Don't be in a hurry! This guy says, 'I have only 50 cents.' If we are in a hurry, please be very clear, we have only 50 cents. We don't trust ourselves. That is why we run, run and run. We don't think we can achieve by being relaxed. We don't trust our energy. We hurry because we only have 50 cents. We want to grab and finish everything before the other person realizes we have only 50 cents. We don't want someone to see that we are inadequate. Don't be in a hurry! We don't need to run. If we are centered on jealousy and comparison, again we approach the Divine from that angle and only for that purpose.

I have seen some people who run temples in India boast: 'Only in my temple, we have a hundred foot high tower; in my temple, we have diamond crowns and twenty-four carat gold crowns. I have this, I have that!' With the Divine also, people boast and compare.

Why talk about temples? We do this in our homes. In San Jose, I visited a devotee. He took me to his prayer room and started explaining. He had ten photographs. However, for each photo he gave at least half an hour's explanation.

He said: 'No copy of this photograph exists anywhere else on planet Earth.'

I asked, 'How is that possible? There must be at least a few prints.'

He said, 'No! All other prints are destroyed! This is the only print available.'



It is hard to imagine the extent of foolishness people go to and what type of things they do if they are caught in jealousy and comparison. One goes on and on bragging: this is mine; that is mine; this is the way I do it, etc.

We need to realize that each of us is unique. God is not a machinist; He is an artist. He sculpts each of us with His hands lovingly and uniquely. Therefore, each one is different.

When we approach the Divine with the mentality of jealousy and comparison, we are caught again. People ask me, 'Master, in our epics, the *puranas*, we read about gods and goddesses fighting out of jealousy and greed, out of anger. What do you say about that?'

Please be very clear, those *puranas* were written for people caught in jealousy, so that they could relate with them. Don't think that the Divine has done those things. I don't think the Divine would have made those mistakes. But if people think the Divine has also made those mistakes, they relate with Him.

That is why again and again we do the marriage rituals for God. If people feel He is married, they feel comfortable and safe. People feel, 'Yes, I can relate with Him now. He is like me.' To give feelings of comfort, to make people feel relaxed, these stories are told and these things are expressed. So, it makes it easier for people to relate with Him.

You see, unless the Divine is expressed in our language, we will not be able to relate with Him. That is why these *puranas*, all these stories, are written and given to us.

Next is the person who is centered on the ego. This is difficult. The person who is centered on ego, the person who is centered on name and fame, tries to accumulate name and fame in the guise of the Divine. The person who is centered on name and fame starts claiming that he is divine without expressing the qualities of the Divine.

That is why there's a beautiful *Upanishad* verse that says: if you are divine, express it by your quality. Let people recognize it by your quality, not by your words.

Believe me, what you do speaks for you; what you speak will not do anything for you. What you do, the way in which you work, speaks for you. Your words will not work for you.

There's a short, beautiful *Upanishad* called *Paramahansa Upanishad*. It says *Paramahansa* should not wear *kavi* cloth (safron robe). Actually, technically speaking, I am not supposed to wear this *kavi* cloth. They say we are not respected if we wear this *kavi* cloth.

By our quality, we should be respected. Because of our quality, because of our divinity we should be respected. The divine qualities expressed in our life, that alone should be respected, and not this cloth. The respect should not come because of this *kavi* cloth and tradition.



It should come because of the enlightened qualities expressed in our life.

Yesterday there was a question: How do we know if a person is egoistic or a real spiritual Master?

A person who is egoistic can only play with words. Only a person who has achieved can reproduce the experience in you. A person who has achieved creates the experience in you. If you get the experience, then be very clear your Master is enlightened, divine. He's the embodiment of spiritual experience and knowledge. If you get words but not the experience, be very clear, something is seriously wrong in the path or in the person you follow.

Words are like the menu card. Experience is like the food. If you go to a restaurant and they give you a menu card and say, 'The food is not available here,' can you call that a restaurant? No! The menu card is not enough; your hunger cannot be removed by it. Words are like the menu card. Experience is like the food. Be very clear, in spiritual life we cannot stop with a menu card.

The person who has approached the Divine with ego always tries to represent the Divine without having the solid experience in himself. That is why the *Upanishad* again and again emphasize experience. If we don't experience, be very clear there's something seriously wrong with the person whom we follow.

I always tell my listeners: if you have not experienced anything with me, forgive me, there's something seriously

wrong with me. Forget about everything. You are not wrong. It's easy to put the blame and responsibility on disciples and continuously blame them by saying: you are not qualified, you are not practising perfectly, you are not practising regularly, you have not tried, and that is why you have not had any experience.

This is a cunning way of cheating the disciple and evading the truth. The disciple comes to a *guru* because the disciple is not perfect. And the *guru* says, 'You are imperfect and that is why you do not have spiritual experiences.' To learn this, one doesn't need a *guru*: a spouse is sufficient! Because this is what they tell each other continuously. From morning till night, that's what the wife tells the husband or the other way around. She doesn't need a *guru* to tell her that she is imperfect; her husband will do.

A true Master will reproduce in you the same experience that happened in him, no matter what your condition.

A scientist is a person who creates a formula to reproduce what he experienced in the outer world. A spiritual Master or a mystic is a person who creates a formula to reproduce his experience in the inner world. For example, Newton saw an apple fall from a tree and he understood something. He created a formula to reproduce the same understanding in everybody else. Likewise, a Master or a mystic creates formulas or



techniques to reproduce the same experience that happened to Him in everybody else.

I always tell people: if you have not experienced anything by attending our meditation programs and meditation camps, be very clear, something is wrong with me, not with you. Forget about me; carry on with your life. You may meet some other Master.

I am enlightened only if you can experience my enlightenment, not otherwise. Before that, it's only a word, a menu card. A menu card will not help you. It cannot remove your hunger. It can only create more hunger. It can only create more trouble. So don't stop with the menu card. What you hear is only the menu card. Don't stop with the menu card; aim directly at the Divine.

The person who approaches the Divine with ego gets everything and boosts his ego. He never surrenders to the Divine. He becomes more egoistic. His ego becomes stronger. He strengthens his ego by getting all the knowledge.

Be very clear, these are the most dangerous people. The most dangerous people! Instead of surrendering their ego to the Divine, they strengthen their ego with their knowledge. Knowledge can be used in two ways. With this knowledge, you can surrender to the Divine; or with this knowledge, you can make others surrender to you! For both these purposes it can be used. It's up to you how you use it.

A small story.

A king goes to the forest to hunt. Suddenly he sees more than fifty trees with the target mark: marked circles within circles, like a bull's eye. In the center, there is an arrow. There are target marks and an arrow pierced exactly in the center. He sees so many target marks and the arrow exactly in the center. He wants to find out who has mastered the art of archery. 'Who is this person? He must be a great master. He must have mastered the art. He must be like Arjuna,' thinks the king.

Suddenly he sees a young boy with bow and arrows; the same colored arrows that he saw at the target marks.

He asks, 'Are you the person who shot the arrows?'

The boy replies, 'Yes, I am the person.'

The happy king congratulates him saying, 'From this day onwards, I appoint you as commander-in-chief of my army. I appreciate your mastery over archery, your power, and your capacity. Please tell me how you mastered such a great art at such a young age. How did you achieve perfection at such a young age?'

The boy replies, 'It's simple. First I shot the arrow, and then I marked the circles. That's all!'



Be very clear, if we approach the Divine with ego, we do the same thing. Instead of aiming at the center, we shoot arrows and then create the circles. Instead of aiming at the center, we create the center according to our aim. When we approach the Divine with ego, instead of surrendering our ego, we strengthen our ego with knowledge. And it is dangerous.

The next level is the ultimate. When we go to the Divine with gratitude, with ultimate gratitude, the whole relationship takes a different turn. It takes a different turn! We feel so grateful, so deeply connected with the Divine that our whole life changes.

We move from first level of greed, where we pray to boon-giving gods, to the next level of fear where the gods who can protect us appeal to us. That's why tribal gods have big swords. In many Indian villages also, you see gods with swords and big weapons. People who are fear-centered worship gods with weapons.

The next is worry. Buddha appeals to us if we are centered on worry. Buddha appeals most, gods or *gurus* who give us peace appeal to us. To the person who is centered on name and fame, gods who give name and fame appeal most.

In the same way as with gods, people also approach Masters from all these levels.

I have seven kinds of disciples: *One*, people who approach me out of greed; *two*, people who approach me

out of fear; *three*, people who approach me out of worry; *four*, people who approach me for name and fame; *five*, people who approach me out of jealousy and comparison (comparison in terms of: 'That *guru* has only one or two *ashrams*. This *guru* has more *ashrams* at a young age. He must be a big *guru*.'). *Six*, people who approach me out of ego, to strengthen their ego by saying, 'I am a disciple of Nithyananda Swami. I am close to him. He knows my name. He calls me by name.' Just to have ego satisfaction they come to me. Finally, *seven* - there are a few, very few who approach me out of gratitude.

There's one more problem with people who approach me out of greed. Not only do they have greed, they also have their ideas and fantasies about a Master: their own frame. They come with a frame and see whether this person fits that frame or not. I face a big problem because of my age. My age is a big problem.

An incident that happened in our Indian *ashram*:

One day I was sitting outdoors in the *ashram*. I was sitting alone, without my turban. Nobody was around me. I sat alone on a small stone, enjoying the cool breeze. Our *ashram* is located next to a forest. Bears and cheetah come in from the forest area. I was sitting there on a stone, enjoying the cool breeze. One well-read, elderly *pundit* (scholar) came to me and asked, 'I want to meet Swamiji. Where is he?' I told him, 'Please go and sit in the *Ananda Sabha* (meditation hall). He will come in half an hour.' He went and sat in the meditation hall.



In those days, I used to sit alone; there were not many people in the *ashram*. He went and sat in the hall. After half an hour, I wore my turban and *rudraksha* (rosary beads) and went there and was about to sit in my chair. He said, 'No, no, I want to meet the big Swamiji. I want to meet *Guruji* (Master).'

I said, 'Please forgive me. In this *ashram* I am the *Swami*. Whom do you want to meet?' He said, 'I have heard about Nithyananda Swami. He healed my cousin. I want to see him.' Then I told him his cousin's name and the disease he had and that I had healed him. I told him, 'I am Nithyananda Swami.' You will be surprised; he was not ready to believe me. He just looked at me.

Then I said, 'Usually, we don't carry ID card (identity card). Usually in India, *swamis* don't carry ID card. Still, if you can't believe, look at that photograph (on the *ashram* signboard). See the name, and see that face. I am that *swami*! I can't say anything more to convince you.'

You will be surprised! I tell you, this is the truth. He said, 'I am not ready to learn from you.' He did not speak to me, but went away. He went away. Because of his strong fantasies and strong imagination about what a *guru* should be like, he was not able to relate with me.

When we have a strong imagination, we will not be able to relate with the reality. It will be difficult to relate

with the reality. He went away. He said, 'I have nothing to ask you about, nothing to talk to you about,' and he went away. When we can't drop our strong imagination, naturally we won't be able to relate with reality. It is the same with fear; people who come with fear will never be able to get rid of that fear. They will be stuck with that.

At different levels, people approach the Master or God. The more mature we are, the more we feel connected to that person who will give us fulfilment. When we become mature, when we are above fear and greed, please be very clear, we approach the same Master, the same God, with more maturity, with more intimacy. We feel deeply connected.

In *Bhagavatam* (an Indian epic), we learn about five different attitudes with which we normally relate with a Master or with God:

1) *Dasa bhava* - seeing God as a lord or master and oneself as a servant, as with Hanuman who saw *Rama* as his master and served Him as a *sadhana* (path for liberation)

2) *Vatsalya bhava* - seeing God as a Divine child, as with Yashoda who saw Krishna as her son

3) *Sakha bhava* - seeing God or the Master as a friend, the way Arjuna related with Krishna

4) *Matru bhava* - seeing God or the Master as a father or mother, the way Ramakrishna related with Goddess Kali (representation of the Mother of the Universe).



Ramakrishna really felt Goddess Kali was his mother. He always tasted the food before offering it to Goddess Kali. The temple organizers reprimanded him, 'No, you cannot do this. It is sacrilegious! You cannot offer food to God after you have eaten the food.'

Ramakrishna said, 'If you say that, I will leave the temple. I have no problem. But I cannot give food to my mother, food to the Divine, unless I taste it first. Unless I know it is good food, I cannot give it to my mother. I have no problem in leaving the temple and worshipping from outside. But I will not stop what I am doing.'

Ramakrishna deeply felt that Goddess Kali was his mother.

5) Finally, the fifth attitude is *madhura bhava* - seeing God as a beloved, the way Radha saw Krishna. This attitude needs a tremendous amount of maturity. Only if we experience the consciousness which is beyond body, can we relate with the Divine with the attitude of a beloved, *madhura bhava*.

These are the five different *bhavas* (attitudes) with which people relate with the Divine. With different maturity levels, different attitudes suit our minds. According to our maturity, our attitude differs. The more mature we are, the more the gratitude happens. The less the maturity, the more we fill our life with prayers. Prayer religion is greed; confession religion is fear!

That is why I say, 'Gratitude is the greatest prayer, and *thank you*, the greatest *mantra*.'

Next, when we go beyond prayer and confession, we experience gratitude. We experience the Divine. Krishna explains how we can grow step-by-step, how we can reach the ultimate maturity, how we can create and experience the Divine on the ultimate level. He explains step-by-step.

Let's see how Krishna explains. What is technique Krishna offers us to grow in maturity and experience eternal consciousness?

*Chaturvidha bhajante mam janah sukrino'rjuna
arto jignasurarthartha gnani ca bharatarshabha*

Based on how we approach the Divine, the community system is created. Only based on how mature we are, the whole community system has been created. How much we share with society depends on how mature we are. With the same maturity, we approach God also.

If we miss money, if we feel money is missing in our lives, we go to the God who gives money. If we miss knowledge, we go to Saraswati (the goddess of knowledge), who gives knowledge. If we feel insecure, we go to the god who protects us. We go to Durga or Kali. If we miss spiritual experience, the ultimate experience, then we go to the ultimate Divine. We go to the divine incarnations, the ultimate expressions of the Divine.

Krishna says, 'Four types of people come to Me - *Chaturvidha bhajante mam.*' He explains four communities. The first are the people who are distressed, i.e., the working class or workers. The second are the people who desire wealth, i.e., business people or *vaishya*. The third are inquisitive people who continuously enquire, continuously say, '*Tatah kim? Tatah kim? Tatah Kim?*' (What next? What next? What next?) A *kshatriya*, for example, never rests because he constantly asks, 'What next? What next? What next?' The fourth is the person who searches for knowledge of the Absolute: he is a *brahmana*.

'All four come to Me, all four reach Me, but from different levels.' Please be very clear, from different levels all four go to the same God, but they will not experience Him in the same way. They experience Him in different ways.

You may go to the same god or a different god, but according to your maturity, you experience the Divine. As long as you are caught in fear or greed, you go to those types of gods. You will be attracted to only those types of gods.

That is why again and again I tell people: 'It is easy to go to a temple and pray, but difficult to go to a Master and meditate. It's for mature people, not for everyone.' In the temple we see thousands; but in spiritual places, we see a few hundred. It is not for all; it's a luxury.

Spirituality is a luxury; only a few intelligent people can afford it. The price of spirituality is the limit of our suffering! Only if we have had enough suffering can we afford to get into spirituality. If we have not had enough suffering, or if we have not understood that we have had enough suffering, we cannot enter spirituality. It's only for people who have suffered, who have understood that they have suffered. There are two things: it is not only the suffering, but understanding that we suffer. This is what I call intelligence. Both are needed to enter into spiritual life. Spirituality is a luxury. It's not for all. Religion is for everybody. Only a few mature people can enter spirituality.

The person who approaches Me out of love and gratitude, he is the best person, for I am dear to him and he is dear to Me. By this one *shloka*, Krishna ends the whole conversation, the whole concept.

Krishna says, 'Starting at different levels is ok, but don't stop there. Don't stop there.' We can start or take off from any level. However we should not stop and stagnate. This hinders growth. A simple analogy can be stated here. It is like failing to proceed to the second standard from the first; not only that, it is also not making an attempt to move onto the next levels. We want to stay in the same cozy, familiar level.

It takes many lifetimes to understand and achieve this maturity. However, we should not think, 'Let me take some more lives to become mature. What is the hurry?!'



When I say it takes many lives, some think, 'Let me take some more lives and become mature.' Now, that's a big problem. Whenever we speak, we must make it clear, otherwise you can't imagine how many different ways people interpret it.

A small story.

Once, a great *Bhagavatam* scholar recounted the story of *Harishchandra*. Most people in India know the story of *Harishchandra*, a king who lived for truth and sold his wife for the sake of truth. Just to keep his promise, he sold his wife, such was this great person.

The scholar recited the whole story. After narrating the story, he asked one person, 'What did you understand from this story?'

The person said, 'Master, I understood that truth is the most important thing in life. We should give up everything for truth. Truth is the ultimate.'

The *pundit* was pleased. He asked the next person, 'What did you understand?'

The man said, 'Master, I understood that in an emergency, it is ok to sell your wife!'

From the same story, two people have two different understandings. So be very clear, don't miss the understanding.

A common saying is, 'As many Masters, so many paths.' However I say, 'As many disciples, so many paths!'

The Master may utter the same truth to His disciples, yet each understands and interprets in his/her own way. Again, the understanding depends on the maturity of the person receiving the truths. They all approach the Divine, but from different planes. Hence the attitude with which one approaches matters a lot. Based on that one experiences the Divine differently. If we miss the understanding, we misunderstand.

Here Krishna says, 'Out of these, the wise is always devoted to Me. He is the best person.' To start with, you can start at any level, yet you must strive to reach the Ultimate. And, one more thing I want to make clear is, please don't think, 'Oh! Krishna says it will take many lives; let me take some more lives and become mature.'

NO! If you can enter into the knowledge this moment, the experience can happen to you. You don't need to postpone.

Every moment is a new birth for you. Every moment is death and every moment is birth. The outgoing breath is death, and the incoming breath is birth. So be very clear, every moment you die and take birth. This moment can be a new birth for you. The person who understands this truth takes a new birth. He is called *divija*.



A person who is initiated is called *dvija* in Sanskrit, which means twice-born or reborn. All *sannyasi* are twice-born or *dvija*. They are the reborn or born-again people. 'Reborn' does not refer to being reborn physically, but at the being level. At the being level, they have taken a new birth. They give birth to themselves. They become newborn beings. So understand that in this moment, a new birth can happen to you.

Krishna says: *aham sa cha mama priyah* - He is dear to Me, and I am dear to him. He is in Me and I am in him. Krishna says beautifully that He is in you and you are in Him. The moment you understand this Ultimate Truth, the moment you approach the Divine with the right attitude, you become the Divine. All you need to do is change your attitude. Over! Change your attitude and the whole thing is done.

One more thing you must understand. The Master or the Divine is in you only when you engage yourself in service to Him. Sitting in front of the Master or the Divine, gazing at and enjoying the form, is not the service Krishna talks about. You chase Him, no doubt, but from a purely selfish nature.

When you devote yourself to the Divine mission, you become a devotee. That is when you become dear to Him. Your worship is no longer selfish. It is towards the mission of the Divine, in whatever form.

I tell my followers: stop sitting in front of me, gazing at my form and waiting for words to drop. Work for my

mission. Help me transform people. As long as you sit and gaze, you chase me. When you work for my mission, I chase you. I shall always be with you.

When the scriptures say, 'Follow the Master,' they do not mean to follow the form. They advise you to follow the teachings of the Master, so that you can be the Master, too. They tell you to follow the institution of the Master, his community.

That is why the Buddhist prayer says:

*Buddham sharanam gacchami,
Dhammam sharanam gacchami,
Sangham sharanam gacchami.*

Buddham does not refer to the man, Buddha; it refers to state of Buddha; *dhammam* are His teachings and *sangham* is His institution. When we follow these three, which define the Master's mission, we are on the path to liberation.

This is an important statement. Only after many births and deaths can we relate with an enlightened person. We will not be able to relate with an enlightened person, an enlightened Master, unless we undergo many births and deaths.

I told you about the seven steps in spiritual progress: 1) go around many temples, perform many rituals, pilgrimages, etc; 2) do rituals by yourself; 3) concentrate on one God; 4) instead of rituals, do *japa* (chanting),



repeat *stotra* (verses in praise of God); 5) instead of *japa* and *stotra*, visualize His form and meditate; 6) instead of meditating on any form, fall into the same consciousness, realize that that form and your *atman* are one and the same. God and the *atman* are one and the same; 7) experience Reality.

Don't think these seven steps will be done in one lifetime. People take hundreds of lives to achieve this maturity. It is rare to achieve this maturity. Krishna says: *sa mahatma sudurlabhahò* - indeed, very rare is it to see such souls who have achieved that maturity.

It's easy to relate with gods in the temple because they don't demand that we are pure. They don't demand discipline from us. We can pray to Him, do whatever we want, and think He has blessed us and go away. However, relating with a living enlightened Master is difficult.

People ask me, 'Why do Masters become popular after their death?' After death, all Masters become popular because it's easy to cheat ourselves with a photograph. We can keep His photograph and do whatever we want and think these are His teachings. And we will have no problem. There is nobody to question us. There is nobody to ask us anything. We can do whatever we want and project everything as His blessings, and we can play with the photograph. It is easy. There is nobody to catch us, nobody to discipline us. It's easy to play with the photograph. That is why dead Masters become popular.

And we don't have to give up our ego with dead Masters. Just keep a photograph, put a garland, do *aarti* (offering a lit flame); then go and do whatever we want. Sometimes we sit under that photograph and represent him. No problem! It's easy. The whole game is easy. Nothing needs to be done. The whole game is nothing but ego fulfilling. And it's a nice game!

Connecting with dead Masters is easy because they don't demand our ego. We don't need to surrender. Nothing needs to be done. That is why there will be large crowds with dead Masters and temples. The crowd will be so much because nothing needs to be done. All we need to do is think that we have done everything and we are blessed.

But with a living Master, we need to transform our life. We must transform our life. We need to experience the truth. He will not let us sleep. He will not let us rest. He will haunt us until we realize the truth. He will not let us do what we want. He will not fulfil our ego.

I always tell people, *'Old Masters are dead. The living Master is Death!'*

The living Master will be Death for us. He will be Death for our ego. And we cannot play our games with him. We cannot play our games with him. We must grow. We must become mature beings. Nothing can be done. We cannot play the same old game and put his name in front. He makes us wake up. He shakes us. He awakens us.



Somebody asked the enlightened sage Ramana Maharishi: 'If this whole world is *maya* (illusion), I see the Master also in the same dream, I see the enlightened person also in the same dream, I see You also in the same dream. How is it going to help me?'

Ramana Maharishi said: 'If we see a lion in our dream, what happens? We wake up immediately from our dream. In the same way, if we see a Master, be very clear, we wake up from our dream. Master is a *simha swapna* (lion-dream or nightmare).

Masters are nightmares. That is why we are afraid. People are afraid to come near Masters. With living Masters, it is difficult. We can't continue to play our game. We can't play the same game, and do whatever we want. The game can't be ours. The game will be His. We cannot play our game. We must act according to His script. He is the director. That is why it's difficult to fall in tune with a living Master.

Only a person who has understood, after many, many births and deaths, who has matured, who has enough knowledge, surrenders to Me, surrenders to the living Master.

In India, especially in Tamil Nadu, kids play with wooden dolls. They have four to five dolls. I have seen kids play. For one doll, they drape a *sari* and say, 'This is Mother.' They dress another in a *dhoti* and say, 'This is Father.' For another doll, they put on a skirt and say,

'This is Sister.' They dress another doll in trousers and say, 'This is Brother.'

And they start their game: they say, 'Mother is cooking,' and they take the mother doll and make it stand near the toy kitchen. They say, 'Father is going to office,' and place the father doll in a small car, and they will drive it, too. They make honking sounds, 'peem... peem...' to give an effect of a real life scenario, and take the car to office. And then, after a few minutes they say, 'Sister is going to school.' They place the sister doll in the toy car and move it around. Sister goes to school. They cry and make sounds as though Sister cries because she doesn't want to go to school.

They enact the scenes of the game. And then they say: 'Now it is evening, Sister comes back from school.' They bring Sister back. They bring Father back and say, 'Father comes back from office.'

This seems like a game for kids. They may be playing. But please understand, you play the same game. You catch somebody and say, 'You are my mother, you are my father, you are my wife, you are my husband, you are my son, you are my sister, and you are my brother.'

And if that doll doesn't behave according to your frame or your image, you say it's not a good doll, this is not a good toy, and you throw it away. Sometimes, children hurt themselves with dolls and say, 'This doll hurt me.' They don't realize that they took the doll and



poked it into their eyes. They complain: this doll hurt me. They cry. In the same way, when somebody doesn't behave according to your frame, you feel they hurt you.

To you, a sister means a certain kind of person, you have an idea that a sister should behave like this or like that. A mother means - you have an idea of how a mother should be. Similarly, a wife; you have an idea about how a wife should be. You want all the dolls to play their role. When somebody doesn't play their role well, you throw them out of the gate. You don't want to play with that doll.

Suddenly, you die. You leave the body.

When you go to another place, in your next birth, you again catch one more set of dolls and start the same game: my father, my husband, my wife, my daughter, my son, my brother, my sister - and the game starts. You play the same game. Continuously, you play the same game. Sometimes you bring dolls into the game, sometimes you throw dolls out, sometimes you fire them and sometimes you enjoy them. And if you don't have enough dolls, you get some cats or dogs to play with. And now you have everything to play the game. And now that you have everything, continuously you play, you play, and you play.

Suddenly, again you die. When you die again, you assume another body. With that body, you catch one more set of people and play the same game!

Again and again and again, you play the same game. Only a person who is a little mature thinks, 'How many times will I play this same game? What am I doing? How many times will I do this same psychodrama?'

Please understand that the whole thing is a psychodrama! The whole thing is a psychodrama. Whether it is a relationship, or whether it is life itself, it is nothing but a psychodrama. You have an agenda. Society has taught you that, as a father, you should behave like this; as a husband you should behave like this; as a son you should behave like this. As long as you follow the agenda, you are considered a good citizen.

When, even once, you don't follow that agenda, you are not respected. All the other dolls kick you out of the gate. They tell you that you are not accepted in the game. You are not allowed in this game anymore. You are not invited to parties. That is what is called boycotting. They boycott you and then suddenly one day you realize, 'How many times am I doing the same drama; again and again and again the same game!'

The person who understands that he is doing the same drama, playing the same game again and again, has achieved knowledge: *gnanavan mam prabadyate*. *Gnanavan* means the person who has achieved knowledge, the real intelligence about what is happening. Then naturally you surrender. *Vasudeva sarvam*; you surrender unto Me.

One who understands that the cause of all causes is Me, realizes the ultimate Divine. He realizes thus, 'How



many times will I undergo the same drama? How many times will I make the same mistakes?' Until this realization, the whole thing is repeated again and again without end, without the experience.

The person who has understood, who has knowledge of this truth, surrenders unto Me, surrenders to the Master, an enlightened being, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all there is. Such a great soul is rare.

Only a person who has achieved this knowledge relates with the Master in a real sense. Only he sees the Master in a real way. Please be very clear, there's a beautiful verse that says, 'Even if you have *seen* an enlightened Master *once*, you will become enlightened.'

Some people come back and ask me, 'Why haven't I become enlightened yet, Master?' Be very clear, 'Never think that you are seeing me; never think that by seeing through your eyes, you can see the Divine. You can see my form, but not me. Even if you have seen many enlightened Masters, never think that you have seen them. Just by seeing through your eyes, never ever think that you have seen them.'

Even if you have seen them, the attitude with which you have seen them plays a major role. If you went to them with greed, you went to a demigod and not to an enlightened Master. If you have gone out of fear, again you have approached a demigod, not an enlightened Master.

Only if you go with an attitude of love and gratitude, understanding and maturity, only then do you see a living Master, only then do you see an enlightened person. The moment you see an enlightened being AS HE IS, you WILL become enlightened. There's no doubt about it.

Q: Master, I am never comfortable with the status quo; I need to always work towards something, to keep myself busy. Once I am there, I need to move again. Am I on the path, as you say, since I seem to be dissatisfied with the end result?

Interesting! If you are truly on the path and focused on the path, you enjoy the path. You will not be dissatisfied with what you get at the end. Whatever you receive, wherever you reach will be satisfying. That is what Krishna means by detachment, neither attachment and liking, nor aversion and dislike.

Life is a gift, birth is a gift, love is a gift, and death is a gift. If we know how to appreciate them, all are gifts. If we don't know how to appreciate them, there will be nothing but complaints in life. There are two types of people: 1) those who know how to appreciate the beauty of that which is, of that which has been given to them, and 2) those who have no sense of appreciation. They condemn, complain, and ask for more and more.



Only the first kind of people becomes spiritual. The second kind becomes religious. The second kind is bound to deny God sooner or later, because God becomes an enemy who does not fulfill their desires. These people created the proverb, 'Man proposes, God disposes.' Non-spiritual people create such proverbs. They feel frustrated. Whatever happens is wrong. It is never up to the mark. It is never fulfilling, and never to their heart's content; it falls short. They live in misery because there is a grudge, as if they are deprived of something. How can they feel grateful? And without gratitude there is no prayer. Without gratitude there is no spirituality.

Gratitude is the foundation of spirituality. It is the experience of surrender born out of gratitude that becomes the experience of God. The seed of prayer is gratitude. You feel grateful because great is the gift of God and it constantly showers on us. Most of us take it for granted. That is one of the most stupid things that a human being can do, but the mind always does it: it takes things for granted. The sun rises and the dawn has tremendous beauty. But the mind says, 'So what? It happens every day. It is just another morning like the others.'

This is how the mind looks at things. It becomes insensitive: insensitive to beauty, insensitive to music, insensitive to poetry, insensitive to love, insensitive to everything that is valuable. Then naturally we live in darkness. We live in ugliness. We get used to it since it is our own creation.

Start feeling grateful. Cultivate the sense of appreciation. Praise Existence for what has already been done and then much more will happen to you. The more we praise, the more we become capable of seeing, the more perceptive we become. A prayerful person becomes so perceptive that he sees God everywhere. He finds God's signature everywhere and in everything!

We have forgotten who we are. We have become ignorant of our divine nature. That is our Original Sin. Because we have forgotten ourselves we have forgotten all that is ours, the inner Kingdom of God that is our home. The Garden of Eden is not somewhere else. It is in the innermost center of our being. It is in fact our natural habitat. Yet we behave as if it is a strange territory. We are not even aware how to find it.

Bliss results when you find your natural habitat. You are in bliss when you reach your center. It is only for those who are courageous, daring and brave because bliss happens only when we have moved beyond the known into the unknown. Whenever we become confined to the known, our life becomes routine, repetitive. It goes on moving in the same rut. It goes around in circles, and slowly it dulls our sensitivities, our receptivity. It hardens people. It makes them blind; it makes them deaf. It makes them dumb because there is nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to taste and nothing to feel. They have known it all. It is the same repetition. How can there be bliss in such a life? Such a life has only one taste: misery, depression, and a sadness that is a resigned sadness.



But if one is courageous enough to move continuously from the known into the unknown, from the familiar into the unfamiliar, one goes beyond misery. It is risky, because the familiar is secure, safe. And who knows what will happen if we go into the unknown, into the uncharted sea? We take our small boat and we go into the uncharted sea. Who knows if we will come back to the old shore again? Who can give us a guarantee? There is no guarantee.

But unless one is ready to risk oneself, one cannot remain blissful. This is the Master's whole work. It is to help us in what we believe to be a risky path. It is to help us get out of the mind, to put the mind into deep silence so that the heart can function, to come closer to the heart so that we can hear its message.

Q: I hear what you say about the caste system, that it is based on gunas or qualities and not on birth, and that all castes are equal, etc. Yet today it does not work that way. There are many other cultures that treat each other better than we do here. Still you say that we are one of the most civilized cultures. I am unable to reconcile the reality with the truth of what you have presented.

Wonderful. This is a doubt that has arisen from your being. I bow down to that. What you have expressed is a plea. You say, 'Please let me understand what this means, I am confused.'

I salute your question and you, because you come from the level of Arjuna, appealing to the Master, 'Please clear my doubt. Let me be at peace.' I salute you as well as your question, because when I answer I do not answer your question, I answer you, your being. Where you come from is not violence; it is a genuine dilemma.

In the *Vedic* system we had two kinds of scriptures: *shruti* and *smriti*. *Shruti* was the truth as experienced by enlightened Masters, that they transmitted personally to disciples. *Shruti* means 'what is heard.' The *Veda* and *Upanishad* were the primary *shruti*. These truths are timeless and beyond space. They are not historical facts; they are experiential truths.

However, your experiential truth may not be that of another person, and it certainly will not be that of an enlightened Master. So, even while studying *shruti*, the inviolable truths, there is often a problem of understanding and acceptance. If Krishna says that the spirit cannot be destroyed, you wonder, 'What is He talking about? What is the spirit, where is the spirit, I do not see one.'

You need to reach the no-mind state of an enlightened Master to understand the meaning of their expressions, which are the *shruti*. That is why there are many interpretations of the *Vedic* scriptures, the *shruti*. Unenlightened beings casually interpret these sacred truths with no understanding. Many cannot even understand the language these were written in.



Sanskrit is not an easy language to learn. That is why it is called the language of the gods. It has many subtle levels of meaning. Many foreigners have translated our *Vedic shruti*, either based on what was translated to them or based on their limited learning. I respect them for their curiosity. But when Indians follow the translations of foreigners - thanks to the fact that they no longer understand the language of their forefathers - we are in a tragic state.

Instead of attempting to read the original because they are too lazy, they are content to read copies. These copies were not merely made with limited understanding of the language, but often with a total misunderstanding of the culture. In many cases, this misunderstanding was deliberate. It was designed to denigrate what was said. That was the only purpose of many translations.

Under the British, many Indians became scholars. Their reputation depended on how they expressed themselves in the language of their Masters and rulers, in order to be accepted. For them the easy way out was to follow those of the ruling class whose scholarship had been established. It became a vicious cycle of slaves emulating their rulers and trying to be better than them in misinterpreting their own culture and its truths.

If you doubt me, learn Sanskrit and read the original scriptures. Then read the copies by foreigners and Indians who in turn copied them. You will find the truth for yourself.

Furthermore, understanding the language is no guarantee that we have understood these truths. These scriptural truths are established in different energy levels corresponding to the ones we live in. If we are at the gross physical level of existence, operating only within bounds of the material world, that is the level at which we understand the truth expressed.

However, these truths were expressed at the highest energy level, the *nirvanic* layer of these enlightened Masters. Unless we reach that level, we cannot understand the truth of these scriptures. In our Life Bliss Programs, we take people step-by-step through these layers. When I accept someone as my disciple and initiate him, I help him access the *nirvanic* layer. Even that is not enough. I can help him access that point, access the truth once, and provide him the glimpse. After that it is up to the disciple's sincerity and commitment to stay there. This is what Nithya Healers and *Acharyas* are trained to do.

Many disciples, especially *acharyas*, kept asking me to talk about scriptures at levels higher than the gross physical level. I tried that once in my Ashtavakra Gita discourses. You can ask them how many understood or even made an attempt.

Many read these scriptures like novels. Or they use them for predictions. People open a page of the Bible or Gita as they do with the Chinese book of predictions and blindly follow what is written on the page they open. I understand that many people do that with *Guaranteed*



Solutions, the book based on my teachings in the Life Bliss Program. If we have faith, whatever we read works well for us. This has nothing to do with the page we open.

When we immerse ourselves in the pages of a scripture with total understanding and in deep meditation, we truly understand and feel the energy of the truths. This has nothing to do with physical and literal understanding of a few words in a language. I am sure that even a monkey can be taught to understand a few words of any language. It does not need the superconscious ability of a human to do that.

All I have said so far is about *Vedic shruti*. Bhagavad Gita is a *Vedic shruti*, even though it is not a *Veda* or *Upanishad* and is a part of an epic, a *purana*, which in turn is considered a scripture. As we heard today, Krishna is crystal clear on the classification of this system. It is based upon our nature, the mix of our *gunas*, and not on our birth.

If we are to blame someone for the mess we have today, we need to look at the colonizing foreign rulers. They corrupted us and our system as part of their calculated effort to destroy our culture. The pity is that they succeeded well in that.

Today we measure someone's capability in India not by their ability to understand traditional culture and value systems, but by their ability to communicate in English and live by Western 'civilized' standards. We are proud

not to be 'Indian' or follow our traditional culture. Corruption of this classification system is a result of converting a highly scientific and effective system of education and training into a hierarchical system of oppression, as a direct result of the 'Westernization' of our minds.

Many call this a *varna* system, *varna* meaning 'color' in Sanskrit. Foreign experts said that this arose from the fact that higher castes were foreign Aryan invaders who were lighter in color. It is surprising then that Vishnu and his incarnations Rama and Krishna are described as dark or blue, the color reserved by these experts for *shudras*, the lowest class according to them.

Understand two more things. People quote the *manusmriti* and similar material as proof that our scriptures differentiated among people based on caste. The *Vedic* religion is the only religion that separates truth from facts. The *shruti* are expressions of experienced truths of enlightened Masters. They remain as truths, regardless of time and space. On the other hand, *smritis*, like those of Manu, are man-made factual regulations. These are based upon the socio-economic conditions prevalent at a point in time and space.

The *Vedic* religion, *sanatana dharma*, what we call Hinduism today, has always accepted that *smritis* can change; in fact they are meant to change with changing times. What was *smriti* in Manu's time can no longer be true thousands of years later. People who quote *smritis* in



defense of their criticism of Hindu practices should understand this first. If some Hindus do not accept this, it is for the sake of protecting the socio-economic benefits that have accrued over time, not because of scriptural sanctions.

In fact, as far as I know, Hinduism is the only religion that has the courage to declare that these man-made religious laws can and should change according to the changing culture. No other religion has the courage to allow a part of its compiled scriptures, its religious foundation, to change with time.

Secondly, wherever you look in this world there is a classification system. Nowhere is everyone treated equal, however civilized they call themselves. A much more recent civilization that considers itself to be the bulwark of global democracy can have nothing good to say about its treatment of minorities based on skin color and socio-economic standing. Once again it is about the conditions of birth. No country and no culture in this world have had a past that is without blame in this regard.

God is an artist not a machinist. He cast each human in a different mold, unique in potential and performance. He did not mass-produce them as robots. Herein lies the inherent problem as well. Sections of society value themselves and their skills better than others, and depending on their culture, subjugate others based on their superiority in that skill. At a time in the past, physical strength may have been the superior skill. In

much of the world today, wealth is the consideration. These skill sets were also passed on as if they were birthrights. The son of a warrior became a warrior and the son of a noble, a noble.

At least in the *Vedic* system the criterion for classification was the child's inherent ability. It had nothing to do with birth. It had everything to do with what the child was good at. Whatever classification was chosen was ok, since nothing was considered superior or inferior. An artisan who was a *shudra* was as respected as a scholar who was a *brahmana* or a merchant who was a *vaishya*.

Condemning the system and eliminating it will not solve the problem. Another system will be created. This has already happened in most parts of India. The son or daughter of a political leader is considered by birth to be the future leader of the country. This has democratic sanction. Does this system set that right?

I am not a *brahmana* by birth. As a Master, I am beyond the *gunas*, beyond classifications. I have no need for any system. Let me tell you this. I salute the *brahmana* of this *Vedic* tradition who at the risk of their lives kept the *Vedic* tradition alive for thousands of years.

One disciple, a *brahmana* by birth, criticized his *varna* based upon his understanding of what 'education' had taught him. I stopped him. I told him about the *brahmana dikshitar*s of Chidambaram who even today do not move



out of the limits of their sacred township. Many thousand years ago this group swore to stay and protect the scriptures in their possession. As the world around them progressed and grew richer, they could have given up this noble, but monetarily valueless occupation. In fact, it was a thankless occupation because the Tamil community had been in the forefront of denigrating the *Vedic* culture in this country. That is the reason why you find the largest and wealthiest expatriate community in the USA to be Tamil Brahmins who could not survive in their homeland.

You have similar communities of *brahmana* scholars in Varanasi and other locations who kept *Vedic* scholarship alive in spite of numerous handicaps. Without them, this country would have been ruined.

This is the reason I salute the Indian community system.

I Am in Your Heart!

7.20 Those whose discrimination has been distorted by various desires, surrender unto deities.

They follow specific rules and regulations of worship according to their own nature.

7.21 I am in everyone's heart as the Super Soul.

As soon as one desires to worship some deity, I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.



7.22 Endowed with such a faith, he endeavors to worship a particular demigod and obtains his desires;

In reality, these benefits are granted by Me alone.

7.23 Men of limited intelligence worship the demigods and their fruits are limited and temporary.

Those who worship the demigods go only to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees reach My supreme planet.

He says: I am in everyone's heart as the *Paramatman* (Super Soul). As soon as one desires to worship some deity I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.

Please understand that when He says 'deity' or 'demigod', He doesn't mean the Supreme. Even if you approach Krishna out of fear or greed, you approach a demigod. When He says the word demigod, He means the attitude with which we approach the Divine, how we approach the Divine. With the right approach, even if you approach the demigod, he will be Supreme. He will give you enlightenment. With the wrong approach, even if you approach Krishna, you will have only material benefits.

There's a beautiful story from Krishna's life.

A rich man prayed to Krishna to become a King. Twice a day, morning and evening he repeated, 'Krishna, Krishna.' He always asked Krishna thus:

‘Krishna, please give me a kingdom. Krishna, I want to become a king.’

There was another poor lady, who had only one cow. With that milk she made a little butter and some sweets and offered it to Krishna. The whole day she sat and chanted Krishna’s name.

Suddenly one day Krishna appeared and responded to both of them. This guy, who had asked for a kingdom, became a king. And this lady who prayed everyday to Krishna, her cow died.

Narada asked Krishna, ‘What is this, Krishna? That fellow who repeats your name only twice a day has been made a king by you. This lady who remembers you 24 hours a day, you killed her cow. What is this? Is it fair?’

Krishna says, ‘That fellow only wants the kingdom. He came to Me only for that. I am a utility to him. So I blessed him with what he wants. But for her, I was her whole life. There was only one small hindrance. Only one thing stood between her and Me. I took that away. I removed that hindrance also. Now she is completely into Me, within Me. And now she has completely become Me!’

Whatever our approach to the Divine is, it plays an important role in our spiritual progress. If we approach Krishna out of fear or greed, we worship a demigod. But Krishna says we are not wrong. He’s not here to discourage us. Nothing is wrong. But it’s not enough.



Not enough! That is not the place to stop. It's a good place to have a visa, but not a green card or citizenship. Here, the planets or palaces of demigods are good places to visit, but not the right place to stay.

Krishna says, 'Because I am in everyone's heart as the *paramatman*, the moment you desire to worship some demigod, I shall make your faith steady, so you can devote yourself to that particular deity.'

Let me describe how a seeker usually travels through all these paths and eventually ends up. When a normal seeker starts, he hears about all kinds of rituals like *pooja* and *homa*. This *pooja* will give you this benefit, that *homa* will give you that benefit; and he starts doing these things - on Friday, fasting for Devi (the mother goddess); Saturday, fasting for Balaji (another name for Lord Vishnu); Sunday, fasting for some other god; Monday, fasting for Shiva; Tuesday for Skanda (another name for Lord Subrahmanya); Thursday, fasting for *Guru* (Master), and so on.

You attend all *poojas*, all possible *homans*, wherever these things go on. This is the way it starts. Then slowly, you not only go to all these *poojas* and *homans*, you also go to many different temples. This is the way it starts. Then slowly, after sometime, you understand that these rituals and trips to the temples are too much. And you think, 'Why let somebody else do these things for me? Let me directly do it and relate with the Divine. You start your own shrine in the *pooja* room, in your home. From morning till night, you engage in worship. When you become a little mature, you start doing it yourself. You

think that you should feel directly connected to the Divine. 'Let me do it by myself,' you think. So you start doing it.

The first standard (or first grade) in spirituality is going around visiting all the temples, watching all the *poojas*, all the *homas*. The second standard is doing it yourself. The third standard is realizing, 'The Divine is there in all the gods, in all the forms. But I think I feel more attracted towards this one god, this particular god. So let me concentrate on worshipping the Divine in this form.' Having one form and doing *pooja* and *homa* only for that one form is the third standard. Fourth: 'More than *pooja*, *mantra* (sounds imbued with energy) is powerful. Let me repeat the *mantra*.'

Surrendering through the body is *pooja*; surrendering through words is *mantra* and *stotra* (songs in praise of the Lord); surrendering through the mind is *gnana* (wisdom or knowledge of the Self). So here you think, 'Why not do *stotra* and *japa* (repetition of a *mantra* or name of God)?' You start repeating the *mantra* of your favorite deity.

At every level, different gods appeal to you; at every level, different *gurus* or Masters appeal to you. When you are at the level of *pooja* and *homa*, other people who also do that appeal to you. When you are at the level of going around all pilgrimage places, people who guide you to these pilgrimage centers appeal to you. When you go to *Shabarimala* (a famous pilgrimage spot in South India), you call somebody as *guru swami*. The person who



leads the trip is called a *guru swami*. He appeals to you. When you come to the level of doing *upasana* or worship, then the person who teaches you *pooja* appeals to you. He is your *guru*.

Then when you start repeating a *mantra*, the person who gives you the *mantra*, he appeals to you. He becomes your *guru*. The person who guides you, who tells you how to repeat the *mantra*, how to do *japa*, he appeals to you. Next, after sometime you think, 'Why only repeat this *japa*, why not do meditation?' You start visualizing His form. Now the person who teaches you meditation appeals to you. Meditation is again *saguna Brahman*, that means meditating on the form. This is the next standard.

The first standard is attending rituals and visiting temples. The second standard is doing rituals yourself. The third standard is concentrating on one deity, doing *pooja* and *homa* only for that deity. The fourth standard is realizing that *mantras* are more powerful than rituals, and instead of performing rituals, you repeat *mantra*. The fifth standard is visualizing the form and meditating, instead of stopping with the *mantra*. Then, when you sincerely meditate, He Himself appears. He gives you His *darshan* (vision) and guides you to the higher-level *sadhana* (spiritual exertion towards an intended goal). He guides you to the right Master. Sometimes He gives you *darshan* and guides you; sometimes He automatically makes you feel connected.

Only a person who has come to this level can feel directly connected with an enlightened Master. Till you reach this level, till this maturity happens, you cannot

straightaway feel completely connected with an enlightened person.

You need to go through all five steps, only then will you feel completely connected with a living Master. When you come to the stage where you meditate on a single form, then the Master happens in your life. He happens in your life and guides you.

The form upon which you meditate and your own form are expressions of the same Divine energy. So the Master puts you into real meditation. This means turning towards yourself, turning towards your own consciousness, turning towards your *atman* (Being or soul). He gives you the technique to realize your being. This is the sixth level.

The seventh standard, the ultimate standard, is when you experience that *you are that*. You achieve enlightenment.

This is the usual route that seekers travel on, starting from the first standard, moving to the second standard, the third standard and ending with experiencing the Self. Now find out in which standard you are, and try to go to the next level. That's all. That is all you need to do.

Here Krishna says: 'Because I reside in everyone's heart as *Paramatman*, when somebody desires to worship a demigod, I make his faith steady, so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.' When you approach the Divine even from the first level, He helps you. He helps you without doubt.



When you start, you are like 18 carat gold. There's nothing wrong with 18 carat gold, but you need to be put into the fire a little bit, and slowly, you become 22 carat. Then you reach the Master, a living Master. Then slowly you become 24 carat gold, and you become enlightened. If you throw away the first step, you never reach the second step. Unless you have gone through the earlier steps, it will be difficult to relate with a living Master. You will not be able to directly relate with a living Master. You will not be able to connect. You will not be able to feel the importance at all.

This morning, one devotee came to visit me and was speaking to me. He expressed his confusion. This happened after reading all the books. He said, 'I am now more confused than before.' In Gita, Arjuna says the same thing. After a few chapters, he says, 'Oh Krishna, I am now more confused than before hearing the Gita.'

This clearly means that you have done your *sadhana* (spiritual practice). You really did your *sadhana*. Understanding that this *sadhana* is not helping you is the right help derived from that *sadhana*.

Buddha teaches meditation to one of his disciples. The disciple tries his best and comes back and says, 'Buddha, I am unable to meditate!' Then Buddha says, 'Don't worry. You have understood properly. That is the purpose of this meditation. Understanding that you are not able to meditate is the purpose of this meditation. You have done it. That meditation has served its purpose. Now forget about it. Now come to the next step.'

Sometimes these techniques make us mature by giving us the understanding that we are unable to do the technique. That understanding is a big maturity. There's nothing wrong in it. So a different kind of maturity, a different level of maturity happens to us when we reach the Divine.

Approaching the Divine is the first step, or the first level. There's nothing wrong in that, but don't stop there. Here Krishna says, 'I make his faith steady, so that he can devote himself to that particular deity,' which means that he can grow in that particular attitude. There is the possibility of growth. He says, 'I don't discourage him; I make his faith steady, so that he will slowly come up to higher levels.'

Krishna says, 'Even if you approach Me with an attitude of fear or greed, I fulfil your needs. It is My own energy which fulfils them, so that you grow, and you come up to the next level.'

If you receive boons through demigods, do not think that those deities are responsible for it. Do not think that the idols that you pray to are the ones who granted your prayers. All these are granted by *Parabrahman*, the ultimate energy, the same Existence. But you are not expected to stop with these boons. You are expected to grow.

I always tell people, when you approach the Divine, first all your dreams will become reality. He will bless you. All your desires will be realized. All your dreams



will become reality. Later on, He will give you the understanding that the reality you perceive is itself a dream. First He gives *shakti* (energy) to turn your dreams into reality. Then He gives *buddhi* (intelligence) to realize that reality itself is a dream.

That is what He says here: When I bless you, according to your maturity and based on the way in which you approach the Divine, I give everything.

There are many 'educated' individuals who question me about the wisdom of idol worship and rituals.

A small story.

A disciple was massaging Vivekananda's feet. A follower, a young student, came to Vivekananda, prostrated at his feet and said, 'I adore you. I adore you because you despise all these superstitions about idol worship and bathing in the Ganges. You are truly educated.'

Vivekananda roared at him, 'You fool, what do you know about my beliefs. I pray everyday to *Ma Kali* and bathe in the Ganges. Shed all your stupid notions about worshipping idols being foolish and learn how to pray.'

Soon after, an elderly scholar came to Vivekananda and said, 'Master, you are the greatest. Whatever you have said about learning the scriptures and going to temples is so powerful. I wish everyone would talk like you do.'

Vivekananda said to him, 'What do you know about the scriptures? Is there any point in reading all this outdated material? It only makes your ego stronger. Stop this nonsense and meditate.'

After the scholar left, the shocked disciple asked Vivekananda, 'Master, I am confused. You have just reversed your position with these two people. What should I do?'

Vivekananda said, 'Just keep your mouth shut and massage my feet. That is good for you.'

When you go to a temple and worship an idol, when you are in the first standard, you feel that you are praying to a stone or metal idol. As your awareness grows, you realize that the idol is not just stone or metal; it is energy. Even without much effort, you feel the energy of that temple.

Why do you think thousands, no, millions of people, visit Tirupati or Varanasi or Tiruvannamalai? A few hundred people can be misled, but not millions, and that too without any coercion, without any enticement. They come because they feel relieved; not all of them come merely out of greed and fear. There are thousands who come because in some unknown way they see the hand of God, as it were. They feel the touch and they feel the energy connection.

Hindus worship *through* the idols, not the idols themselves; our rituals address the energy behind these idols. Logic cannot make us understand this. Only faith



can. We need to go through this stage of form worship before we realize the formless. Otherwise we will all be intellectual monsters. Religions that condemn idol worship without understanding the philosophy behind worship, breed confusion that leads to destruction.

In every form of learning we need to advance step-by-step. Only if we are an exception can we be promoted to university education without attending high school. Such exceptions are rare, and prove the rule. When we consider idol worship foolish and meaningless, it only means that we are foolish and ignorant. The minute science advances and a scientist measures the energy vibration of our temples and proves that these are centers of energy, these 'intelligent' people will be queuing up. They are like cattle led by science, though they feel others are cattle led by religion and superstition.

It does not matter whether that place is a Hindu temple, a Christian church, a Buddhist pagoda, a Muslim mosque or even a river or mountain. When thousands and millions of people congregate to celebrate the Divine and offer gratitude, any place becomes a temple, a place of worship. Every twelve years, tens of millions of people gather by the river Ganga in India to celebrate *Kumbh Mela*. In certain years 100 million people have gathered in what is certainly the largest gathering in the world.

As these people bathe in the river with deep conviction, gratitude and prayers, the river gets purified and in turn purifies them. It is a deep bio-spiritual interaction that raises the energy of the planet and the universe.

When Krishna says, 'He goes to the planets of the demigods,' don't think there is some planet out there! He talks about space and experience. If we worship some god out of greed, we never come out of that greed. We will be continuously caught in greed. If we worship some god out of fear, we will be always in that fear. If we worship the Divine out of love and gratitude, we experience a totally different space.

Hell and heaven are not geographical; they are psychological. Depending on our particular mood, we create our own hell or heaven, wherever we go. We all know how to create hell! Now all we need to know is how to create heaven. There's nothing that needs to be learnt about the art of creating hell. Now, it is time to learn how to create heaven.

He says: Men of small intelligence - people caught in greed or fear, attention need or worry - worship the demigods. Of course, sometimes we worship the demigods; sometimes we approach Krishna or the Ultimate God with the same attitude - the attitude of asking. If we carry the attitude of greed, whether we worship Kubera, the god who gives money, or Krishna, we worship a demigod. Even if we worship Krishna with that same attitude, we worship a demigod. It is the attitude that makes Krishna either the *Parabrahman* or a demigod. It is we who create the attitude. It is we who create the energy. By worshipping demigods, we attain demigods.



This is an important *sutra*, a technique. It says:

*antavat tu phalam tesõhaam
tad bhavatyalpa-medhasaam
devaan deva-yajo yaanti
madbhakta yaanti maam api*

It says that when we get boons from demigods, they are temporary. God will bless us with wealth when we ask Him. But we need intelligence to preserve it. We need intelligence to protect wealth. That alone we need to do. So be very clear, when we receive anything out of energy, without having maturity, it is temporary. If we have enough intelligence and maturity to have wealth, then naturally, we would have created it. Because we don't have *buddhi*, wisdom, we ask God to give us *shakti*, energy. If we get *shakti* without *buddhi*, it will be temporary.

That is what Krishna says: If we get *shakti* without *buddhi*, it is temporary. It will not stay with us. That is why He says that boons derived from demigods are temporary, not permanent. And if we continue to worship them, we are stuck with them. We create that kind of energy in our inner space. We live with that kind of energy in our being.

And He makes one more statement: *madbhakta yaanti maam api* - My devotees attain Me.

Then He says these words: If you approach Me with the ultimate attitude, with the attitude of love and gratitude, you achieve Me. The greatest attitude is

gratitude. If you approach Me with gratitude, you experience Me.

Again and again people ask me, 'Master, when I have so many problems, how can I be grateful?' Please be very clear, we continuously pray, 'Oh God, please give me a diamond ring.' Do we feel grateful that He gave us the finger to wear a ring on? We don't feel grateful that He gave us the finger. Be very clear, the finger is not our birthright. There are thousands of people who don't have hands. There are thousands of people who don't have a finger. It's not our birthright.

We continuously pray intensely, in all possible ways, 'Oh God, give me this. Oh God, give me that.' But we never feel grateful for the things that are showered on us.

This very life is a blessing!

Can we say that our life has been given to us as payment for some job that we did in *Vaikuntha* (abode of Lord Vishnu) or *Kailash* (abode of Lord Shiva)? No, it's not as if we worked for 100 years in *Kailash*, and earned a check that says, 'Alright, have 70 years of life.' If we work in the army, they give us money to study. It's not like that; we did not get life as a salary. It's a pure blessing showered on us.

Every breath is a blessing! The breath that we inhale and exhale is a boon given to us. This very life is a blessing. Continuously we miss things that are not around us. But we never experience the things that are showered on us by the Divine.



Each of us has a big list of things that God has not given us and we also have a big list of things that God has given us. How many things are showered on us? If you take a paper and pen and write, both lists will be endless. Every moment of our life is a gift from the Divine. We are alive, we are still conscious; that by itself is a gift from the Divine.

If we honestly list the things that are not given to us, it will be an endless, infinite list. If we earnestly make a list of the things given to us, that will also be an endless, infinite list.

Now it's up to us whether to look at the list of things not given to us and constantly feel miserable, thinking: 'Oh! I do not have this, I do not have that,' and live in hell, or look at the list of things showered on us. The latter makes us feel deeply grateful, 'Oh God! You have showered so much on me, and given me the blessing of life.' We feel grateful and create our heaven. It is up to us to create hell or heaven. It's purely our choice. It's up to us to do what we want.

Krishna says, 'These men of small intelligence worship demigods. Their results are temporary.' We continue to live that way. When we feel life is a blessing and we approach the Divine with deep love and gratitude, not only do we experience Divine consciousness, Krishna says: They achieve ME. They attain ME.

There's another verse where Krishna says beautifully: 'If you ask for something, I will give you that. If you don't ask for anything, I will give you Me'. I will give

you ME. People say, 'Who wants Him? We want Him only as a utility, not Him. As long as He serves our purpose, things are ok. So we don't want Him.' People want only solutions. They don't want the Divine.

Q: Many scriptures advise us to look inward. But to be successful in this world we need to look outward, at how things happen around us. How can we succeed by looking inward?

Man can live in two ways. He can live as an extrovert; then he can have the whole world but he will miss himself. And to miss one's self is to miss all. Unless man becomes rooted in his self, he has no future.

One can become a king, a political leader or a successful and rich businessman, but deep down one remains a beggar, utterly poor. Whatever you have, you crave for more, and your greed, whether for money, power or any material pleasure, drives you on and on. This constant running and running, without stopping, hurts. It hurts very much because one cannot drown it in any oblivion. In fact, the more riches you have on the outside, the clearer it becomes to you that inside you are hollow.

The other way is to live an inward life: man can live as an introvert – then man lives in his being. Then one lives rooted in one's own self and a great richness arises because one is nourished.



It is from our inner core that we are joined to God, and if we live from our inner core we allow God to live through us. I am not against the world. Be in the world but don't be of it, be in the world but remain above it, be in the world but remain transcendental to it. Remain a witness - that is the path to reaching the core.

All that is needed is a simple process: sit inside yourself and watch. Let the mind do all its old tricks, simply watch it non-judgmentally - neither labeling anything good nor bad, neither choosing nor rejecting, utterly indifferent, cool. Slowly, slowly, you learn the trick by remaining cool and indifferent.

First the mind tries its old tricks and then, by and by, it feels embarrassed because you are not getting affected in any way, this way or that. Even if you become affected against it, then too the mind is perfectly at ease. It has disturbed you. So don't be against it, don't fight with it, and don't fall a victim to its tricks; remain aloof.

Many times you get involved. The moment you remember, pull yourself out, again compose yourself, again watch. A thought arises; see it. It comes in front of you; see it. Then it passes by; see it. Coming, staying, going, just watch it. Take note of it, with no notion of whether it is good or bad, whether it should be or should not be - with no moral attitude, just a scientific, cool observation.

After a while, the mind stops chattering. One day, suddenly it is not there, and that day a silence descends upon you, a silence as you have never known before.

That silence, that infinite silence overwhelms you from all sides. Then it never leaves you. It remains with you, it becomes your very soul. It is liberating.

And the path is, taking a jump from mind to no-mind. Mind can make you knowledgeable but never wise. No-mind will not make you knowledgeable, but it can make you wise. It is wisdom that brings freedom and it is wisdom that brings God to you. It is wisdom that brings immortality to you. Knowledge is a waste. Avoid knowledge and enter into the world of wisdom. The way is meditation; the way from mind to no-mind is meditation.

This is not a process of fighting; it is not forcing. It is a happening.

Let this be your foundation: be friendly with Existence, outside; inside, be friendly with everybody, including yourself, which is the hardest. People don't love themselves. That is the last thing they ever do. It is easy to love the enemy; it is difficult to love yourself. You know yourself too well - how can you love yourself? But the person who can love himself can love all. Love thyself, and you are bound to love your enemies and everybody else. If you can love yourself you have fulfilled the basic condition of love, and out of that love arises peace. And peace is the door from which you start having your messages from God.

Beauty is an expression of God, in whatsoever form it appears. So this is the way that you have to seek and search for God. Start looking at Existence with this



vision, with these eyes, and you will be surprised because you will see things you had never seen before. You have been passing the same things everyday: the same trees, the same birds and the same people. But once you have this vision, that all is divine, you look at things in a new light. Then the world is no more a puzzle, no more a problem, no more a question - not a question to be solved but a mystery to be lived.

The moment you are empty of yourself, you are full of God. Remember that both cannot exist together. Remember again and again: both cannot exist together; it is either you or God. And the foolish person chooses himself. Choose God: disappear as an ego. Forget yourself as a separate entity from Existence, and in that disappearance, you are reborn.

It is a paradoxical state: the moment you are empty of yourself, you become full, and full for the first time, full and overflowing, inexhaustibly full. And the ego is a shadow; it has no substance. It is a dream, not a reality. Drop the shadow so that you can attain the substance. Drop the false so that the real can be attained.

All that I teach here is how to be empty of yourself so that you can be full of God. That fullness is fulfilment.

No One Knows Me

*7.24 Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the supreme personality of Godhead, the **Bhagavan**, who was impersonal before, have become a human being now.*

They do not know that I am imperishable and supreme, even when I assume the body.

7.25 I am never revealed to the foolish and unintelligent, covered as I am by My divine power [yoga-maya];



The ignorant do not know Me, unborn and eternal.

7.26 O Arjuna, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I know all that has happened, all that is happening, and all that is to happen.

I also know all living entities; but no one knows Me.

7.27 O scion of Bharata [Arjuna], O conqueror of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, overcome by the dualities of attachment and aversion.

Unintelligent men, who do not know my supreme, illimitable and immortal form, assume my illimitable form as manifested.

Here is another important verse. When He says earlier - My devotees achieve Me, attain Me - naturally Arjuna would have had the doubt: are you one more demigod? Naturally Arjuna would have had this obvious doubt.

So Krishna gives the explanation: 'Unintelligent men, who are not mature, think I am just this form. Only an intelligent man understands that I am immortal. Even when I assume this form, I am that same Consciousness. I have not become an ordinary human being by assuming a human form.' He declares His divinity openly. He declares, 'I am the same even when I assume a human form. Don't think I am one more demigod. '

He says, 'I am unborn, immortal, illimitable, even when I assume this form. Even when I assume this form,

I am that same ultimate Divine. I am not an ordinary man.' It's an important statement. This statement is made to declare His enlightenment and to express clearly and explicitly, 'I am enlightened. I am the embodiment of ultimate Consciousness.' The problem is that the person who is receiving this is not mature enough to recognize it as such.

People ask me again and again, 'Why is Krishna repeatedly declaring that He is enlightened?' That's a big problem. If you talk about something again and again, people tend to think that something is wrong with that.

There is a proverb in Tamil: if you wear a new ring, you always gesture with that hand because you continuously show it off. If you wear a new earring, what will you do? You shake your head to show it off.

If you speak about something again and again, there's something wrong with that thing. If you are clear about it, why should you speak about it again and again? This is how a spiritually immature person will misunderstand what is said.

Arjuna is approaching Krishna out of fear and greed. When Gita started, Arjuna approached Krishna out of fear and depression, and also out of greed, with the 'what is beneficial for me?' attitude. He asked Krishna what would give maximum benefit, which is an expression of the attitude of greed.

Next he experiences fear. He is afraid of what will



happen in the war. Fear and greed - that is the way he approaches Krishna. So initially even Arjuna sees Krishna as a demigod. At the initial level Arjuna's approach is also that of a demigod. That is the reason why Krishna now declares His glory, or His true form.

He says: 'All types of people come to Me. I fulfil them at different levels, to encourage their faith and to help them grow. But only intelligent people understand that, even if I assume this body, I am the ultimate; I am enlightened. Unintelligent people think by seeing my body, seeing my form, that I am not the Divine. So please be very clear, that I am THAT.' He makes a clear statement again and again, so that Arjuna understands.

We need to understand two important issues here. First, the formless energy of Krishna defines His supremacy, His divinity, His Krishna Consciousness. Second, in whatever form that formless is expressed, it is divine. It is the awareness of that divinity in Him that makes Krishna divine, the Supreme Master. If that awareness happens in you, you will be in Krishna Consciousness, immersed in Him; and you will be divine too. The intelligence Krishna talks about is the intelligent awareness of our own divinity, not merely that of Krishna. They are both one and the same. It is only when we are aware of our divinity that we appreciate the Divine.

I say to my disciples, 'Till you become enlightened, you will have no clear awareness of who I am. Till then you try to reach me out of fear or greed, however slight

it may be. It is only when you are enlightened and are in the same awareness as me, when it is no longer necessary for you to fear me or desire through me, that you open up to me in sheer gratitude.'

That is the intelligence that Krishna speaks about. When that intelligence exhibits itself, when that awareness surfaces, then and only then true recognition of the Divine happens. That true recognition happens when you recognize the Divine within you.

Krishna asks: How can you recognize divinity when you are covered in ignorance? How can you recognize Me when you are not aware?

Out of the thousands who come to me, tens of thousands, the vast majority seeks favors of one kind or another. They come for the healing of the body and mind, they may come for repairing relationships, and they come for material benefits. Even those who do not look for material benefits may aspire to that intangible peace and bliss.

It is the rare person who comes without asking anything. It is not even seeking a benefit, tangible or intangible, that leads such people. It is an awareness of what they need to be and where they need to be. They are attracted like iron filings to a magnet. It is a call from their being which leads them to me.

In Mahabharata, the Pandava princes could recognize the true reality of Krishna. No one needed to coach them.



On the other hand, their cousins the Kaurava for the most part denied Krishna. They rejected and ridiculed Him. Duryodhana, who was offered the first choice by Krishna to choose either Him unarmed or His Yadava army, chose the utilitarian army. That was all Duryodhana could see. That was his level of awareness, steeped as he was in ignorance.

Arjuna jumped at Krishna's offer. All Arjuna wanted was Krishna, His presence, not His army, not His divine powers, nothing at all.

It is a choice all of us need to make, whether we wish to be Duryodhana or Arjuna. It is not a difficult choice, as it will be determined by our being and our awareness. It will not be a choice at all. It will be a happening.

No one knows Me, says the Master. How true!

Don't take me for granted, says Krishna. Do not put me in a frame for I shall not stay there, He says.

Can you know Nature? Can you predict Nature? Each time you think you can, Nature does things differently. Then you say Nature is cruel, and ask why Nature is so cruel. Nature is Nature, not cruel, not kind, it just is.

So is Krishna. His compassion is not pity as we imagine. The compassion of the Master is beyond our frames of time and space. So we cannot fathom what that means. When a tsunami kills a thousand people, we weep. When we pray and then win a lottery, we make a donation to the temple, terribly pleased. Divine

compassion is not related to these. It is the truth that is beyond time and space.

My close disciples know that whatever I say is the truth and that what I say will happen. They don't question me, not because they are afraid. What is there to be afraid of? What control can I have over them? They are free to leave any time they want. In fact, I tell them the only thing that causes me to pause is when a disciple leaves me, because then I have lost the chance to help him. So actually, they know enough to blackmail me if they wish to!

But they don't. Instead they do not question me when I am seemingly irrational, angry, inconsistent or whatever. They know that I am Nature and that I flow. I am not in control of what I do, the Divine is. They recognize that and they follow.

They know that when I tell them something, it is not a fact but a truth: truth that is not constrained by time and space.

One of them recently told me this.

Over two years ago when my disciples went with me on the Himalayan trip to the *char dham* pilgrimage centers, I had asked them to say to the local religious authorities that I am a *Mahamandaleshwar*. This title is given to the leader of a very large religious organization. It is more than a title; it confers spiritual leadership, like being canonized as a saint. Without



questioning, they announced that *Mahamandaleshwar* had arrived. As a matter of fact, no one questioned them. They accepted the statement and gave me respects when I visited the temples.

Recently in 2007, I was at the *Ardh Kumbh Mela* at Prayag in Northern India. It normally occurs every six years. However this time the river Ganga reversed her direction, which happens once in 144 years. So it was a great event and 90 million people gathered for a dip in the holy river. I went with a large group of disciples.

In every *Kumbh Mela*, the first right to bathe on the most auspicious day is given to the *naga* sect, who are a special sect, and among them the *Nirvani_Akhada*, the naked monks. During part of my wandering days before my self-realization, I had been with a group of these monks and they had accepted me as their own. Now at the *Kumbh Mela* they asked me, in fact almost forced me, to become the *Mahamandaleshwar* of their sect. So, a few days before the day of the holy dip, I was made the head of their sect, and I was given the first right to enter the Ganga on that special day.

I did not make a connection between what I said two years earlier and what happened at that *Kumbh Mela*. It had nothing to do with what I said. It has to do with what Existence wanted. Because what I say is what Existence directs, there can never be a contradiction.

Truth is unpredictable because it is not bound by time and space as we know it. Truth cannot be known unless we are in truth ourselves. We cannot know Krishna unless we are in Krishna Consciousness.

Krishna Consciousness is not about going around chanting *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna*. Such chanting, unless done with awareness, is a farce; actually it is a tragedy. True Krishna Consciousness needs no words. In fact, it has no words because the experience is beyond expression. One who experiences it does not express it.

Fear and greed are what drive us, says Krishna. That is our delusion. That is the delusion that leads us away from Him.

Attachment and aversion, *raga* and *dvesha*, form the duality, the polarity of human life. Even at the fundamental cellular level, biologists have shown that this tendency is exhibited. If you place a single cell in a Petri dish and place a drop of nutrient, it is attracted to it and moves towards it. If you place a drop of toxin, it moves away. If on either side, you place drops of nutrient and toxin, it remains immobile.

At the cellular level, attraction aids in growth and aversion in survival. A cell can either grow or protect itself. At the multi-cellular level with higher intelligence, human beings act the same way as the primary cell. They get attached to what they think is good for them and flee what they think is not good.

Unfortunately, what works well at the cellular level does not work so well at the human level simply because



humans have greater intelligence. Cells obey Nature and are directed by Nature to recognize instinctively what is good and what is bad. They also automatically accept the consequence.

Humans are different. They bypass signals from their body, refuse to accept what Nature tries to tell them and indulge in or avoid activities or objects based on their logic. Logic overriding Nature is a sure recipe for disaster. That is why we are unhappy all the time.

Shedding attachment and aversion is the first step to awareness. Attachment and aversion are born out of our past; based on experiences and memories, what we call *samskara* in Sanskrit. Based on these *samskara*, we try to define our future. The problem is that these *samskara* operate at an unconscious level and drive us from unawareness to unawareness.

Therefore, we end up acting instinctively, but unlike our cellular brethren, without listening to Nature.

Human beings are given intelligence so that they can rise above instinct and logic and operate out of intuition. This intuition is born from awareness. It comes through meditation. With awareness, we understand that there is truly nothing that we can be attached to, since everything is impermanent. As I said earlier, every moment of our life is a psychodrama.

The same is true of aversion. It arises from insecurity and fears. What is there to be afraid of in life? Each occasion we are afraid, we die. If we shed our fear of death, we lose all fears.

When we move into awareness, through meditation, we settle within our boundaries of body-mind and we move into the present moment. When we are in the present moment there is no duality of like and dislike, attachment and aversion. We respond to each event as it unfolds with clarity, with intuitive intelligence and we are always right.

Q: When I see your disciples, those who live in the ashram and those who follow you while living outside, I see a calmness that I envy. I hope I too can reach there.

Of course, you will. All you need is the decision. They say a disciple meets the Master when the disciple is ready. That is true, because there are so many Masters waiting; only the disciples are few!

Being in an *ashram* is different from being in a monastery. A monastery is about discipline. It is about rules and regulations. An *ashram* is about freedom. It is a space where you explore your personal freedom.

Whether at Bidadi or LA, two locations where we have our major *ashram* establishments, we have guidelines; we have no rules. These guidelines assist in the control of your mind and senses, presumably the purpose that you came to this place for. Otherwise why would you come?

If you wish to enjoy sensory pleasures, you can go to many other places. You would be foolish to come to my *ashram*, or any *ashram*, if that is what you wish to do -



and by mistake if you land here, then you will of course be miserable.

The starting point is a desire to know more about who you really are. You are not satisfied with whatever you are, whatever you have achieved. You start looking for what you think is your purpose in life. In truth, there is no purpose to your life. You are here to experience and enjoy what you experience, that is all. Instead, you look for meanings where there are none.

This search for meaning, this seeking for purpose, leads you to a Master. You may be initially attracted to him intellectually. Later, you may be attracted to him emotionally. You start believing what he says. But as long as you are a day-tripper or weekend visitor, this relationship stops at the gates of the *ashram* or wherever you meet him. Your normal worldly burdens overwhelm you the moment you are outside his sphere of influence. Out of sight is out of mind.

The *ashram* helps you link with people of similar needs and beliefs, and takes you to a deeper understanding of what the Master and the Master's teachings are about. Many of our followers who cannot move into an *ashram* environment, get together at least once a week in what is termed a *satsang*. A *satsang* means a gathering of people in search of truth. The truth of the experience of all Masters is the same; their expressions may be different.

At the level of the *satsang*, at least once a week, they gather with people of similar intention and belief so that their search gets intensified. At the level of the *ashram*,

you make it more permanent. If you are so inclined, the process can be faster.

If your search is serious, you become sincere in what you do. You will not be able to be idle in the *ashram*. Many sleep only a few hours every night. All you need is three to four hours of sleep every night to rejuvenate yourself. The problem is that you do not sleep; you toss and turn. When you learn to flow with your energy and the energy around you, you fall into deep sleep immediately when you lie down.

My *ashrams* are my womb; they are my energy centers. When you are in them, you are rejuvenated, refreshed and alive. You are awake in all senses of the term. The calmness that you perceive in the *ashramites* is the non-judgmental wakefulness that they live in



No Sin, No Virtue

7.28 Persons who have acted virtuously, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of reality and unreality,

Engage themselves in My worship with firm resolve.

7.29 Persons who are striving for liberation from the cycle of birth, old age and death, take refuge in Me.

They are actually Brahman because they comprehend everything about activities that transcend these.



7.30 Those who know Me as the Supreme Lord, as the governing principle of the material manifestation, who know Me as the one underlying all the demigods and as the one sustaining all sacrifices,

Can, with steadfast mind, understand and know Me, even at the time of death.

Krishna talks here about *papa* and *punya*, sinful and meritorious acts.

The concept of sin and merit itself is a delusion, one of duality. At the level of Krishna Consciousness there is no *papa* or *punya*, no sin and no act of merit. All are the same.

Your immediate question is, 'Can I do anything I want? Can I kill, maim, annihilate, and be a Hitler?'

When you reach Krishna Consciousness you will not be a Hitler. It is impossible. At the level where you are now, it is necessary to follow some regulations because you still operate in duality. You operate from attachment and aversion. You act out of fear and greed.

Unfortunately, instead of these statements being guidelines for self-awareness as they were intended to be, they have become tools to control us by institutions, whether religious, political or societal.

Thousands of years ago, great Masters like Patanjali outlined prescriptions for Self-realization. In his *ashtanga yoga*, Patanjali established practices of *yama* and *niyama*.



These are internal and external regulations for your guidance, not for others to manipulate you with. These are milestones to guide your way. Once you reach the destination, you do not need milestones anymore; you do not need regulations either.

Every year, when I take my disciples to the Himalaya mountains on a pilgrimage, the first stop is Rishikesh, where the river Ganga is about to enter the plains. Here I make them take the *sannyas* vows prescribed in *yama*. It is for their protection and guidance. It is not to instil notions of sin and virtue.

These five vows are *satya*, *ahimsa*, *asteya*, *aparigraha* and *brahmacharya*. *Satya* is truth in thoughts, word and action; *ahimsa* is not harming anyone in thought, word and action; *asteya* is not coveting, not stealing what belongs to another; *aparigraha* is living with minimal needs; *brahmacharya* is living without fantasies. They take these vows at the end of a dip in Ganga and participate in a *vraja homa*, a fire ritual of purification; for the next two weeks they wear *kavi*, the saffron cloth that I give them.

These vows are for self-discipline and they lead to awareness. No one needs to control us. As long as we need to look over our shoulder to see whether Big Brother is watching, whatever we do is fake; it is sheer hypocrisy.

Krishna addresses mortal beings here, in the form of Arjuna. So He talks about doing virtuous acts and avoiding sinful acts. What follows is more important. He says to go beyond duality, the duality of sin and virtue.

This is only possible when we become aware. It is only when we become aware that we can reach Him.

In *Bhaja Govindam*, Shankara says hauntingly,

*punarapi jananam punarapi maranam
punarapi janani jathare shayanam
iha samsare bahu dustaare
kripaya paare paahi muraare*

Birth and death again and again; lying in a mother's womb again and again. This [ocean of] repeated birth and death is so difficult to cross. Please save me, O Krishna!

The greatest philosopher that Hinduism has known, prays to the greatest Master that the universe has known, 'Save me from this endless cycle of *samsara*, the cycle of birth and death.'

To know that one needs to be saved from this cycle needs great wisdom. To seek the feet of the Master who can lead you to that liberation needs wisdom and awareness.

You can be born again and again and still think that you are being born for the first time, and that this is the only life that you have. This knowledge requires no wisdom. In fact, it requires ignorance to believe this. Much of the Western world operates on this premise. So you focus on this life and want to extract the maximum juice out of it. You run after wine, women and song, as if there is no tomorrow. You live in a fantasy world. You enact a psychodrama.



Please understand that this is not your only life. This body is not who you are. All this is temporary. What you chase is a dream. One day you will wake up and discover that this life is nothing but a dream. But as long as you are in the dream, you salivate and chase.

You are more than this body and mind; you are above this body-mind. What you are endures after death. What you are returns after death. When you understand this cosmic truth, you are liberated. You do not wish to be part of this psychodrama anymore. You are bored. You ask, 'What for?,' just as Shankara plaintively asks Krishna. 'Again and again, without end, I come and I go, please save me from this useless journey; let me be with You,' Shankara says.

Buddha calls this cycle of birth and death a bondage; the cycle of sorrow. It is sorrow because it is not real. It is not the real you that dies and is reborn. The real you changes bodies as you change clothes. How many times do you want to change clothes?

There is no meaning to the psychodrama that you play, the games that you play. Understand that these have no purpose at all. Shed your attachment and aversion to these activities and become a witness. You then become Brahman, one with the Master, and become Krishna Consciousness.

Krishna ends this chapter with the prescription for how to know and understand Him and reach Him.

Even at the time of death, He says, even if all your life you lived a dissolute life, if at the point of departure

you realize your folly, the futility of the psychodrama that you have enacted, that is enough to redeem you. The mere recognition of that saves you.

His compassion is unlimited. He promises: Knowing me at the time of death, even at the time of death, will lead you to Me.

Please understand, this is not easy, not so easy as it seems. If you have been ruled by greed, greed for power, wealth, women, possessions and all such material objects throughout your life, nothing can change suddenly at the point of death. You will be full of the same fantasies that you were obsessed with throughout your life. Your last thoughts will be on them, that dollar bill, car, club dancer or whoever you fancied till the day before.

A small story:

A recently bereaved widow went to a medium to contact her husband's spirit.

All she wanted to know was to whom he had lent money. She knew that he was a miser. He had died suddenly without leaving a record of what people owed him, and she knew he would suffer wherever he was if she did not do something about the collection.

Sure enough the medium responded, 'Our neighbor owes me a hundred dollars. The guy living opposite our house borrowed five hundred dollars...' The list



was long and went on for a while.

When the medium stopped, the widow asked, 'Is that all?'

'Oh, I forgot. I owe Bill a thousand dollars.'

The widow told the medium, 'You have the wrong spirit this time. For sure that is not my husband.'

We cannot change our nature at the last minute. Gandhi died with the name 'Hey Ram' on his lips when he was assassinated because Lord Rama's name permeated his whole being all his life. It could never have been otherwise.

If we want to die with the thought of the Divine uppermost in our mind, we must cultivate the habit of remembering Him now. We should know Him today. We should understand Him today. Then, and only then, will we know and understand Him at death.

Some may ask, 'What is the need to understand and know Krishna, whether at the point of death or before? If I do the right things in the right manner, why should it make any difference whether I understand and know Krishna?'

Please understand that Krishna is not talking about the physical Krishna, or even about the Cosmic Consciousness that He is. He speaks about our understanding and knowing *ourselves*. Krishna talks about the need for us to understand who we are.

The ultimate Master resides within us, not anywhere else. The external Master, be He Krishna or Nithyananda, is a guide to make us understand, know and accept that Master within us. Yes, it may be possible in rare cases for that wisdom to dawn on us at the point of death, but it is not common. Someone who constantly seeks that truth will continuously search for that Master within, and has a better chance of making that connection, making that discovery earlier.

Krishna in His deep compassion says, 'Even if that happens at the point of death, I shall redeem you.' He does not want us to miss that chance, even if we have not thought about Him all our lives. He does not rule out the possibility, even if we have not been seeking all our lives. He wants us to discover that Master within. Even if we do that at the point of our last breath, that is ok with Him.

So, let us pray to the Ultimate *Parabrahma* Krishna to give us the intelligence and awareness to realize the truth about ourselves, to give us this experience of eternal bliss, *Nithya Ananda*.

Q: Does being wealthy negate self-realization? Most religions preach that we need to give up all that is material before we can become spiritual.

It is not necessary to be poor to become spiritual. One can be wealthy and spiritual but the attachment to wealth



and the expectations of wealth need to be dropped.

In almost all cultures, a god or goddess is portrayed as the symbol of wealth, fortune and prosperity. These cultures believe that wealth is important not only in this realm where we live, but also in the spiritual realm. In Hindu mythology, Vishnu, the Sustainer, and his consort Lakshmi represent wealth and fortune. It is believed that when Shankara sang the praises of the goddess Lakshmi in his *Kanakadhara Stotram*, gold coins fell through the roof of the hut of a poor *brahmana* who had fed him selflessly. Shankara had no need for wealth, yet he had no reservations about making a poor man wealthy.

Wealth and money are energy. Not only you, but many others can also benefit from your wealth. It is not the mere possession of wealth that causes problems, but your attitude to your wealth that matters. As long as you enjoy the wealth that you have and also allow others to benefit, you do a great spiritual service. You are of far greater value to the universe than someone who is poor.

However, when greed drives us into acquisition and more acquisition without the desire to enjoy that wealth, wealth becomes an addiction. Wealth consumes us, rather than our consuming wealth. We are no longer in control.

There have been great kings and wealthy men who were spiritually advanced. They did not allow the fantasy of wealth to touch them. They used wealth intelligently, and the very use of wealth without attachment brought them more wealth. That is the way the universe works.

The universe is abundance. Any amount of wealth is possible from the universe. However, the universe does not respond to begging, arising from a mentality of emptiness. The universe responds to a call that arises from fulfilment. That is why wealth begets wealth.

Masters and religions have advocated giving up wealth. Please understand that they do not tell you to stay poor. That makes no sense. When you are wealthy, when the wealth does not touch you, you can give up wealth and still be wealthy. Money will come to you and you can give it away. You can live with minimal needs. What you then do is to renounce the pleasures associated with wealth. You renounce fantasies associated with wealth. Only one who is used to wealth can do this and succeed.

For someone who has nothing, to pretend that he is renouncing wealth is foolish. His fantasies remain with him and haunt him, because his basic desires about wealth have not been fulfilled.

Wealth or lack of wealth by itself does not make one spiritual. It is one's attitude to wealth and the renunciation of fantasies about what one does not have that determine spirituality.

Q: Throughout this chapter and other chapters, Krishna talks about reaching Him for salvation. He suggests many methods. But none seem practical. Is He referring to a mere intellectual understanding of what He says or is



there more to it? How does the mere acceptance of the truth that He is Supreme and beyond the demigods liberate me?

This is a brilliant question.

Some years ago I told a group of early disciples that they should only stick around me if they were serious about enlightenment. I told them to leave otherwise. I told them not to block the threshold. Either come in or get out. Some were older and experienced meditators. I said jokingly that it brings me a bad reputation when they say they have been long-time meditators, when nothing has happened to them. People would wonder of what use I am!

Fortunately, Krishna is not in the physical body to suffer the same abuse, when people find that millions read Gita word by word, verse by verse, and yet remain no better in consciousness than when they started.

Many read Gita and claim that they understand what Krishna says. What they mean perhaps is that they understand that language into which the Gita they are reading has been translated. That is all.

A small story.

A businessman placed an advertisement for an executive fluent in French. A girl responded saying she was fluent in writing French, but could not read French. Intrigued, the businessman called her and gave her a test.

He played a French tape for half an hour as she industriously transcribed. He asked her what it was about. She gave him her note pad. He could not understand a word she had written.

Exasperated, he asked her, 'Please read what you have written.'

She said angrily, 'I already told you that I could only write French, I can't read it!'

So you think you understand, but you cannot read.

How can we even intellectually understand that Krishna is Supreme? Forget the demigods, how can we even accept that He is greater than us? We are so full of our identity and ego, that even if a thousand Krishnas were to descend in front of us, we would ask them for their identification cards! We will recognize Krishna only if He comes in front of us in the mold and image of Him that we have stored in our minds!

Krishna must come to us in our image of Him. Then we will accept Him. Then we will accept Him as the Supreme and hang His picture on the wall. If He comes to us in flesh and blood, we would rather see Him dead, hanging on the wall as a picture. Everyday, Krishna comes to us in many forms. He comes to us in the form of every person we meet. We have no idea. We decide whom we will accept and whom we will reject.

We cannot accept Krishna in parts and reject Him in parts. Either we accept Him totally or reject Him. We



have to surrender to Him. We have to surrender our identity to Him. We have to surrender to Him that foolish image that we have in our minds of Him.

When I told my disciples that they should either get enlightened or leave, they chorused, 'Of course we want to get enlightened. That is why we are here. But how? We need your help.'

So I said, 'All you have to do is to surrender to me as your Master. It is that simple.'

They said, 'We have surrendered. We have accepted everything you say. What else do we need to do?'

I explained to them. 'Surrender has three components. The first is intellectual surrender, which is the mental acceptance of what I say. You may have done that partially. Even that I am not sure of. When I say something that pleases you, you accept what I say. The moment I say something that displeases you, you argue.

Ok, even if I assume that you have intellectually surrendered as some of you may have, the next step is total emotional acceptance. It is emotional surrender and your heart must accept me. People often ask me how they can tell if I am their true Master. I say, 'If I am your Master, you can never forget me even for a moment.' Your heart will tell you that I am your Master. You do not have to tie a knot in your handkerchief to remember me.

Even this acceptance is partial. The final surrender is the surrender of the senses.

This is the surrender that happens when the mind is extinguished. This is the state when we drop our identity. We assume the identity of the Master. We see what he sees; we see what he says he sees.

I told them, 'If I tell you that the white wall in front of you is black, and your eyes see a black wall, then and only then have you surrendered to me. Only then have you surrendered your identity.'

Meditation is a technique for surrendering one's identity. Throughout Gita, Krishna suggests to Arjuna techniques or *sutras* that lead to liberation. Combined with understanding at the intellectual level, as a *shastra*, as well as through devotional acceptance of His glories through *stotra*, Gita leads you through the path of surrender into liberation.

Dropping one's identity requires a deep understanding, acceptance and internalization of the merger of Self, World and God. This is what we call the merger of the elements of *Jiva* (Self), *Jagat* (World) and *Ishwara* (Creator). Simply put, we accept our divinity and become one with the Divine. This is what enlightenment is about.

In the various Life Bliss Programs we teach techniques that lead you through this process of dropping your identity. In the first level course, LBP 1 or Ananda Spurana Program, we teach techniques that activate and unblock your energy centers or *chakras*. The sixth *chakra* (the third eye or *ajna chakra*) that lies between your eyebrows is the center that needs to be unblocked to



drop one's ego. Over a two-day program we take you through a journey of energizing the seven *chakras* in your body-mind energy system.

Once you unblock and energize the *ajna chakra* and move on to the final gateway of the crown center, the *sahasrara chakra*, you drop all your discontent and surrender in gratitude to the universe. You accept your inner divinity and have a glimpse of that final integration.

The next level course, LBP 2 or Nithyananda Spurana Program, is a different journey through the energy layers that are part of your body-mind system. At each level you re-experience the emotion-laden memories that have conditioned your life. This reliving relieves you and liberates you. At the end of the program you are reborn in a sense, liberated from the bondage of your emotions and conditioned memories that have imprisoned you.

At the end of these courses, if you are ready to accept me as a Master, I initiate you into a meditation technique that helps you reach your innermost core. This meditation technique, called the *ananda gandha* or 'fragrance of bliss' meditation, helps you constantly discard embedded memories as they surface. This is a meditation technique that you can use any time or all the time, along with any activity you are engaged in. It anchors you in the present moment, and in the awareness of the present moment, no embedded memories, *samskaras*, can form. No *karmic* baggage is acquired and your *vasanas*, the mindset of unfulfilled desires, is extinguished. You are liberated.

The simple truth is that the present moment *is* Krishna Consciousness. When we reach this state of being in the present moment, we reach Him and we are liberated. So it is not the mere intellectual understanding of what we read in the verses, but the internalization of what Krishna says, that can liberate us.

May you reach Krishna Consciousness and realize eternal bliss, *nithyanandam!*

Thus ends the seventh chapter named 'Self Knowledge and Enlightenment' of the *Upanishad* of Bhagavad Gita, the scripture of *yoga* dealing with the science of the Absolute in the form of the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.



Scientific Research on Bhagavad Gita

Several institutions have conducted experiments using scientific and statistically supported techniques to verify the truth behind the Bhagavad Gita. Notable amongst them is the work carried out by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, whose findings are published through Maharishi Ved Vigyan Vishwa Vidyapeetam.

Studies conducted using meditation techniques related to truths expressed in the verses of the Bhagavad Gita have shown that the quality of life is significantly improved through meditation. These studies have found that meditators experience a greater sense of peace resulting in a reduced tendency towards conflict.

Meditators gain greater respect for and appreciation of others. Their own inner fulfilment increases resulting in improved self-respect and self-reliance, leading to Self Actualization.

One's ability to focus along with brain function integration is enhanced. These have resulted in greater comprehension, creativity, faster response time in decision-making and superior psychomotor coordination.

Stress levels have been shown to decrease with enhanced sensory perception and overall health. The tendency towards depression has been clearly shown to decrease.

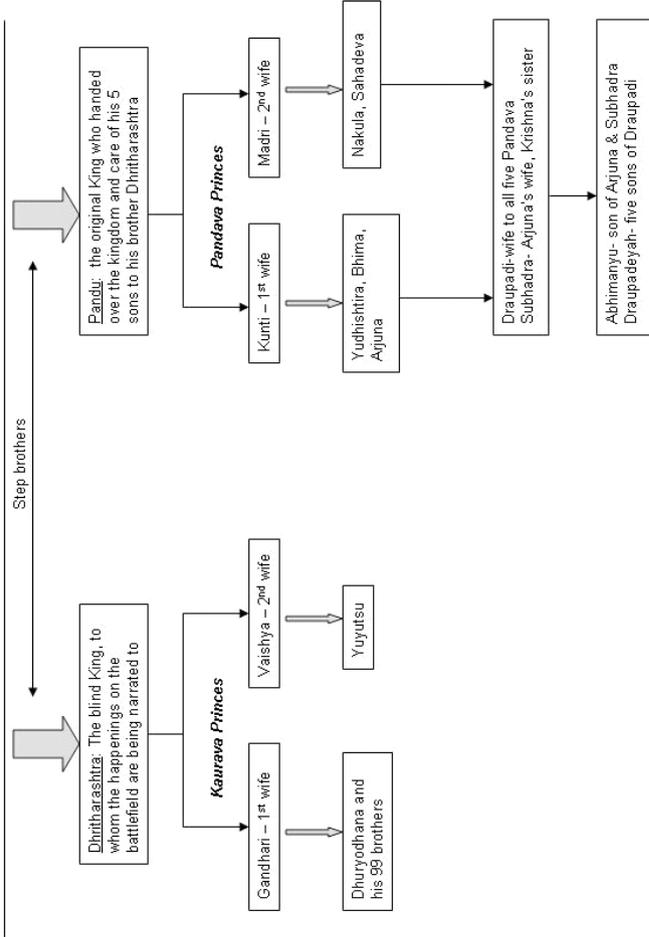
There is enough evidence to show that as a result of meditation, individuals gain a better ethical lifestyle that in turn improves their interaction with others in the community, resulting in less conflict and crime. Group meditation of 7000 people (square root of 1% of world population at the time of the study) was significantly correlated to a reduction in conflict worldwide.

Meditation leads to higher levels of consciousness. Through the research tools of Applied Kinesiology, Dr. David Hawkins (author of the book *Power vs. Force*) and others have shown that human consciousness has risen in the last few decades, crossing a critical milestone for the first time in human history. Dr. Hawkins' research also documents that the Bhagavad Gita is at the very highest level of Truth conveyed to humanity.

We acknowledge with gratitude the work done by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi institutions and Dr. David Hawkins in establishing the truth of this great scripture.



Kuru Family Tree



Glossary of Key Characters in the Bhagavad Gita

Pandava's Side:

Krishna:	God Incarnate; Related to both Kaurava and Pandava; Arjuna's charioteer in the war
Drupada:	A great warrior and father of Draupadi
Drishtadummna:	The son of King Drupada
Shikhandi:	A mighty archer and a transexual person
Virata:	Abhimanyu's father-in-law; King of a neighboring kingdom
Yuyudhana:	Krishna's charioteer and a great warrior
Kashiraj:	King of neighboring kingdom, Kashi
Chekitan:	A great warrior
Kuntibhoj:	Adoptive father of Kunti, the mother of first three Pandava princes
Purujit:	Brother of Kuntibhoj
Shaibya:	Leader of the Shibi tribe
Dhrishtaketu:	King of Chedis
Uttamouja:	A great warrior



Kaurava's Side:

Sanjay:	Charioteer and narrator of events to Dhritharashtra
Bhishma:	Great grandfather of the Kaurava & Pandava; Great warrior
Drona:	A great archer and teacher to both Kaurava and Arjuna
Vikarna:	Third of the Kaurava brothers
Karna:	Pandava's half brother, born to Kunti before her marriage
Ashvatthama:	Drona's son and Achilles heel; Said to always speak the truth
Kripacharya:	Teacher of martial arts to both Kaurava and Pandava
Shalya:	King of neighboring kingdom and brother of Madra, Nakula and Sahadeva's mother
Soumadatti:	King of Bahikas
Dushassana:	One of Kaurava brothers; responsible for insulting Draupadi

Meaning of common Sanskrit Words

For purposes of simplicity, the phonetic of Sanskrit has not been faithfully followed in this work. No accents and other guides have been used.

Aswattama is spelt as also *Asvattama*, *Aswathama*, *Aswatama etc.*, all being accepted.

Correctly pronounced, *Atma* is *Aatma*; however in the English format *a* is used both for *a* and *aa*, *e* for *e* and *ee* and so on. The letter *s* as used here can be pronounced as *s* or *ss* or *sh*; for instance *Siva* is pronounced with a sibilant sound, neither quite *s* nor *sh*. Many words here spelt with 's' can as well be spelt as 'sh'.

[In the glossary, however, letters have been indicated in brackets to facilitate pronunciation as intended in the Sanskrit text.]

This glossary is not meant to be a pronunciation guide, merely an explanatory aid. It is merely a compilation of common words.

A(a)bharana: adornment; *vastra(a)bharana* is adornment with clothes

Abhy(a)asa: exercise; practice

A(a)cha(a)rya: teacher; literally 'one who walks with'

Advaita: concept of non-duality; that individual self and the cosmic SELF are one and the same; as different from the concepts of *dvaita* and *visishta(a)dvaita*, which consider self and SELF to be mutually exclusive



A(a)ha(a)ra: food; also with reference to sensory inputs as in *praty(a)ha(a)ra*

A(a)jna: order, command; the third eye energy centre

A(a)ka(a)sa: space, sky; subtlest form of energy of universe

Amruta, amrit: divine nectar whose consumption leads to immortality

Ana(a)hata: that which is not created; heart energy centre

A(a)nanda: bliss; very often used to refer to joy, happiness etc.

Anjana: collyrium, black pigment used to paint the eye lashes

A(a)pas: water

Aarti: worshipping with a flame, light, as with a lamp lit with oiled wick, or burning camphor

A(a)shirwa(a)d: blessing

Ashta(a)nga yoga: eight fold path to enlightenment prescribed by Patanjali in his Yoga Sutra

A(a)shraya: grounded in reality; *a(a)shraya-dosha*, defect related to reality

A(a)tma, A(a)tman: individual Self; part of the universal Brahman

Beedi: local Indian cigarette

Beeja: seed; *beeja-mantra* refers to the single syllable *mantras* used to invoke certain deities,

e.g., *gam* for Ganesha.

Bhagava(a)n: literally God; often used for an enlightened master

Bha(a)vana: visualization

Bhakti: devotion; *bhakta*, a devotee

Brahma: the Creator; one of the Hindu trinity of supreme Gods, the other two being *Vishnu*, and *Shiva*

Brahmacha(a)ri: literally one who moves with the true reality, *Brahman*, one without fantasies, but usually taken to mean a celibate; *brahmacharya* is the quality or state of being a *brahmachaari*

Brahman: ultimate reality of the Divine, universal intelligent energy

Bra(a)hman: person belonging to the class engaged in *Vedic* studies, priestly class

Buddhi: mind, intelligence; mind is also called by other names, *manas*, *chitta* etc.

Buddhu: a fool

Chakra: literally a 'wheel'; refers to energy centres in the mind-body system

Chakshu: eye, intelligent power behind senses

Chanda(a)la: an untouchable; usually one who skins animals.

Chandana: sandalwood

Chitta: mind; also *manas*, *buddhi*.

Dakshina(a)yana: Sun's southward movement starting 21st June

Darshan: vision; usually referred to seeing divinity



Dharma: righteousness

Dhee: wisdom.

Deeksha: grace bestowed by the Master and the energy transferred by the Master onto disciple at initiation or any other time, may be through a mantra, a touch, a glance or even a thought

Dosha: defect

Dhya(a)na: meditation

Drishti: sight, seeing with mental eye

Gada: weapon; similar to a mace; also *Gada(a)yudha*

Gopi, Gopika: literally a cowherd; usually referred to the devotees, who played with Krishna, and were lost in Him

Gopura, gopuram: temple tower

Grihasta: a householder, a married person; coming from the word *griha*, meaning house

Guna: the three human behavioural characteristics or predispositions; *satva, rajas* and *tamas*

Guru: Master; literally one who leads from *gu* (darkness) to *ru* (light)

Gurukul, Gurukulam: literally 'tradition of *guru*', refers to the ancient education system in which children were handed over to a *guru* at a very young age by parents for upbringing and education

Homa: ritual to *Agni*, the God of fire; metaphorically represents the transfer of energy from the energy of *A(a)ka(a)sa* (space), through *V(a)ayu* (Air), *Agni* (Fire),

A(a)pas (Water), and *Prithvi* (Earth) to humans. Also
y(a)aga, yagna

Ichha: desire

Ida: along with *pingala* and *sushumna* the virtual energy
pathways through which *pranic* energy flows

Ithiha(a)sa: legend, epic, mythological stories; also *pura(a)na*

Jaati: birth; *jaati-dosha*, defect related to birth

Ja(a)grata: wakefulness

Japa: literally 'muttering'; continuous repetition of the
name of divinity

Jeeva samadhi: burial place of an enlightened Master, where
his spirit lives on

Jiva (pronounced as *jeeva*) means living

Jyotisha: Astrology; *jyotishi* is an astrologer

Kaivalya: liberation; same as *moksha, nirva(a)na*

Ka(a)la: time; also *maha(a)ka(a)la*

Kalpa: vast period of time; *Yuga* is a fraction of *Kalpa*

Kalpana: imagination

Karma: spiritual law of cause and effect, driven by *va(a)sana*
and *samska(a)ra*

Kosha: energy layer surrounding body; there are 5 such
layers. These are: *annamaya* or body, *Pra(a)namaya* or
breath, *manomaya* or thoughts, *vigya(a)namaya* or sleep and
a(a)nandamaya or bliss *koshas*



Kriya: action

Kshana: moment in time; refers to time between two thoughts

Kshatriya: caste or *varna* of warriors

Kundalini: energy that resides at the root chakra
'*mula(a)dha(a)ra*' (pronounced as *moolaadha(a)ra*)

Maha(a): great; as in *maharshi*, great sage; *maha(a)va(a)kya*, great scriptural saying

Ma(a)la: a garland, a necklace; *rudra(a)ksha mala* is a garland made of the seeds of the *rudra(a)ksha* tree

Mananam: thinking, meditation

Manas: mind; also *buddhi*, *chitta*

Mandir: temple

Mangala: auspicious; *mangal sutra*, literally auspicious thread, the yellow or gold thread or necklace a married Hindu woman wears

Mantra: a sound, a formula; sometimes a word or a set of words, which because of their inherent sounds, have energizing properties. *Mantras* are used as sacred chants to worship the Divine; *mantra*, *tantra* and *yantra* are approaches in spiritual evolution

Ma(a)ya: that which is not, not reality, illusion; all life is *ma(a)ya* according to *advaita*

Moksha: liberation; same as *nirva(a)na*, *sama(a)dhi*, *turiya* etc.

Mula(a)dha(a)ra: the first energy centre, *moola* is root; *a(a)dhara* is foundation, here existence

Nadi: river

Naadi: nerve; also an energy pathway that is not physical

Na(a)ga: a snake; a *na(a)ga-sa(a)dhu* is an ascetic belonging to a group that wears no clothes

Namaska(a)r: traditional greeting with raised hands, with palms closed

Na(a)nta: without end

Na(a)ri: woman

Nidhidhy(a)asan: what is expressed

Nimitta: reason; *nimitta-dosha*, defect based on reason

Nirva(a)na: liberation; same as *moksha*, *sama(a)dhi*

Niyama: the second of eight paths of Patanjali's *Ashta(a)nga Yoga*; refers to a number of day-to-day rules of observance for a spiritual path

Pa(a)pa: sin

Phala: fruit; *phalasruti* refers to result of worship

Paramahamsa: literally the 'supreme swan'; refers to an enlightened being

Parikrama: the ritual of going around a holy location, such as a hill or water spot

Parivra(a)jaka: wandering by an ascetic monk

Pingala: please see *Ida*.

Pra(a)na: life energy; also refers to breath;

pra(a)na(a)ya(a)ma is control of breath

Pratya(a)hara: literally 'staying away from food'; in this



case refers to control of all senses as part of the eight fold *ashta(a)nga yoga*

Prithvi: earth energy

Purohit: priest

Puja (pronounced as *pooja*): normally any worship, but often referred to a ritualistic worship

Punya: merit, beneficence

Pura(a)na: epics and mythological stories such as Maha(a)bha(a)rata, Ra(a)ma(a)yana etc.

Purna (pronounced *poorna*): literally 'complete'; refers in the *advaita* context to reality

Rajas, rajasic: the mid characteristic of the three human *guna* or behaviour mode, referring to aggressive action

Putra: son; *putri*: daughter

Rakta: blood

Ra(a)tri: night

Rishi: a sage

Sa(a)dhana: practice, usually a spiritual practice

Sa(a)dhu: literally a 'good person'; refers to an ascetic; same as *sanya(a)si*

Sahasrana(a)ma: thousand names of God; available for many Gods and Goddesses, which devotees recite

Sahasrara: lotus with thousand petals; the crown energy centre

Sakti: energy; intelligent energy; *Para(a)sakti* refers to universal energy, divinity; considered feminine; masculine aspect of *Para(a)sakti* is *purusha*

Sama(a)dhi: state of no-mind, no-thoughts; literally, becoming one's original state; liberated, enlightened state. Three levels of *samadhi* are referred to as *sahaja*, which is transient, *savikalpa*, in which the person is no longer capable of normal activities, and *nirvikalpa*, where the liberated person performs activities as before.

Samsaya: doubt

Samska(a)ra: embedded memories of unfulfilled desires stored in the subconscious that drive one into decisions, into *karmic* action

Samyama: complete concentration

Sankalpa: decision

Sanya(a)s: giving up worldly life; *sanya(a)si* or *sanya(a)sin*, a monk, an ascetic

sanya(a)sini, refers to a female monk

Sa(a)stra: sacred texts

Satva, *sa(a)tvic*: the highest *guna* of spiritual calmness

Siddhi: extraordinary powers attained through spiritual practice

Sishya: disciple

Simha: lion; *Simha-Swapna*: nightmare

Shiva: rejuvenator in the trinity; often spelt as *Shiva*. *Shiva* also means 'causeless auspiciousness'; in this sense,



Shivara(a)tri, the day when Shiva is worshipped is that moment when the power of this causeless auspiciousness is intense

Smarana: remembrance; constantly remembering the divine

Smruti: literally 'that which is remembered'; refers to later day Hindu works which are rules, regulations, laws and epics, such as Manu's works, *Puranas* etc.

Straddha: trust, faith, belief, confidence

Sravan: hearing

Srishti: creation, which is created

Sruti: literally 'that which is heard'; refers to the ancient scriptures of *Veda*, *Upanishad* and

Bhagavad Gita: considered to be words of God

Stotra: devotional verses, to be recited or sung

Sudra: caste or *varna* of manual labourers

Sutra: literally 'thread'; refers to epigrams, short verses which impart spiritual techniques

Sunya: literally zero; however, Buddha uses this word to mean reality

Sushumna: Please see 'ida'

Swa(a)dishtha(a)na: where Self is established; the groin or spleen energy centre

Swapna: dream

Swatantra: free

Tamas, taamasic: the lowest *guna* of laziness or inaction

Tantra: esoteric Hindu techniques used in spiritual evolution

Tapas: severe spiritual endeavour, penance

Thatagata: Buddhahood, state of being such...a pali word

Tirta: water; *tirtam* is a holy river and a pilgrimage centre

Trika(a)la: all three time zones, past, present and future;
trika(a)lajna(a)ni is one who can

see all three at the same time; an enlightened being is beyond time and space

Turiya (pronounced *tureeya*): state of *samadhi*, no-mind

Upanishad: literally 'sitting below alongside' referring to a disciple learning from the master;

refers to the ancient Hindu scriptures which along with the *Veda*, form *sruti*

Uttara(a)yana: Sun's northward movement

Vaisya: caste or *varna* of tradesmen

Va(a)naprastha: the third stage in one's life, (the first stage being that of a student, and the second that of householder) when a householder, man or woman, gives up worldly activities and focuses on spiritual goals

Varna: literally colour; refers to the caste grouping in the traditional Hindu social system; originally based on aptitude, and later corrupted to privilege of birth

Va(a)sana: the subtle essence of memories and desires,



samska(a)ra, that get carried forward from birth to birth

Vastra: clothes

Vastra(a)harana: removal of clothes, often used to refer to Draupadi's predicament in the

Maha(a)bha(a)rata, when she was unsuccessfully disrobed by the Kaurava prince

Va(a)yu: air

Veda: literally knowledge; refers to ancient Hindu scriptures, believed to have been received by enlightened *rishi* at the being level; also called *sruti*, along with *Upanishad*

Vibhuti (*pronounced vibhooti*): sacred ash worn by many Hindus on forehead; said to remind themselves of the transient nature of life; of glories too

Vidhi: literally law, natural law; interpreted as fate or destiny

Vidya: knowledge, education

Visha(a)da: depression, dilemma etc.

Vishnu: preserver in the trinity; His incarnations include Krishna, Rama etc. in ten incarnations; also means 'all encompassing'

Vishwarupa (*pronounced vishwaroop*): universal form

Yama: discipline as well as death; One of the eight fold paths prescribed in Patanjali's

Ash(a)nga Yoga; refers to spiritual regulations of *satya*

(truth), *ahimsa* (nonviolence), *aparigraha* (living simply); *asteya* (not coveting other's properties) and brahmacharya (giving up fantasies); *yama* is also the name of the Hindu God of justice and death

Yantra: literally 'tool'; usually a mystical and powerful graphic diagram, such as the *Sri Chakra*, inscribed on a copper plate, and sanctified in a ritual blessed by a divine presence or an enlightened Master

Yoga: literally union, union of the individual self and the divine SELF; often taken to mean

Hatha yoga, which is one of the components of *yogasana*, relating to specific body postures

Yuga: a long period of time as defined in Hindu scriptures; there are four *yugas*: *satya*, *treta*, *dwa(a)para* and *kali*, the present being *kali yuga*



Invocation Verses

ॐ पार्थाय प्रतिबोधितां भगवता नारायणेन स्वयं
व्यासेन ग्रथितां पुराणमुनिना मध्ये महाभारतं
अद्वैतामृतवर्षिणीं भगवतीं अष्टादशाध्यायिनीं
अम्ब त्वामनुसन्दधामि भगवद्गीते भवद्वेषिणीं

*Om paarthaaya pratibodhitaam bhagavataa naaraayanena svayam
Vyaasena grathitaam puraanamuninaa madhye mahaabhaaratam
Advaitaamrutavarshineem Bhagavateem ashtaadashaadhyayineem
Amba tvaamanusandadhaami bhagavadgeete bhavadveshineem*

OM, I meditate upon you, Bhagavad Gita the affectionate Mother, the Divine Mother showering the nectar of non duality and destroying rebirth, (who was) incorporated into the Mahaabhaaratam of eighteen chapters by sage Vyasa, the author of the Puraanaas, and imparted to Arjuna by Lord Narayana, Himself.

वसुदेवसुतं देवं कम्पचाणूरमर्दनम्
देवकीपरमानन्दं कृष्णं वन्दे जगद्गुरुं

*Vasudeva Sutam Devam Kamsa Chaanura
Mardanam
Devakee Paramaanandam Krishnam Vande
Jagadgurum*

I salute you Lord Krishna, Teacher to the world, son of Vasudeva and Supreme bliss of Devaki, Destroyer of Kamsa and Chaanura.



Verses Of Gita Chapter 7

श्री भगवानुवाच
मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः।
असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥७.१॥

Sri Bhagavan uvaca:

*mayyasakta manah partha yogam yunjanmadasrayah
asamsayam samagram mam yatha jnasyasi tacchrnu 7.1*

sri bhagavan uvaca: Krishna said; *mayi:* in Me; *asakta-*
manah: mind attached; *partha:* Arjuna (Son of Prtha);
yogam: union; *yunjan:* so practicing; *mat-asrayah:* in My
shelter; *asamsayam:* without doubt; *samagram:* completely;
mam: to Me; *yatha:* how, in what manner; *jnasyasi:* you can
know; *tat:* that; *srnu:* hear

7.1 Krishna says,

***Arjuna, Listen to Me, you can know Me completely and
without doubt by practicing yoga in true consciousness
of Me, With your mind attached to Me.***

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः।
यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥७.२॥



*jnanam te 'ham sa-vijnanam idam vaksyamy asesatah
yaj jnatva neha bhuyo 'nyaj jnatavyam avasisyate 7.2*

jnanam: phenomenal knowledge; *te*: unto you; *aham*: I;
sa: with;

vijnanam: absolute knowledge; *idam*: this; *vaksyami*: shall
explain;

asesatah: in full; *yat*: which; *jnatva*: knowing; *na*: not; *iha*:
in this

world; *bhuyah*: further; *anyat*: anything more; *jnatavyam*:
knowable;

avasisyate: remains to be known

**7.2 Let Me explain to you in detail this phenomenal and
absolute knowledge along with its realization; by
knowing which, there shall remain nothing further to be
known.**

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः॥७.३॥

*manusyanam sahasresu kascidyatati siddhaye
Yatatamapi siddhanam kascinmam vetti tattvatah 7.3*

manusyanam: of men; *sahasresu*: out of many thousands;
kascit: hardly one; *yatati*: endeavors; *siddhaye*: for perfection
of self-realization; *yatatam*: of those so endeavoring; *api*:
indeed; *siddhanam*: of those who have achieved perfection;
kascit: hardly one; *mam*: Me; *vetti*: does know; *tattvatah*: in
truth

7.3 Out of many thousands of men, hardly one endeavors or strives to achieve perfection of self-realization;

Of those so endeavoring, hardly one achieves the perfection of self-realization and of those, hardly one knows Me in truth or reaches that state of oneness with Me.

भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥७.४॥

*bhumir apo analo vayuh kham mano buddhir eva ca
ahankara itiyam me bhinna prakrtir astadha 7.4*

bhumih: earth; apah: water; analah: fire; vayuh: air; kham: ether;

manah: mind; buddhih: intelligence; eva: certainly; ca: and; ahankarah: ego; iti: thus; iyam: all these; me: My; bhinna: separated, various; prakrtih: external energies; astadha: total eight

7.4 Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego

All together these eight constitute My separated external energies.



अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम्।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥७.५॥

*apareyam itas to anyam prakrtim viddhi me param
jiva-bhutam maha-baho yayedam dharyate jagat 7.5*

*apara: inferior; iyam: this; itah: besides this; tu: but;
anyam: another; prakrtim: energy; viddhi: understand; me:
my; param: superior; jiva-bhutam: the living entities; maha-
baho: O mighty armed one; yaya: by whom; idam: this;
dharyate: being utilized or exploited; jagat: the material
world*

7.5 Besides these external energies, which are inferior in nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine.

This comprises all the embodied souls of all the living entities by which this material world is being utilized or exploited.

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥७.६॥

*etadyonini bhutani sarvanity upadharaya
aham krtsnasya jagatah prabhavah pralayas tatha 7.6*

etat: these two natures; *yonini*: source of birth; *bhutani*: everything

created; *sarvani*: all; *iti*: thus; *upadharaya*: know; *aham*: I; *krtsnasya*: all-inclusive; *jagatah*: of the world; *prabhavaah*: source of manifestation; *pralayah*: annihilation; *tatha*: as well as

7.6 Know for certain that everything living is manifested by these two energies of Mine.

I am the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of them.

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥७.७॥

*mattah parataram nanyat kincid asti dhananjaya
mayi sarvam idam protam sutre mani-gana iva 7.7*

mattah: beyond Myself; *para-taram*: superior; *na*: not; *anyat kincit*:

anything else; *asti*: there is; *Dhananjaya*: O conqueror of wealth; *mayi*: in Me; *sarvam*: all that be; *idam*: which we see; *protam*: strung; *sutre*: on a thread; *mani-ganah*: pearls; *iva*: likened

7.7 O conqueror of wealth [Arjuna], there is no truth superior to Me.



Everything hangs upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.

रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः।
प्रणवः सर्ववेदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु॥७.८॥

*raso aham apsu kaunteya prabhasmi sisi-suryayoh
pranavah sarva-vedesu sabdah khe paurusam nrsu 7.8*
*rasah: taste; aham: I; apsu: in water; kaunteya: O son of
Kunti; prabha asmi: I am the light; sisi-suryayoh: in the sun
and the moon; pranavah: the letters a-u-m; sarva: in all;
vedesu: in the Vedas; sabdah: sound vibration; khe: in the
ether; paurusam: virility, manliness; nrsu: in man*

***7.8 O son of Kunti [Arjuna], I am the taste of water, the
radiance of the sun and the moon, the sacred syllable
Om in the Vedic mantras.***

I am the sound in ether and ability in man.

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ।
जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु॥७.९॥

*punyo gandhah prthiviyam ca tejas casmi vibhavasau
jivanam sarva-bhutesu tapas casmi tapasvisu 7.9*

punyah: original; *gandhah*: fragrance; *prthivyam*: in the earth; *ca*:

also; *tejah*: temperature; *ca*: also; *asmi*: I am; *vibhavasau*: in the

fire; *jivanam*: life; *sarva*: all; *bhutesu*: living entities; *tapah*: penance; *ca*: also; *asmi*: I am; *tapasvisu*: in those who practice penance.

7.9 I am the original fragrance of the earth, and I am the heat in fire.

I am the life of all living beings, and I am the penances of all ascetics.

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।
बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥७.१०॥

*bijam mam sarva-bhutanam viddhi partha sanatanam
buddhir buddhimatam asmi tejas tejasvinam aham 7.10*

bijam: the seed; *mam*: Me; *sarva-bhutanam*: of all living entities; *viddhi*: try to understand; *partha*: O son of Prtha; *sanatanam*: original, eternal; *buddhih*: intelligence; *buddhi-matam*: of the intelligent; *asmi*: I am; *tejah*: prowess; *tejasvinam*: of the powerful; *aham*: I am



7.10 O son of Pritha, I am the eternal source of all creatures, the intelligence of the intelligent, and the brilliance of all those who are brilliant.

बालं बलवतामस्मि कामरागविवर्जितम् ।
धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥७.११॥

*balam balavatam caham kama-raga-vivarjitam
dharmaviruddho bhutesu kamo asmi bharatarsabha 7.11*
balam: strength; bala-vatam: of the strong; ca: and; aham: I am; kama: procreative energy; raga: attachment; vivarjitam: devoid of; dharma-aviruddhah: not against the religious principles; bhutesu: in all beings; kamah: lust; asmi: I am; bhārata-rsabha: O lord of the Bharatas

7.11 I am the strength of the strong, and I am procreative energy in living beings, devoid of lust and in accordance with religious principles, O lord of the Bharata.

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।
मत् एवेति तान्विद्धि नत्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥७.१२॥

*ye caiva sattvika bhava rajasas tamasas ca ye
matta eveti tan viddhi na tv aham tesu te mayi 7.12*

ye: all those; *ca*: and; *eva*: certainly; *sattvikah*: in goodness; *bhavaḥ*: states of being; *rajasah*: mode of passion; *tamasah*: mode of ignorance; *ca*: and; *ye*: although; *mattah*: from Me; *eva*: certainly; *iti*: thus; *tan*: those; *viddhi*: try to know; *na*: not; *tu*: but; *aham*: I; *tesu*: in those; *te*: they; *mayi*: unto Me

7.12 All states of being - be they of goodness, passion or ignorance - all emanate from Me.

I am independent of them but they are dependent on Me.

त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।
मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥७.१३॥

*tribhir guna-mayair bhavair ebhīh sarvaṃ idam jagat
mohitam nabhijanati mam ebhyaḥ param avyayam 7.13*
tribhīh: three; *guna-mayaiḥ*: by the three gunas; *bhavaiḥ*:
state of being; *ebhīh*: all these; *sarvaṃ*: the whole world;
idam: this; *jagat*: universe; *mohitam*: deluded; *na abhijanati*:
do not know; *mam*: Me; *ebhyaḥ*: above these; *param*: the
Supreme; *avyayam*: immutable

7.13 The whole world is deluded by the three modes (goodness, passion and ignorance), and thus does not know Me. I am above the modes and unchangeable



दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥७.१४॥

*daivi hy esa guna-mayi mama maya duratyaya
mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te 7.14*

daivi: transcendental; *hi*: certainly; *esa*: this; *guna-mayi*:
consisting

of the three modes of material nature; *mama*: My; *maya*:
energy;

duratyaya: very difficult to overcome; *mam*: unto Me;
eva: certainly;

ye: those; *prapadyante*: surrender; *mayam etam*: this
illusory energy; *taranti*: overcome; *te*: they

**7.14 My divine energy, consisting of the three modes of
material nature, is difficult to overcome.**

***But those who surrender unto Me can cross beyond it
with ease.***

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।
माययापहतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥७.१५॥

*na mam duskrutino mudhah prapadyante naradhamah
mayayapahrta-jnana asuram bhavam asritah 7.15*

na: not; *mam*: unto Me; *duskrtinah*: miscreants; *mudhah*: foolish; *prapadyante*: surrender; *nara-adhamah*: lowest among mankind; *mayaya*: by the illusory energy; *apahrta*: stolen by illusion; *jnanah*: knowledge; *asuram*: demonic; *bhavam*: nature; *asritah*: accepting.

7.15 Those miscreants who are foolish, lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by Maya (that which is not real), and who have taken shelter in demonic nature, do not surrender unto Me.

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।
आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥७.१६॥

Chaturvidha bhajante mam janah sukrino'arjuna
arto jijnasurararthartha jnani ca bharatarsabha 7.16

catuh-vidhah: four kinds of; *bhajante*: render services; *mam*: unto Me; *janah*: persons; *su-krtinah*: those who are pious; *arjuna*: O Arjuna; *artah*: the distressed; *jijnasuh*: the inquisitive; *artha-artha*: one who desires material gain; *jnani*: one who knows things as they are; *ca*: also; *bharatarsabha*: O great one amongst the descendants of Bharata.

7.16 O best among the Bharata, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me. They are: the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and those searching for knowledge of the Absolute.



तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एक भक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।
प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहम् स च मम प्रियः ॥७.१७॥

*tesham jnani nityayukta ekabhaktir vishisyate
priyo hi jnanino tyartham aham sa ca mama priyah 7.17*

*tesam: of them; jnani: the wise; nityayuktah: ever
steadfast; eka bhaktih: whose devotion is to the one;
vishisyate: better; priyah: dear; hi: verily; jnaninah: of the
wise; atyartham: exceedingly; aham: I; sah: he; ca: and;
mama: to me; priyah: dear*

***7.17 Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge
and ever united with Me through single-minded devotion
is the best.***

I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानीत्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।
आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥७.१८॥

*udarah sarva evaite jnani to atmaiva me matam
asthitah sa hi yuktatma mam evanuttamam gatim 7.18*

*udarah: noble; sarve: all; eva: certainly; ete: these; jnani:
one who is in knowledge; tu: but; atma eva: just like*

Myself; *me*: My; *matam*: opinion; *asthitah*: situated; *sah*: he; *hi*: certainly; *yukta atma*: engaged in devotional service; *mam*: unto Me; *eva*: certainly; *anuttamam*: the highest goal; *gati*: destination

7.18 All these devotees are indeed noble; one who knows Me, dwells in Me.

Being engaged in My mission, he attains Me.

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥७.१९॥

*bahunam janmanam ante jnanavan mam prapadyate
vasudevah sarvam iti sa mahatma su-durlabhah 7.19*

bahunam: many; *janmanam*: births; *ante*: after; *jnana-van*: he possessing knowledge; *mam*: unto Me; *prapadyate*: surrenders; *vasudevah*: cause of all causes; *sarvam*: all; *iti*: thus; *sah*: such; *maha-atma*: great soul; *su-durlabhah*: very rare.

7.19 After many births and deaths, he who knows Me surrenders to Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is.

Such a great soul is very rare.



कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः।
तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥७.२०॥

*kamais tais tair hrta-jnanah prapadyante nya-devatah
tam tam niyamam asthaya prakrtya niyatah svaya 7.20*

kamaih: by desires; taih: by those; taih: by those; hrta:
distorted;

jnanah: knowledge; prapadyante: surrender; anya: other;
devatah:

deities; tam: that; tam: that; niyamam: rules; asthaya:
following;

prakrtya: by nature; niyatah: controlled; svaya: by their
own.

***7.20 Those whose discrimination has been distorted by
various desires, surrender unto deities.***

***They follow specific rules and regulations of worship
according to their own nature.***

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥७.२१॥

*yo yo yam yam tanum bhaktahò sraddhayarcitum icchati
tasya tasyacalam sraddham tam eva vidadhamy aham 7.21*

yah: that; *yah*: that; *yam*: which; *yam*: which; *tanum*: form of the

deities; *bhaktah*: devotee; *sraddhaya*: with faith; *arcitum*: to worship; *icchati*: desires; *tasya*: of that; *tasya*: of that; *acalam*: steady; *sraddham*: faith; *tam*: him; *eva*: surely; *vidadhami*: give; *aham*: I

7.21 I am in everyone's heart as the Super soul.

As soon as one desires to worship some deity, I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.

स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।
लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान् हि तान् ॥७.२२॥

sa taya sraddhaya yuktas tasyaradhanam ihate
labhate ca tatah kaman mayaiiva vihitan hi tan 7.22

sah: he; *taya*: with that; *sraddhaya*: with faith; *yuktah*: endowed;

tasya: his; *aradhanam*: worship; *ihate*: endeavors; *labhate*: obtains; *ca*: and; *tatah*: from which; *kaman*: desires; *maya*: by Me; *eva*: alone; *vihitan*: bestowed; *hi*: for; *tan*: those.



7.22 Endowed with such a faith, he endeavors to worship a particular demigod and obtains his desires;

In reality, these benefits are granted by Me alone.

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्भवत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।
देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥७.२३॥

*antavat tu phalam tesam tad bhavaty alpa-medhasam
devan deva-yajo yanti mad-bhakta yanti mam api 7.23*

anta-vat tu: limited and temporary; phalam: fruits; tesam: their; tat: that; bhavati: becomes; alpa-medhasam: of those of small intelligence; devan: demigods' planets; deva-yajah: worshipers of demigods; yanti: achieve; mat: My; bhaktah: devotees; yanti: attain; mam: to Me; api: surely

7.23 Men of limited intelligence worship the demigods and their fruits are limited and temporary.

Those who worship the demigods go only to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees reach My supreme planet.

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः ।
परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥७.२४॥

*avyaktam vyaktim apannam manyante mam abuddhayah
param bhavam ajananto mamavyayam anuttamam 7.24*

avyaktam: nonmanifested; *vyaktim*: personality; *apannam*: achieved;

manyante: think; *mam*: unto Me; *abuddhayah*: less intelligent persons;

param: supreme; *bhavam*: state of being; *ajanantah*: without knowing;

mama: My; *avyayam*: imperishable; *anuttamam*: the finest.

7.24 Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the supreme personality of Godhead, the Bhagavan, who was impersonal before, have become a human being now.

They do not know that I am imperishable and supreme, even when I assume the body.

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥७.२५॥

Na ham prakasah sarvasya yoga-maya-samavrtah?
mudho yam na bhijanati loko mam ajam avyayam 7.25

na: nor; *aham*: I; *prakasah*: manifest; *sarvasya*: to everyone; *yoga-maya*: internal potency; *samavrtah*: covered; *mudhah*: foolish; *ayam*: this; *na*: not; *abhijanati*: can



understand; *lokaḥ*: such less intelligent persons; *mam*: Me; *ajam*: unborn; *avyayam*: immutable.

7.25 I am never revealed to the foolish and unintelligent, covered as I am by My divine power [yoga-maya];

The ignorant do not know Me, unborn and eternal.

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चाऽर्जुन।
भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन॥७.२६॥

*vedaham samatitani vartamanani carjuna
bhavisyani ca bhutani mam tu veda na kascana 7.26*

veda: know; *aham*: I; *sama*: equally; *a titani*: past; *vartamanani*:

present; *ca*: and; *arjuna*: O Arjuna; *bhavisyani*: future; *ca*: also;

bhutani: living entities; *mam*: Me; *tu*: but; *veda*: knows; *na*: not; *kascana*: anyone

7.26 O Arjuna, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I know all that has happened, all that is happening, and all that is to happen.

I also know all living entities; but no one knows Me.

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत।
सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परन्तप।।७.२७।।

*iccha-dvesa-samutthena dvandva-mohena bharata
sarva-bhutani sammoham sarge yanti parantapa 7.27*

iccha: desire; dvesa: hate; samutthena: born; dvandva: duality; mohena: overcome; bharata: O scion of Bharata; sarva: all; bhutani: living entities; sammoham: into delusion; sarge: in creation; yanti: go; parantapa: O conqueror of enemies.

7.27 O scion of Bharata [Arjuna], O conqueror of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, overcome by the dualities of attachment and aversion.

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम्।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढ ता।।७.२८।।

*yesam tv anta-gatam papam jananam punya-karmanam
te dvandva-moha-nirmukta bhajante mam drdha-vratah 7.28*

yesam: whose; tu: but; anta-gatam: completely eradicated; papam: sin; jananam: of the persons; punya: pious; karmanam: previous activities; te: they; dvandva: duality; moha: delusion; nirmuktah: free from; bhajante: worship; mam: Me; drdha-vratah: with determination.



7.28 Persons who have acted virtuously, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of reality and unreality,

Engage themselves in My worship with firm resolve.

जरामरणमोक्षाय मामश्रित्य यतन्ति ये।
ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम् ॥७.२९॥

jara-marana-moksaya mam asritya yatanti ye
te brahma tad viduh krtsnam adhyatmam karma cakhilam 7.29
jara: old age; marana: death; moksaya: for the purpose of liberation;

mam: unto Me; asritya: taking shelter of; yatanti: endeavor; ye: all

those; te: such persons; brahma: Brahman; tat: actually that; viduh: they know; krtsnam: everything; adhyatmam: transcendental; karma: activities; ca: and; akhilam: entirely

7.29 Persons who are striving for liberation from the cycle of birth, old age and death, take refuge in Me.

They are actually Brahman because they comprehend everything about activities that transcend these.

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः।
प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः॥७.३०॥

*sadhibhutadhidaivam mam sadhiyajnam ca ye viduh
prayana-kale pi ca mam te vidur yukta-cetasah 7.30*

sa-adhibhuta: the governing principle of the material manifestation;

adhidaivam: underlying all the demigods; *mam*: Me; *sa-adhiyajnam*:

sustaining all sacrifices; *ca*: and; *ye*: those; *viduh*: know; *prayana*: of

death; *kale*: at the time; *api*: even; *ca*: and; *mam*: Me; *te*: they; *viduh*: know; *yukta-cetasah*: with steadfast minds.

7.30 Those who know Me as the Supreme Lord, as the governing principle of the material manifestation, who know Me as the one underlying all the demigods and as the one sustaining all sacrifices, can with steadfast mind, understand and know Me, even at the time of death.





Bhagavad Gita

commentary by

N i t h y a n a n d a

The Indian Community system - chapter 7

Who is God? How can I know He exists?

Is wealth an obstacle on the spiritual path?

Why is it so difficult to face myself?

Why is the caste system the way it is today?

Are the priestly class the only ones who can get enlightened?

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