COMPLETE WORKS OF SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

Vol. IX

SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

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COMPLETE WORKS
OF
SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

Vol. IX

(BHAGAVAD GITA, PART II)

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	XXXIII:	God is the Witness of the Process of Works . ..	523
CHAPTER	XXXIV:	Atman is the Source of Everything	538
CHAPTER	XXXV.	Religion of Vedanta is Universal	554
CHAPTER	XXXVI:	Lamp of Wisdom Dispells all Ignorance .	567
CHAPTER	XXXVII:	Everything is Manifestation of the Lord ..	582
CHAPTER	XXXVIII:	All-pervading Form of God ..	597
CHAPTER	XXXIX:	Resignation Brings Eternal Peace	617
CHAPTER	XL:	Attainment of Godconsciousness is Universal	634
CHAPTER	XLI:	We All are Immortal and Indestructible	649
CHAPTER	XLII:	Absolute is the Unknown and the Known	665
CHAPTER	XLIII:	World Beyond the Senses	681
CHAPTER	XLIV:	The Knower of the Brahman is Perfect	693
CHAPTER	XLV:	Discrimination Between Kshetra and Kshetrajna	710
CHAPTER	XLVI:	Three Qualities are Bondage ..	723
CHAPTER	XLVII:	The Self is Above All Qualities ...	742
CHAPTER	XLVIII:	Tree of Samsara and the Highest Goal	761
CHAPTER	XLIX.	Eye of Wisdom can Realize the Atman ...	771
CHAPTER	L:	Our-Soul is an Object to be Achieved ...	786
CHAPTER	LI:	Spirituality and Meterialism .	801
CHAPTER	LII:	Three-fold Faith	816

CHAPTER	LIII:	Three-fold Food, Worship, Austerity and Gift .	830
CHAPTER	LIV:	OM Tat Sat : Three Names of Brahman	843
CHAPTER	LV:	Sannyasa and Tyaga Distinguished	855
CHAPTER	LVI:	Three-Fold is the Fruit of Actions	867
CHAPTER	LVII:	Five Causes for Actions .	883
CHAPTER	LVIII:	Three Impulses according to Three Gunas ...	897
CHAPTER	LIX:	Three Kinds of Action . .	916
CHAPTER	LX:	Four Classes of Duty	928
CHAPTER	LXI:	Human Beings with Different Tendencies	946
CHAPTER	LXII:	Serene Spirit is Undisturbed by Eeverything . ..	962
CHAPTER	LXIII:	Lord said Surrender Unto Him ...	978
CHAPTER	LXIV:	Doubts of Arjuna Were Removed	992
CHAPTER	LXV:	Conclusion .. .	1006

CHAPTER XXXIII

GOD IS THE WITNESS OF THE PROCESS OF WORKS

Now we will begin with the nineth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. In the eighth chapter we have learned how one meditates on the Supreme Deity, and how through that process of meditation one can attain to the highest goal. We have also learned that, if we can direct our vital *prana* through the middle cord *sushumna*[1] at the time of death, and if we pass away, we are no longer subject to birth and rebirth. In this nineth chapter we will study the nature of that Supreme Deity and the nature of that knowledge which brings freedom to the soul.

Sri Krishna says: "I shall now declare to thee the highest secret; that knowledge combined with direct cognition, knowing which thou shalt be liberated from evil, for thou hast no evil thought in thy mind".[2] That knowledge which, when accompanied by direct cognition or direct perception, brings liberation from all evils, is going to be explained in this chapter.

Direct cognition leads to the highest realization which comes through the state of superconsciousness, and the realization of the union is accomplished between the individual soul and the Supreme Spirit. And here is a significant remark: "I shall tell the secret, because thou hast no evil thought in thee".[3]

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[1] The Yogis meditate on the Paramatman, the determinate Brahman in the *sushumna* chord that passes through the spinal column and thus they attain gradual emancipation (*krama-mukti*), and they generally believe in the *videha-mukti* i.e. final emancipation after the dissolution of the material body, as Mandana-mishra, Prakashatma Yati, Ballabha and others maintain. But, in this verse, *sadyamukti* or *jivanmukti* is meant, as the word *'tu'* indicates the superiority of knowledge (*jnana*) to meditation (*dhyana*), and *jnana* is *vijnana-sahitam.*

[2] इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् ॥९।१

[3] राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।
प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तमव्ययम् ॥९।२

That evil thought refers to that particular quality which is found in ordinary people which makes one see evil in good things. When you are doing something good, some persons find fault, where there is no fault at all. That quality should not be cultivated, on the contrary, one should try to see good in evil, even when there is evil. Some person is doing wrong, some other person is doing good, and all should see good instead of seeing evil, even where there is no good. That quality should not exist in the heart or mind of a disciple and, as Arjuna did not have this quality, he was a true disciple, who was entitled to receive the secret, the truth and highest wisdom, and the Master was very anxious to impart that knowledge to the disciple, and he presents this knowledge by saying: "It is the king of all sciences. It is sacred and best. It is easy, and it imparts direct result i.e. *mukti.*"

The knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, the immediate knowledge of the Absolute, is the highest, and that science which treats of that knowledge, is the king of all sciences. It is the secret of all secrets, because very few people know this secret and the greatest purifier; it purifies our hearts as the light of the sun purifies wherever the sun shines, so the light of intelligence and divine wisdom purifies the heart and soul wherever it shines, and, therefore, it is said to be the greatest purifier.[5] It can be apprehended by spiritual experience. It is not a mere theory, but is subject to direct perception, and it is not opposed to true religion.

It is not a knowledge like any other scientific one which leads to materialistic beliefs or results that keep us away from the absolute Truth, but it is knowledge unopposed to true religion. It is a knowledge of the highest goal of true religion. It is not difficult to be practised, and even when the result is

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[4] In the Commentary, Sankara said: "अतः 'राजविद्या' विद्यानां राजा दीप्तातिशयत्वात्। दीप्यते हीयमतिशयेन ब्रह्मविद्या सर्वविद्यानाम्। तथा 'राजगुह्य" गुह्यानां राजा। 'पवित्रं' पावनमिदमुत्तमं सर्वेषां पावनानां शुद्धिकारणमिदं ब्रह्मज्ञानमुत्कृष्टतमम्। अनेकजन्मसहस्रसञ्चितमपि धर्माधर्मादि समूलं कर्म क्षणमात्राद भस्मीकरोति यतः, अतः किं तस्य पावनत्वं वक्तव्यम्। * * अतः श्रद्धेयमात्मज्ञानम्।"

obtained, you may think that result will perish, but it is not so, it is imperishable. So in this verse we can grasp the idea of what kind of knowledge it is. This knowledge is the immortal *Brahmajnana.*

It is the king of all sciences, and the secret of all secrets. It can be apprehended by direct perception. It is unopposed to true religion, and is easy to be practiced and is imperishable. "Of sciences it is the king, because it is of great splendour." The science of Brahman, the absolute Truth, is the most brilliant of all sciences; of all the purifiers this knowledge of the Supreme is the best purifier; it reduces *karma* or all the actions, good and evil, to ashes in an instant. That *karma* which has been accumulated during many thousand births, is destroyed by the light of knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. Moreover, it can be comprehended, like the feeling of pleasure etc. and what is opposed to many a desirable quality, may also be opposed to religion. It is not separable from true religion, it is not difficult to obtain, rather it is very easy to acquire, like the power of discriminating gems.

Of the other acts, those which involve little trouble and are easily accomplished, seem to be productive of small results, and difficult acts may be productive of great results etc. So it may be imagined that this *Brahmajnana* which is so easily attained, perishes when its effects are exhausted. So to prevent this supposition, Sri Krishna says that it is imperishable. It does not perish like an act when the effect is exhausted, wherefore knowledge of the *Atman* is worth-acquiring.

"Those who have no faith in the Supreme Spirit, and in the true Self, do not attain to Me, the Supreme Deity, but return to the path of birth and death."[5]

You will notice that in other religions, it is said that he who does not believe in God, is an atheist, but in Vedanta, you will notice that he who does not believe in himself i.e in his true self, is an atheist, and that atheist has neither

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5 अश्रद्दधानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परन्तप ।
अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥९।३

Anandagiri said "आत्मज्ञानाख्ये धर्मे श्रद्धावतां तन्निष्ठानां परमपदप्राप्तिरुक्ता ततो विमुखानां संसारप्राप्तिः ।"

happiness in this world, nor in the next. If you doubt your own existence, you will also doubt the Supreme Being as dwelling in you, because your soul is a part and parcel of the Absolute, and, therefore, how can you expect to be happy in this world, and how can you get out of the path of reincarnation? You are living in the darkness of ignorance and, as long as you live in this darkness, you are subject to nature and to the law of birth and rebirth, and you cannot avoid it.

Those who have no faith in this truth, do not attain to the Absolute, but return to the path of birth and death. There is no such statement in Vedanta as going to hell and to eternal perdition, but the coming back and being subject to the law of birth and rebirth mean a great punishment. If you are in a state of ignorance, that state is worse than hell. It is the greatest punishment, and so we should try to get out of this condition before we can think of anything else. I think that is very encouraging that this state of suffering now is better than the state of ignorance. Ignorance is worse than death, and so long as we are living in that state of ignorance, we cannot expect to be happy and free.

"All this world is pervaded by My unmanifested being; all things dwell in Me, but not I in them".[6] If you understand that Sri Krishna is the embodiment of this Supreme Being, and an Incarnation who possessed all wisdom and knowledge of the highest and was giving that knowledge to his disciple, you will be able to understand why he utters these words 'I', 'Me', 'Mine', etc. Wherever he uses these words, he never uses them in the sense of an ordinary ego, but he uses them in the sense of the Supreme Spirit, and he had that consciousness, and never was away from that consciousness. He has said: "All this world is pervaded by my unmanifested

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मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि ना चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥९।४

The word अव्यक्तमूर्तिना means, said Madhusudana Sarasvati "अव्यक्ता सर्वकरणागोचरीभूता स्वप्रकाशाद्वयचैतन्यसदानन्दरूपा मूर्तिर्यस्य तेन मया व्याप्तमिदं सर्वं न त्वनेन देहेनेत्यर्थः । अतएव सन्तीव स्फुरन्तीव मद्रूपेण स्थितानि मत्स्थानि स्थावराणि जङ्गमानि च ।"

being". Sri Krishna was manifested and embodied. The manifested is that which can be perceived by our senses, but the supreme and all-pervading Spirit cannot be perceived by gross senses when it is not manifested. If it is unmanifested, we cannot see it with our eyes, cannot hear it with our ears, and cannot smell it with the power of smelling, etc.

When the Supreme Spirit manifests on the sense plane, we can perceive it, and not until then. "All things dwell in Me and not I in them", because they are unmanifested in space. Everything in this world lies in space, but you cannot see that space that lies in everything, as if it were with a form. If the Supreme Spirit had a particular form, you could see that these things of the world have forms and hold the Supreme Spirit, as a vessel would hold water, or a room would hold people, etc. But we cannot see in that way, because the Supreme Spirit has no particular form. "All this world is pervaded by my highest being, and my form being invisible to the senses, etc. I have no individual existence, because the source of intelligence and existence is one, and that source is the Supreme Spirit and, as all existences depend upon that source of intelligence, that individual intelligence depends upon that supreme source of intelligence. Through my self, they are self-existent."[7] "They are what they are in coexistence of my true self underlying them all." All living beings are what they are because of that intelligence, and if that be taken away from all beings, these beings will have no existence of any kind, no perception, no realization no knowledge, nothing; it will be like dead matter. "Since I am the Self of all beings—try to imagine that you have that intelligence, and whatever you have experienced in your life, depends upon

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[7] न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥९.५

Madhusudana Sarasvati explained "नाहं कस्यचिदाधेयो नापि कस्यचिदाधारस्तथाप्यहं सर्वेषु भूतेषु मयि च सर्वाणि भूताणि इति महतीयं माया । * * एवमभिन्ननिमित्तोपादानभूतोऽपि ममात्मा मम परमार्थस्वरूपभूतः सच्चिदानन्दघनोऽसङ्गाद्वितीयस्वरूपत्वान्न भूतस्थः परमार्थतो न भूतसम्बन्धी, स्वप्नदृगिव न परमार्थतः स्वकल्पितसम्बन्धीत्यर्थः ।"

that which you possessed i.e. that intelligence". If you take things collectively, all the experiences of all human beings, all animals and all living creatures will depend upon that collective intelligence, and that collective intelligence will be the source of all experiences and that will be universal. That is something which is the support of all phenomenal existence, and, therefore, of all phenomena.

"Since I am the Self of all these beings, it would seem to the deluded, that I dwell in them." Can you say that intelligence is dwelling in you? Where is it dwelling? Is it in you or outside of you? Is it in body, or brain, or nerves? You cannot know it; you cannot locate it; but still it is there, although you cannot say that it is dwelling in that body; and at the same time you cannot say that it is outside of the body. In fact, it is inseparable from the body although we cannot locate it in one particular spot. Make experiments, cut off a nerve and destroy a certain part of the brain, and then you will find that certain feelings or activities have been destroyed, but that will not locate the spot where intelligence dwells. The communication may be cut off, but the intelligence is still there, and there is a vital *prana* which you destroy, and that communication will be cut off. No vivesection of the body has revealed to us the particular spot where intelligence is located. It must dwell in all things because of their constant contact with the Supreme Self which pervades everything. Therefore you cannot locate it. It is finer than space, and the innermost essence of space you cannot locate. If you try to locate a particular spot, the space is also there. Imagine the minutest atom, and that atom would not exist if there were no space, because every form means limitation of space, no matter how fine that form is, and, therefore, the space cannot be limited in an atom, because an atom exists in space and space is finer than an atom. Anything that has a form, is grosser than space. That which is unconnected with an object, cannot be connected anywhere as though in a receptacle. A vessel can hold water, but if you take out that water, you leave the vessel empty. Take, for instance, space. Space is in that vessel which is inside space and occupied by space itself. The outside form which includes the space, is also space. It becomes all-pervading, and the vessel cannot exist

except through space. The very size of the vessel means extension and that is space. The limiting space which, if properly analysed, will show that space is not limited by space, but the form is only the limitation of space which is all pervading, because it is finer.

Intelligence is finer than space. It is the essence of space. This body is extension in space, and the essence of this extension is that intelligence. It is conscious, and if it is cognized by somebody else, that is also the manifestation of intelligence. The essence of that unconscious and inanimate object is also intelligence. It is very deep, and sets you to thinking, and Vedanta, as you know, goes to every department of thought from the lowest to the highest and takes you right up from the material plane.

The moment you begin to think of intelligence, you are above sense-perception, above mind, and above intellect, and there you will find the clue of the universe, or the source of all phenomena. "Nor do these beings abide in me; behold my divine glory, my Self is the cause of all things, and it sustains them, but does not dwell in them. That which is unconnected with any object, cannot, indeed, be contained anywhere as though in a receptacle.

The Absolute, the source of intelligence, the essence of our existence, is unconnected with any material object, because it has no particular form and has no direct contact in the same sense as two gross objects are in close contact, but yet it is the cause of all things, and the sustenance and growth and life of things depend on it. What sustains us? It is the intelligence, the source of consciousness that sustains us. Material food does not sustain us. If there be no intelligence, you could stuff the body with food, but that would not be sustaining to the body. But, at the same time, although it is all-pervading and the sustainer of everything, yet it is not the sustainer in the same sense as the individual ego is the sustainer of the body, because there is no sense of 'I' in that intelligence, although the sense of 'I' proceeds from it It is far from all mental or intellectual ideas and is above all mental conception, because all mental conceptions and ideas depend upon the source of intelligence.

"As the powerful wind moving everywhere dwells in the

infinite space, so do all beings rest in Me, the all-pervading Self." Think of this illustration. The wind moves everywhere dwelling in space, yet it is not the same as space. It could not exist, if there were no space, so all things dwell in the Supreme Spirit in the same way, but yet, as space is unconnected with the mind, so the infinite Being is unconnected with everything, and yet it is the support of everything as the space is the support of the mind. This knowledge will bring us to the result of the highest, the absolute Truth.

What is higher and finer than space? Ask that question in your own mind and find it out for yourself—what is finer and higher than the sense of space? The source of intelligence that makes you realize the existence of space, is finer and higher than space, and that is inseparable from your being. As space is unattached to the mind, so the Supreme Spirit, the source of intelligence and existence, although it is all-pervading, and is unattached to everything that has a form. "At the end of a cycle of evolution all beings return to Me, the *Prakriti,* or Nature; I send them forth at the beginning of a new cycle."[9] Here you get the idea of creation or projection

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[8] यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायु सर्वत्रगो महान्।
तथ सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थनीत्युपधारय ॥९।६

Anandagiri said in the glossary: यथा सर्वगामित्वात् परिमाणतो महान् वायुराकाशे सदा तिष्ठति, तथा आकाशादीनि महान्त्यपि सर्वाणि भूतान्याकाशकल्पे पूर्णे प्रतीच्यसंगे परस्मिन्नात्मनि संश्लेषमन्तरेण स्थितानीत्यर्थः।"

The *Atman* is the source and ground of everything phenomenal, and though the *Atman,* in reality, transcends all relations and adjuncts, yet it is *imagined* as background of everything.

[9] सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम्
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥९।७

Sri Ramakrishna has given in this connection an example of an earthen vessel in which an old house-wife (*ginni*) preserves seeds of all kinds of fruit and vegetable, and in suitable time she again scatters them in the soil so that the seeds may burst forth and sprout. Similarly, Sri Ramakrishna has said at the end of every cycle, the *samaskaras* of all living and non-living beings are stored up in the womb of primordial *Prakriti,* they remain latent there and in the next cycle, they are potent or manifested. The Rig Veda explained it as 'यथापूर्वमकल्पयत्।

as given in Veda and Vedanta. All this creation or evolution takes place in cycles. This idea is very strong in Vedanta, though Vedanta has borrowed this idea of evolution from the Samkhya philosophy. There is a period when the process of evolution goes on. Then involution or dissolution begins just as you will find in your own body. It goes in cycles. Each individual body goes in cycles. For a period there is growth, then decay, then dissolution. These are in cycles. You have a certain period of existence for the body and then it begins to decay. You must not think that your growth and decay are only individual. That which is individual, is changeable. The same law pervades the universe. Whatever exists in the microcosm, exists in the macrocosm. Just as one apple falls by gravitation, so the earth moves around the sun. This is a scientific fact and truth. Just as we have a period of rest after hard labour, we get exhausted and sleep So the whole universe comes into a certain state of evolution, begins to decay, and goes back to the primordial state, and comes back again and this process of evolution and involution goes through eternity.

This process of evolution and dissolution is going on, and modern scientists like Herbert Spencer and others have admitted that. But think of the time when this was taught, centuries before the birth of Christ. Sri Krishna lived approximately in 1400 B.C., at the battle of Kurukshetra when he was giving these instructions.

Prakriti is the eternal cosmic energy which contains the potentiality of all these manifestations. It is the potential state of the universe and out of that state come these manifestations, which we know as the effect of the process of evolution. Evolution is only a method or a means by which these manifestations take place The word evolution has a very wonderful charm in it, but analyse it, and you will find that it is nothing but a gradual growth just as you see in a plant or tree a gradual expansion.

From the gaseous state comes out the sun. From the nebulous mass comes out the star and that star, in course of time, becomes inhabited and becomes our earth. Earth has come to this state through the process of evolution. From the gaseous or nebulous state it becomes the inhabited some-

thing and, if it comes in contact with a comet, it will go to pieces and will instantly be dissolved in vapour. Then the world will appear like gass, and then it will be changed into a nebulous mass and become invisible, and that will be the primordial state of this earth. Not a single particle will be destroyed when the earth is reduced to that gaseous substance. But the amount will remain the same, and from that will come out another form in course of time through the process of evolution. It will radiate its heat, and will get cooler and cooler, and gradually will become solid, and then the germs of life will begin to sprout. The whole universe is living. You do not have to get germs of life from anywhere else. The whole universe is filled with it. In course of time, human beings will come and have politics and war and fighting, and the whole thing will exist like a bubble in the air. We are so foolish that we do not see it. It is self-interest that makes one man start a revolution. See the transitoriness of this universe. But you cannot see the transitoriness of the universe, if you have a very narrow way of thinking. A narrow way of thinking is no other than thinking of yourselves as individuals and wanting to get position and everything. Then you have limited that knowledge to one particular part, and cannot see the transitoriness of your own life, and so you make so many mistakes. What are you going to do? Simply open your eyes and do not forget this higher knowledge which reveals to you that this whole universe is subject to evolution, and in course of time it will all go to pieces and a new universe will come out. You can shut your eyes and refuse to see. You can say, 'O, I have so much attachment to these things', but weeping and wailing will not help you. It is the most inexorable law.

In Vedanta, it is said: "He is the bright light which governs you; look up and see His face, and be aware of it; do not forget; look up and make the best of your time, and know that it is so, and you will then get out of that attachment." Here you may say, "this nature comes out by itself'. No, *Isvara* or God of Vedanta, whom we call the Creator, is the One who projects this manifestation, directs, and guides this eternal energy toward the proper expression through the process of evolution. He is the Lord beyond this

insensiate energy. "And I send them forth again at the beginning of a new cycle when all these living creatures and all these bodies are dissolved, these living germs of life remain latent in that primordial state just as our souls remain latent in a deep sleep state. There is no intelligence in activity, and it is all covered with darkness. It is darkness lying over darkness, and there is no spark of light. Then as evolution begins, darkness begins to clear up, and we begin to see things. Then the sense powers wake up. The homogeneous mass becomes divided into egos and non-egos, into spirit and matter, then one cognizes the truth of matter. The cognition of matter comes when the sense of 'I' manifests.

These germs of life which remain latent in that state of *Prakriti,* or the eternal energy, or the undifferentiated consciousness, get the sense of 'I' and become differentiated. Then they cognize and realize their own individuality. So long they are forgetting, just as we forget our individuality without losing it at the time of deep sleep. We must know why we have come, if we have bodies. As we remain in that state of deep sleep, so the souls, or germs of life, remain in that state of dissolution, being latent in that cosmic energy without knowing their individuality. It is through intellect that we know that intellect remains latent and when it wakes up, it brings up the sense of 'I', and that is the first step of evolution and from that the ego and non-ego are differentiated and later on come the material gross manifestations. But this cosmic energy is not separate from the being of the Creator, or absolute intelligence.

Here you will notice that in the next verse Sri Krishna says: "Presiding over my own *Prakriti,* or cosmic energy, or nature again and again I project all animate and inanimate objects which are also subject to the laws of nature[11] At pre-

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10 कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ।

11 प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्रामिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥९।८

In the Commentary Madhusudana Sarasvati said "किं निमित्ता

sent we are all human beings and subject to the laws of nature; we cannot have these bodies without being subject to the laws of nature. If the force of attraction did not operate upon the molecules of our body, the body would go to pieces. Every inch of our bodies bears about fourteen pounds of weight. Think of the weight of atmosphere we are carrying about on our bodies. If this pressure was taken off, these bodies would go to pieces. That burden we feel when we are climbing a mountain, and we cannot carry our own bodies easily, because the air is heavy, the pressure is less, and we are subject to these laws of nature, having gross material forms.

We are also subject to the laws of cause and effect. At the time of evolution we remain subject to these laws. Very few have the power of overcoming these laws. We overcome them when we give up these bodies, then we are not subject to the laws which govern the gross material plane. If we go still farther, we will rise above the laws that govern on the finer plane, and still higher we will overcome the laws which govern the higher plane.

This cycle of evolution is not one particular cycle. One cycle comes after another. The cycle lasts for hundreds and millions of years. Then comes the cycle of dissolution that lasts for millions and millions of years. There is no definite time. It may last longer or shorter, and again that will be followed by another. We cannot grasp the idea of time, our mind is so limited. We take interest in these things which immediately concern our lives, but, in studying Vedanta, we are studying the whole universe. We are not studying our particular form, or any other particular form, but we are studying our whole being and the whole universe, because, as I have already said, that which exists in the microcosm, exists in the macrocosm, and these remain absorbed in that unmani-

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परमेश्वरस्येयं सृष्टि ? न तावत् स्वभोगार्था * * मायावीव पुनः पुनर्विसृजामि विविधं सृजामि कल्पनामात्रेण स्वप्नदृगिव स्वप्नप्रपञ्चम् । '

Gandapada in the *Mandukya-karika* elaborated this idea and said that there exists nothing but the Brahman, and the creation of the phenomenal universe is mere a dream or imagination. Sankara described creation as the act of the mind—*'mana-vilasam'*. The philosophy of the *Lankavatarasutra* also explained the world of phenomena as a dream.

fested state. So wake up and follow the process of evolution in the new cycle, according to their tendencies and desires. If suddenly this whole world is collapsed and dissolved by coming in contact with a comet, with millions of beings living here suddenly giving up their gross bodies and each having a particular desire and tendency, the germs remain in invisible state. But we carry these tendencies and ideas just as a seed remains latent in snow for six months and then sprouts up. So these germs of life may remain for millions of years until the conditions would become favourable for the manifestation of those desires. When the new cycle comes, you have your desires over again and I have mine. Whatever desire you have fulfilled, you do not have to fulfil again. In that way, you will be subject to the laws of nature also. So everybody will be, and, in the new cycle, we may not remember all these things we have done here today, but if we have good memory, we will, perhaps, remember them. Many a time we have gone through all this processes, but we do not remember them. We can sometimes remember them, because each individual is the storehouse of all his past experiences, and when the knowledge comes, these past experiences become vivid and he begins to know them.

In Vedanta, you will notice that idea of creation or creating something out of nothing suddenly, is denied. Some one says: "If God created something out of nothing, why does he create for his own pleasure? He ought not to create, He has His pleasure already if He needs pleasure. He is lacking in something, and so He is not perfect." The idea of creation of souls has been rejected, because if you accept it without giving proper reasons, it will be a dogma and that has no foundation and it is only a statement, and Vedanta does not make any statement which is not in harmony with the laws of nature Therefore it rejects the theory of creation of something out of nothing, but it admits the evolution theory because it is in harmony with our experience and with the laws of nature.

This process of projecting the absorbed beings into existence, must mean some work and that will bind. If God does that kind of work, He will be bound. But Sri Krishna says: "This action of creation and dissolution does not bind Me,

and I am always unconcerned and unattached to them."[12] God does not create as we would make a chair with that sense of 'I'. God has no egotism, and if He had, He would not be God. If He created with a sense of responsibility, or with a sense of self-interest, He would not be God, He would be just like a common mortal. Therefore, he says: "I am unconcerned with and unattached to them; therefore they do not bind me. The acts involved in the unequal creation of the multitudinous beings do not bind me. I, knowing the immutability of the Self, remain like one who is unconcerned, without attachment to the fruit of the act, without the egotistic feeling that I do these things, I do create, wherefore in the case of others, etc."

One who has the sense of 'I' like 'I am the doer and actor, etc.,' is bound by the nature and by his desires, material ideas, and egotism, etc., and that kind of action we cannot expect from the Supreme Being who is perfect and is above *maya*. He is free from all the attachment, and there is no agency in His creation. He stands, being the witness (*saksi*) of every age and manifestation in every step of the evolution. As the presence of a magnet would attract a piece of iron and make it move, similarly He is the greatest magnet and makes nature go through its own process and makes individual egos latent in that state, which come out and take forms according to their desires and tendencies.

Sri Krishna says: "O Kaunteya, (i.e., son of Kunti) guided by my eternal energy I produce the phenomenal universe, and

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[12] न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबन्धन्ति धनञ्जय ।
उदासीनबदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ॥९।९

The cause of indifference or non-attachment on the part of God, said Sankara, is:

"कर्तृत्वाभिमानाभावः फलासङ्गाभावश्चाबन्धकारणमन्यथा
कर्मभिर्बध्यते मूढ़ कोषकारवदित्यभिप्रायः ।"

Anandagiri also said: "ईश्वरस्य फलसङ्गाभावात् कर्तृत्वाभिमानाभावाच्च कर्माम्बन्धबदीश्वरादन्यस्यापि तद्भयाभावो धर्मादसम्बन्धे कारणामित्याह — अतोऽन्यस्येति ।"

this is the cause of the evolution of the world."[13] We do not accept that kind of evolution which simply relates to insensate matter, and we take the source of intelligence distinct from material manifestation. Therefore, the Supreme Spirit is the guide, director and projector and starter of the process of evolution and that idea has been accepted by some of the evolutionists of the present time, like John Fiske. He is the greatest evolutionist who has produced the world, and he has accepted that idea that material evolution is not the highest and it is guided by the Supreme Spirit, and that idea is very prevalent in the Sankhya philosophy of Kapila in the 7th century before Christ. You will find some reference to that philosophy in my lecture on *Cosmic Evolution and Its Purpose.*

The *Bhagavad Gita* explains on the lines of what is said in the *Upanishads.* There is the same idea. There is only one Being, who is all-pervading, dwelling in all beings and is the Soul of all living souls. He is the witness of all actions, mental and physical. He is the witness of this process of evolution, as we are the witnesses of all material activities, sense-powers, perception, etc. This manifested and unmanifested will-power, as an object of consciousness and source of intelligence and consciousness, is the witness, just as we are seeing and feeling, and enjoying.

All these works of the phenomena have their beginning in consciousness, and their end is also in consciousness or intelligence, as all actions, natural and cosmic, have their beginning and end in cosmic consciousness or intelligence, which can be called the Creator or *Isvara.* When we understand this idea clearly, we understand how the cyclic creation or evolution begins and ends, and how the one, is followed by another, etc.

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[13] मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥९।१०

CHAPTER XXXIV

ATMAN IS THE SOURCE OF EVERYTHING

Vedanta philosophy believes in the Incarnation of God, that God manifests Himself from time to time in a human form to teach mankind, to show the path to righteousness and to establish the path to true religion.[1] This idea you will find very strongly enforced in the *Bhagavad Gita,* and the teacher in the *Gita* is considered in India as one of the great Incarnations (*Avatara*). All sects, beginning with monists and dualists, believe in Krishna as one of the Incarnations of the divine manifestation. Those who heard my lecture on *The Worship of Krishna,* will remember how he lived and how wonderful was his life. He lived about 1400 B.C., during the Trojan war in Greece, and his teachings are incorporated in the *Bhagavad Gita.*

The monists or non-dualists, who believe only in one existence, still cannot deny this manifestation of the Incarnation of God. We will see now how Sri Krishna speaks of himself as the Incarnation of the Divinity. You will find that whenever Sri Krishna used the pronouns 'I', 'me' and 'mine', he never uses them in the human sense, but in the divine sense, and I have said it over and over again that whenever a great spiritual leader or Incarnation speaks, he never speaks from the human standpoint, or from the standpoint of the individual ego, but he remembers and is conscious of his divine nature. When he speaks of himself, he speaks as part and parcel of the Supreme Deity. Here in the eleventh verse of the nineth chapter Sri Krishna says: "Those who are deluded, do not know my supreme self as the great Lord of all beings and think that I am bound in a human form".[2] I have already

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[1] Vide the *Gita* IV.7.

[2] अवजानन्ति मां मूढ़ा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।
परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥९।११

mentioned before that Sri Krishna uses these words 'I' and 'me' not in the sense of an ordinary mortal, but in the sense of the Supreme Spirit. That Supreme Self, who is the projector of all the phenomenal forms that we see and perceive with our senses, manifests itself in a human form and expresses its power through the human body, and when that manifestation comes, a new spiritual influx comes to this world, and, according to Vedanta, this divine manifestation is not limited by time, place, or nationality.

We accept Christ as one of these great manifestations, and we also accept Buddha as one of these manifestations. The only difference between the Christians and the students of Vedanta is that the Christians believe that Christ is the only manifestation, while the others do not.

Now those who do not understand the relation between the ego and the Supreme Self, and those who do not and cannot differentiate the actions and works of an ordinary mortal from those of divine manifestations, think that they are like ordinary mortals. But there is a vast difference. Although they live like human beings, still they are not on the human plane. It is very difficult for an ordinary mortal to understand the difference between a human being and a divine manifestation. If the divine manifestation did not come down on our plane, we could not have realized their Divinity and could not have struggled hard to rise above the human plane. Sri Krishna says: "These deluded ones who disregard the divine manifestation, are of vain hope, vain action, alike in discrimination and possessing the delusive nature of a demon, or a friend.[3] It

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Sankara said in the Commentary :

"एवं मां नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्तस्वभावं सर्वज्ञन्तुनामात्मानमपि सन्तम्—'अवजानन्ति' अवज्ञां परिभवं कुर्वन्ति 'मां मूढ़ा' अविवेकिनो * * ।

[3] मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञान्ग विचेतसः ।
राक्षसीमासुरीञ्चैव प्रकृतिं मोहनीं श्रिताः ॥९।१२

Sankara said:

"(a) "मोघाशा—वृथा आशा आशिषो येषां ते मोघाशाः (b) मोघकर्माणः—यानि च अग्निहोत्रादीनि तैरनुष्ठीयमानानि कर्माणि तानि च तेषां भगवतः परिभवात् स्वात्मभूतस्य अवज्ञानात् मोघान्येव निष्फलमेव कर्माणि भवन्ति इति मोघकर्माणः ।

seems very strong and harsh, but those who do not recognize the Divinity when such manifestations appear, are of vain hopes. Their hopes are not of a higher nature, their spiritual eyes are not open, and their hopes are of worldly kind on a material plane. Consequently they are vain and false when we look at them from the standpoint of those which are eternal and permanent. These actions do not produce the highest results, but they produce results on the lower plane of vain knowledge. This knowledge is not of the Supreme, but of the individual ego, or of ordinary mortals, and that far they can go. Ordinarily we think that, when we have knowledge of ourselves and ordinary mortals, we attained the highest knowledge, but it is not so. The highest knowledge consists in the true Self and the relation which we bear to the Supreme Spirit.

Lacking in the power of discrimination they do not discriminate the right from the wrong, the eternal from the non-eternal. They think that this body will last forever, and so they try to preserve this body. They do not see the transitoriness of the material form, nor they understand the ephemeral character of phenomenal names and forms. What is the character of a demon, or of a friend? The character of a demon is described here, like those who constantly think of injuring others. A demon says, 'cut, break, eat, drink, and rob others of their properties and injure them'. He has no sense of moral obligation. He does not even obey the moral and spiritual laws that govern our souls, because he does not recognize the existence of souls which will continue to live after death, nor does he recognize the law of cause and sequence. He is extremely selfish and tries to enrich himself at the expense of others. That is the character of a demon or a devil. After death a devil is not elevated, and when he comes down to the human plane, he is born with those dark tendencies and continue to fulfil his desires by extremely selfish motives, and, therefore, he remains on that plane for some time.

But people of this type will not remain in that state forever. Their nature will come out and, after reaping the results

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(c) मोघज्ञाना—ज्ञानमपि तेषां निष्फलमेव स्यात्। (d) विचेतसः—विगतविवेकाश्च ते भवन्तीत्यभिप्रायः।

of their wicked thoughts and deeds, they will begin to understand the moral and spiritual laws which govern their lives, and gradually they will rise above that plane.

There is another class of people who are described as Mahatmas. You have heard that word many a time. The theosophists have introduced that word and misinterpreted it and have given a false idea amongst the people of the Western countries, and that is the reason why there was so much fighting and quarrelling. The word 'maha' is the singular and 'atma' is the plural. 'Maha' means great and 'atma' means soul, therefore it literally means a 'great soul'. Sri Krishna says: "The great-souled ones partaking of the divine qualities, worship me with a heart, turned to no other object and knowing me as the unchangeable source of all beings."[4] Not only that, says Sri Krishna, "but also being devoted to austerity and love, they sing in praise of me, pay attention to the noble teachings of Vedanta, worship me, bow down to me, and pray to me with one-pointed hearts."[5]

There is another class of devotees who possess divine qualities. They have self-control or *shama* which means control of mind and senses. Those who possess self-control, possess divine qualities. Those who have faith in the eternal and unchangeable truth, possess divine qualities. Those who are charitable and kind toward others, possessing as they do divine qualities, worship the eternal Truth with one-pointed hearts. Although they live in this world with wife, children and family, still their mind does not deviate from the path of truth, rather their mind is directed toward God, and whatever they do they do without forgetting the ideal, the eternal Truth. They always remember that every other thing of the world is secondary, and the highest aim of life they consider to be the realization of eternal Truth, which does not change, and is the eternal source of all beings. Ordinary people do not realize the eternal source of all beings. But it should be remembered that the

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4 महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।
भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥९।१३

5 सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥९।१४

aim of our existence is to know that eternal source, and we cannot be satisfied otherwise. We may devote the whole of our energy to the pursuit of objects of a transitory nature, but at the bottom of our soul we find extreme longing for that which does not change with phenomenal forms, and so we struggle to know that. Why is that tendency? Because our nature is also eternal. In trying to know eternal Truth we know ourselves, and our true nature is revealed. We want to know ourselves as eternal, and there is that something which is eternal and unchangeable and will be easily known. When we say we do not know the eternal, we mean we do not know our eternal nature. Vedanta does not mystify anything, but it solves the mystery, and makes it simple.

If eternal Truth be infinite, we are not excluded from that infinite substance. That infinite substance dwells in us, and we cannot be separated from it. Therefore, if we can know that infinite substance dwelling in us, then where we live and move and have our beings, the soul is satisfied. It does not wish to know anything else, and nothing beyond that is considered to be worth-having. If the things of the world go to pieces, the soul is not sorry for it, because it has known its own eternal nature. And those who possess divine qualities, worship that eternal Truth, have faith in that eternal Truth, and ultimately realize it through that faith. What else do they who possess divine qualities?

They always glorify the eternal truth. They do not glorify anything that is transitory and that is not worth-glorifying, but which is eternal, they glorify that, and manifest the glory of their divine nature. They take vows that they must know the truth, and must not deviate from the path of truth and righteousness. They are stead-fast in those vows, just as Buddha took vows and, after going through his struggle for six years sat down under the bow tree with this determination and saying, "Let the bones and flesh of my body go to pieces, let the bones be reduced to dust, but without attaining to that eternal Truth (Bodhi), I shall not move an inch from this spot"

'इहासने शुष्यतु मे शरीरं, त्वगस्थिमांसं प्रलयञ्च यातु'

With that determination he sat there, and within three days he accomplished what he wished, and then he became Buddha,

the enlightened one. So let us be steadfast in our vows even in our ordinary life. If we take the vow of not telling a lie, let us be steadfast. Let us take the vow of leading a strictly moral life and make that vow here and now.

The Mahatmas worship me with love, and that love is love for the Highest, and wherever there is true love, there is the Divinity. Wherever there is that divine manifestation, there is true love. That kind of worship is performed by those who are Mahatmas or high-souled ones. Others worship knowledge through knowledge.

Here Sri Krishna is describing different methods by which the eternal Truth can be worshipped and glorified remaining steadfast in vows, etc. Through love one can attain to the same goal as through knowledge. Because, in the truest sense, love (*prema*) and knowledge (*jnana*) are one and the same, and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa has said it again and again. In this country, especially amongst Christians, knowledge is never considered to be one of the paths, and love or devotion is the only path as described in Christianity, but knowledge is the path through which scientists and philosophers go, and they attain to the highest Truth through rational understanding, intelligence, and knowledge.

Sri Krisha says. "Others again worshipping me through the sacrifice of wisdom realize my many-sided wisdom in unity and diversity".[6] Why sacrifice of wisdom? Wisdom or knowledge itself is a great sacrifice (*yajna*). That knowledge is not an ordinary knowledge, but knowledge of the Supreme, the eternal Truth. That knowledge takes in every other thing.

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[6] ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥९।१५

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"* * त्रिविधाः उत्तमा मध्यमा मन्दाश्चेति सर्वेपि स्वानुरूप्येण मामुपासते.....। केचित् * * उपास्योपसकाभेदचिन्तारूपेण ज्ञानयज्ञेनैकत्वेन भेदव्यावृत्त्या मामेवोपासते .....। अन्ये तु केचिन्मध्यामाः * * श्रुत्यक्तेण प्रतीकोपासनरूपेण.....। अन्ये त्वहंग्रहोपासने प्रतिकोपसने चासमर्थाः केचिन्मन्दाः काश्चिदन्यां देवतां चोपासीना· कानिचित् कर्माणि.....।

When you possess that knowledge, all other knowledge is sacrificed there; because that is included. That supreme knowledge includes all other knowledge.

There are three kinds of worshippers: the first are those who worship God, the Supreme Deity or the eternal Truth in their own souls, and they think of the Supreme Spirit as the true nature of their soul. They repeat *'so'ham'*, 'I am He', 'I am the Spirit' I am the eternal knowledge itself, and they never forget that. It is the most purifying and elevating kind of worship. It is the identity of your self with the Self of the universe. "I am the eternal Truth, or the eternal Truth is my self; I am not the transitory, mortal, and changeful something; I am not subject to birth and death, but am the eternal Truth; that which is not eternal, is not I"—that is the kind of their worship. This form of worship is very difficult, it is for those who are highly advanced and have got a glimpse of their real Self. That form of worship is called 'Jnana Yoga' i.e. worship through the idea of the true Self.

There is another form of worship which is medium. Those who worship, as I have just described, are considered to be the highest, because they worship through a higher spiritual realization. The medium ones worship a god to be loved, and that god is different for every one, That deity is infinite in powers and in wisdom is independent and omnicient, and we are like creatures.

Others worship the divine Being through some phenomenal manifestation i.e. through fire or light, or some other manifestations. There is yet another class including those who worship a different manifestation of the Spirit, and do not see the Supreme Spirit, but worship lower spirits, like spirits of the ancestors, or angels, or some bright spirits, and they are all lower manifestations of the Divine. They worship them through some mediums, and are devoted to them. They perform many sacrifices to please them, and get their desires fulfilled. But the highest form is that in which we realize the Supreme Spirit as manifesting through our souls, although it is very difficult to feel that way. But even those who worship through sacrifices and also through rituals and ceremonials, are in the wrong way, for this is, in reality, the expression of the divine will,

which is all-pervading and dwells in these acts, sacrifices etc.[7]

"I am the sacrifice and the offering to the *Devas* or bright spirits. Wherever the worshipper offers to the bright spirits, that offering is done to me. I am the food, and am dwelling in the food. I am the chant, and when they offer sacrifices, they chant the *mantrams*. When they chant I invoke the Deity. I am the butter, the fire, and the oblation. I am everywhere and that means the Spirit is all-pervading", says Sri Krishna.[8]

There are some worshippers who have realized the infinite nature of the Supreme Spirit, who see the Supreme God in everything, and it can be seen, but, at the same time, the Supreme Spirit is transcendent. He is the creator and protector of the universe. That Supreme Spirit is described later as: "I am the father of the universe, the mother also, the sustainer and the grand-father, the knowable the purifier, the sacred sound OM and also the sacred Vedas like Rik, Yaju and Sama."[9] Here you will see that the fatherhood of God was known in that age i.e. in the age of the *Mahabharata*.

The world lives in that Being, because life which is possessed, is a part of the universal Life, and you cannot deny it. If you study science, you will find that this whole universe is living. We draw our life and vitality from that atmosphere. The nerve-current is the cause of vitality, and that is caused by *prana* which dwells in the atmosphere everywhere. That 'prana' is the cause of all other forces like electricity, gravitation etc., through radius you will find that prana manifested. In the *Katha-Upanishad* (II. 3.3), it has been said: "यदिदं किञ्च जगत् सर्वं प्राण एजति निःसृतम्।"

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[7] Vide the commentary of Madhusudana Sarasvati on the *Gita*, IX.15, the extract of which has already been given in the footnote No 6.

[8] अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञं स्वधाऽहमहमौषधम्।
मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥९।१६

[9] पिताऽहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः।
वेद्यं पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक् साम यजुरेव च ॥९।१७

'OM' itself is the embodiment of three prime deities, Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Mahesvara, the destroyer, as well as of *Trayee* or three Vedas, Rik, Yaju, and Sama.

This Spirit is not unknown and unknowable, as described by Herbert Spencer and Kant, but it is unknown and unknowable by intellect. It is knowable by our Spirit, it is the source of our consciousness. Intellect cannot know this, sense perception cannot reveal the eternal Truth. Intellect and mind are transitory, phenomenal, and relative, but our true nature can know the eternal Truth. The Knower alone can know the eternal Truth; the *Atman* can be known only by the self-consciousness and not by any other means.

We all know about the ether, but ether alone would not explain everything, because ether is not the source of consciousness. Ether is revealed by cosmic consciousness, otherwise no one would know the existence of ether. So what is higher than the Spirit, is revealed by that which reveals. That which reveals, is higher than the object of consciousness. Therefore we must know that if we say ether is the goal, that would not explain everything, because behind the goal is the knower of ether. The knower of eternal energy is the goal, and that is the Supreme Spirit. Who will protect this universe? The laws only protect this universe. Laws are nothing but the medium by which the divine will is working in the universe. God protects the universe through the laws. He does not protect it by holding the rod in His hands saying, 'If you do not obey me, I will kill you and send you to eternal fire'. His laws are uniform and eternal, and nothing can go beyond these laws. Take, for example, the law of gravitation. If that law were not in manifestation, then the whole universe would have gone back to its primordial condition i.e. to the state of ether. These laws protect the universe, and you should understand the meaning of the word 'laws' when they are interpreted by the gross minds. You may call the divine will, still it protects just the same. Why is He, the Lord of the universe, because there is nothing higher than He. So Sri Krishna says: "O Arjuna, I am the prime goal and preserver or sustainor of all beings. I am the master and receptacle of all of them, as well as I am the witness of their good and bad results. I am the saviour and real friend of all. I am the creator and also destroyer. I am the causes of both origin and destruction, and I am the immortal seed or source of everything. I give heat to all the universe in the form of the sun, and I convert rain into cloud

and cloud into rain. I am the immortality or immortal life of the *Devas*, as well as I am death of the mortal ones. I am everything of the universe, gross and subtle. In truth, all things of the world sentient and insentient, owe existence, intelligence, and life from me."[10]

You will have to understand what a witness is. You know everything that is going on around you so far as your range of consciousness goes, and you are a witness of the rising and setting of the sun etc., in the same way. If the range of your knowledge expands, you will know more, and you will be the universal witness of the whole universe. And as there is no other knowledge higher than the Divine knowledge, you find the *Atman* is the witness of the universe, and not one can transcend Him. The *Atman* is the Lord of the universe in whom we live and move and have our refuge. Who can be a better friend than this eternal *Atman*, because all its names and forms are perishable, but that which does not perish, is the nearest and dearest to ourselves. That is the eternal Truth in you, the Soul of your soul, the Life of your life, and no other being can be more friendly than that. Real friendship leads to oneness, and when we feel we are one with the eternal Truth, then who can be a better and nearer friend than that. Again, He is the origin, dissolution and stay of the phenomenal universe. Phenomenal universe beings and ends in that eternal Truth. Even in the middle state, if you analyse, you find that that eternal Truth is the foundation, the receptacle and the eternal seed of the universe. All the germs of life and existence proceed from that one source; therefore, He is called the eternal seed of the universe.[11]

Phenomenal names and forms are in the process of evolution. They remain latent in that state before the beginning of evolution and again they come out, as a tree comes out from a seed. .Sri Krishna has said, 'I give heat'. Heat and light

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[10] गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निबासः शरणं सुहृत् ।
प्रभवः प्रल्यः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥
तपम्येहमहं बर्षं निगृह्णाम्मत्सृजामि च ।
अमृतश्चैब मृत्युश्च सदासच्चाहमर्जुन ॥९।१-१९

[11] Cf. the *Gita*, IX. 18-19.

proceed from the sun. By the rays of the sun the water is converted into rain and that rain is held up in space, and again it comes down on this earth goes up in the form of vapour, cloud, etc.

The Lord says: "I am immortality as well as death". Death means only a change, and that which remains when the change has taken place, is immortality and unchangeable. Being and non-being are all manifestations of the same eternal Truth. That is the cause and effect. Every cause has its foundation upon the eternal Truth, and every effect is also founded upon the same substance.

This kind of knowledge is the knowledge through which the worshippers of a certain class pay homage to the eternal Truth. They hold this knowledge in their mind constantly, and they try to realize and to be conscious of it. These are only the projections which refer to the same eternal Truth, the foundation of the universe.

After describing these Sri Krishna describes those who do not and cannot grasp this higher eternal Truth. Those who worship some lower divinity, like some particular form of divinity with some desire, what would become of them? Those who are versed in the Vedas as well as in the Old Testament, will find different sacrifices and works, described in them, and they should be used at the time of worship. That portion of the Vedas which deals with such things, is called the ritualistic portion (*karmakanda*). In all nations, you will find a certain portion of these scriptures which are ritualistic.

The 'Soma' or Soma-juice is a kind of wine which are offered to the *Devas* at the time of sacrifie. Really the Soma is a kind of creeper, and the Brahmins used to prepare a kind of intoxicating liquor after pasting the Soma creepers in Some-pot (*udukhala*). In time of sacrifice, the Brahmins (*Advarjus*) used to pour some portions of Soma liquor to the tongue of the sacrificial fire and used to drink also some portions. They would have a horse sacrifice. They would kill a horse, and build a fire, and burn every inch of that body of the horse. They would dip the flesh and Soma-juice into the fire and let it burn and let the smoke go up, and chant the words of the Vedas and pray and do all kinds of things—these relate to the ritualistic portions of the Vedas. And afterward they would

drink the remnants of the sacrifice and the Soma-juice, and the Soma was considered to be the purifier of the soul. They believed that after doing these things they would be purified, and would pray for heavenly pleasures and celestial enjoyments. They had faith enough which would make them realize and believe that after their death they would go to heaven, so that is mentioned in these two verses, IX. 20-21. These verses say: "The Brahmins or *Advaryus*, well-versed in three Vedas, Rik, Yaju and Sama, worship me by sacrifice and praying, and by drinking the sacred Soma-juice they wash out their sins and afterwards ask the boon for going to the heavenly region. Then as a result of their sacrificial works, they go to the *Indraloka* i.e. to the region of Indra and enjoy there unworldly pleasures that are meant for the *Devas*. Then after enjoying infinite heavenly pleasures for certain length of time they again return (enter) to this world after termination of their virtues of merits, acquired by performances of the sacrifices and thus performing the sacrificial works, as prescribed by three Vedas, the worldly men incarnate repeatedly in this nether region."[12]

Soma-juice, as used in the Vedic sacrifices, was a particular kind of intoxicating juice or liquor, made out of pasting of

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12 त्रैविद्य मां सोमपाः पूतपापा
यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गतिं प्रार्थयन्ते ।
ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-
मश्नन्ति दिव्यान् दिवि देवभोगान् ॥
ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं बिशालं
क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं बिशन्ति ।
एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना
गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥९।रे०-२१

In the *Mundaka-Upanishad* (1.2.10), it has also been said:

इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमानावरिष्ठं
नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढ़ा ।
नाकस्य पृष्ठे ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वेमं
लोकं हीणतरं वा बिशन्ति ॥

some creepers, called Soma. It is said that Soma was stolen by the *Asuras* (demons) from the *Devas,* when Soma was in the form of a woman. Some of the *Brahmana* literature have described this interesting story. The Soma-creepers are very rare and difficult to find them at present. The ancients used to make a kind of wine with their own hands, and at any time when they picked up the creepers, they would make certain ceremonies on special occasions. They would repeat prayers, as you see in Roman Catholic service. All these customs are Oriental. The Soma drink was supposed to purify the worshippers.

Sri Krishna says: "Worshipping me by sacrifices and praying for the heavenly goal, they reach the holy region of the gods and enjoy celestial pleasure in those regions." After death they go to those regions. So you see the idea of heaven is not limited to Vedanta. They say there is not only one heaven, but also many, and you can go to any of them where different desires would be fulfilled. "They reach the holy region of the gods. Those who have more powers and have attained to a certain height of spiritual power, enjoy the celestial pleasures which these *Devas* are enjoying. They remain there for a certain length of time. Having enjoyed the celestial world to which their good deeds had entitled them, they enter into the world of mortals, etc. and reincarnate themselves again and again." This idea is a little different from the Christian idea of going to heaven. They go to heaven and remain there for a certain length of time, as long as their merits would produce good results. The good works are not permanent, consequently the results are limited by time and space. No limited or finite cause can produce infinite results. That was a law understood even at that early age when they described these things. You will not find any illustration of a finite thing producing infinite effects. When you say that eternal heaven is going to be obtained by finite works good works or prayers or devotional offerings, that cannot be. It must have a limit, and that idea of eternal heaven and hell we find among the Christians, Mohammedans, Jews, and Zoroastrians, but, in Vedanta, we do not find that. There are realms where through their good works souls can go and stay as long as their works would allow, but after that time they would come down from

that realm and then go to other higher or lower realms where other desires would be fulfilled, and in that way they would not remain in one particular realm forever. They would reincarnate themselves on the human plane, or reincarnate themselves on the plane of the ancestors, etc. They repeatedly come and go, because they have desires and would have to fulfil those desires.

So the performers of the ritualistic scriptures and ceremonials would have all the results of their desires fulfilled But those who do not care for those things, or the comforts of this life, worship the Lord. The Lord provides them with all the things they need. This is another thing which is very true. "Those who seek me alone, meditate on me and know nothing else, and these ever-devoted ones I maintain with the means of livelihood".[13] Christ says, "See the fowls of the air, they work not, still they are fed; think not of the garments"—all these ideas are not new. You will find that the Lord provides with everything which a true devotee needs, and it is true. The worker must have his wages—you may go without a penny anywhere, you will find some one who will protect you. In this country you might find that the laws would interfere and would be enforced, but even in this country a good man never suffers, and he gets enough to live upon. If he is true to himself and his Master and true to his ideal, he will not suffer.

"But those who are devoted to other gods and worship them with food, do worship me, the Supreme, through ignorance".[14] Those who are devoted to other bright spirits and

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13 अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्यभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥९।२२

"'योगक्षेमं' योगः अप्राप्तस्य प्रापणं क्षेमस्तद्रक्षणम्"—Sankara.

Sridhara-swami called योगक्षेम as emancipation or *mukti*. In the *Katha-Upanishad*, it is described as *shreya* (good). The Buddhists called it as Nirvana which is positive. But the literal meaning, as has been given by Sankara, is to procure which is not obtained (*yoga*) and to save which is already obtained (*kshema*).

14 येऽप्यन्यदेवता भक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयाऽन्विताः ।
तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥९।२३

the angels, or some particular manifestation of the Divinity, do worship the Supreme Spirit through ignorance. They consider the other god and bright spirits as the highest, as the spiritualistists do, or as the worshippers of certain manifestations and the worshippers of mythological gods do, but all those mythological gods and goddesses are the manifestations of the one Supreme Being, and they are considered supreme by those who cannot grasp the absolute eternal Truth as it is.

"For I am God and the Lord of all sacrifices; they do not know me in truth and hence they fail to attain to the right fruit of their works".[15] This kind of devotion and good works do not produce permanent results, rather they bring them to the realms of the bright spirits or ancestors, and the worshippers stay there, not knowing that these are not eternal. The devotees of the bright spirits or gods go to the gods, and to the ancestors go the ancestor-worshippers. If you are a worshipper of ancestors and pray to them and constantly worship them and think of them, after death you will go to them and their realm. A spirit-worshipper goes to the region of spirits. These spirits are earth-bound, and if any one is devoted to them, like the mediums, will go to them. They will be drawn toward them, and they cannot help it, "but my worshippers come to me".[16] Those who are devoted to the Eternal Truth, will attain to the Eternal Truth. So you see everything has its place in Vedanta. Even the spirit-worshippers and the ancestor-worshippers are not denounced. Therefore we say it includes all parties. These are not the highest ideals, but if you wish, you can stay in those realms. If you wish to go to heaven, or to the earth-bound spirits, you can do so. But if you wish to attain to the eternal Truth come and follow this

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Sri Krishna has suggested that sense of duality or difference is ignorance or nescience (*ajanana*) and sense of non-duality or non-difference is knowledge (*jnana*). Everything of this universe is covered by the all-consciousness *Atman* or Brahman, but, men, out of ignorance, differentiate everything from the *Atman*.

[15] अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।
न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥९।२४

[16] यान्ति देवव्रता देवान् पितॄन् यान्ति पितृव्रताः ।
भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥९।२५

path. This is the beauty of Vedanta. It does not say you must worship this or go to eternal hell. Go and worship anything, but know what you are worshipping, and be conscious of it, and you are sure to get the result just as you deserve it. Not an iota more will be given to, and not an iota less will you be deprived of. You will get exactly what you want. What you think and desire, you are sure to do. That is the beauty of our life in this world. You have known the laws, and it is no little consolation and happiness that you are sure to get what you deserve. Be worthy of it first and do not say you are worthy of it, but have not got it. That is not true. The moment you are worthy of it, you will get it, whatever it is or whether it be a material or a higher thing. You can try it in your every-day life, no matter what you do. This knowledge you cannot get rid of, no matter where you go, you are bound to reap some results. Vedanta opens the spiritual eyes and makes you see things as they are in reality, and leads you from the darkness of ignorance into the divine knowledge.

CHAPTER XXXV

RELIGION OF VEDANTA IS UNIVERSAL

Religion of Vedanta is all-inclusive. It has different branches, and from the worship of the spiritualists to the worship of the Supreme Deity or unchangeable Truth, every phase of worship and belief is incorporated and embodied in the teachings of Vedanta, but very few people in this country realize the universality of this wonderful philosophy and religion. It does not teach any particular creed or dogma, but it takes in everything. It takes in science, philosophy, and logic, and in the highest ideals which are spiritual, or are given in all the great religions of the world and all those matters of higher Truth which have been expressed in all the writings and books that are to be found. This *Bhagavad Gita* explains in different chapters what different forms of belief and worship are included in religion of Vedanta.

The meaning of the verse IX .25 is: "The devotees of the gods go to the gods, the devotees of the ancestors go to them, worshippers of the spirits go to them and my worshippers come to me". Now from this one verse you understand the universality of the teachings of Vedanta. The devotees of gods go to the gods. The gods here include minor deities, not the Supreme Deity, or the Lord of the universe. The minor deities include the higher spirits, or the higher manifestations of the Divinity, and they also include all the particular personal gods. Every religion has a particular personal God. The Mohammedan has Allah, the Buddhists have Buddha, the Jews have Jehova, etc. Again each one has its particular name and form although they all refer to the one Universal Being, but still the devotees worship the particular forms of that one Universal spirit, and through that worship they attain to that ideal by coming into communion with that particular form of the Supreme Deity, nay, they atlast realize their oneness with the Supreme Spirit, the *Atman* or Brahman.

So those who believe in Christ and worship his form and name, will go to him; those who believe in Buddha, in that

particular name and form will go to Buddha, but those who worship the Supreme Spirit, the *Atman,* which is nameless and formless, will attain to Him. No other religion teaches that so clearly and distinctly. The spiritualists are those who believe in a certain Spirit as the ideal, and will attain to that particular realm where they will come in direct communion with that Spirit, but those devoted to the Supreme Spirit, are the best, and will attain to the highest goal of all religions. Others will remain in the heavens (*svarga*) for an indefinite period and cannot transcend the laws of nature i.e. the laws of cause and sequence. In course of time, they will have to come back and be born again as human beings But those who attain to the Supreme Spirit, the *Atman,* the unchangeable Reality of the universe, do not come back, they transcend all the laws of nature and all the limitations of time and space. They do not care for going to heavens or to enjoy the heavenly pleasures and enjoyments which are invaluable to the less advanced souls.

But, at the same time, the worship of the Supreme Spirit is much easier than the worship of any minor deities. The minor deities have more demands; they are not easily pleased while the Supreme Deity is easily worshipped and can be attained to. The Incarnation (*Avatara*) of the Supreme Deity, Lord Krishna, who flourished in India about 1400 years before the birth of Christ and who was one of the best exponents of Vedanta, was giving this truth to his disciple Arjuna: "When anything like a leaf, a flower, a fruit, water, or any other offering is offered to me with love and devotion, I accept that love offering made by a pure heart".[1]

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[1] पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥९।२६

The word *prayatatmana* means the devotee who is possessed of *shuddha-buddhi* and is *nishkama* i e does works without asking their results. The real meaning of this verse is that when a purified and sincere soul offers anything to God out of his devotion, God accepts it as he is the choosen and beloved Deity. In fact, any kind of offering to God, or to any deity, should be given with sincerity, pure and selfless love and devotion, and God, or deity, counts only sincerity, love and devotion, and not the offerings.

In worshipping the Supreme Deity, what we need is pure love, devotion, and the heart must be purified from all the lower tendencies, animal passions and propensities, and selfish motives and selfish desires. When the heart is purified by unelfish works, good thoughts, and devotional exercises, all the pure divine love and unselfish devotion manifest in the soul of the devotee and, through that unselfish devotion and love, whatever is offered in the name of the Supreme Deity, is accepted by Him. What is the use of offering Him a leaf or a flower or any trivial thing like that? It is not the thing that is to be considered, but it is the love through which that is offered. Even in this daily life, we find that if one loves another purely and unselfishly, the little thing that is done through love counts a great deal. That is the expression of the feelings and not the thing to be considered, so it is the feeling of love and devotion which the Lord takes and accepts, not the trivial things. If you offer the most expensive things with a heart devoid of love and devotion, that offering is not accepted by God, but if you offer a penny with the feeling of devotion and love unselfishly, that offering is considered to be the best and highest, and the Lord is pleased with such offerings which proceed from the pure-hearted devotees through love and devotion. That shows how easily the Lord can be attained through love and devotion. Some people say that Vedanta does not teach love and devotion and worship of God. They ought to remember this passage and a few more which are coming just now.

Bhakti Yoga is the highest philosophy of love that has ever been given to the world. Many of the people of this Western country have an idea that Christianity alone teaches the religion of love and devotion. But it is not so. In India, you will see real devotion and love such as I have never seen in any other country. I have been in Christian lands for many years and have not seen anything such as is found in India. In the Western countries, everything is based upon financial principles, and the people worship God to get something. But who can sacrifice everything for the sake of God- I have tried to see such a man in Western country, but I did not find. Whereas I find hundreds of this type in India where they devote their whole life and soul caring

nothing for the morrow. The people of the West talk of one Christ, but we have living examples of Christ in India. They go bare-footed having no possessions and no home, and their whole life and soul are turned toward God, and whatever they do with their minds and bodies, are done for the sake of God Such persons are ideals, and religion of Vedanta makes such persons, even today.

Here is another instruction which should be remembered by all people in all satges of life, and this is the easiest way of worshipping God. "Whatever thou doest or eatest, or sacrificest, and whatever thou givest, and the austerities thou performest, do them as an offering to me", says the Lord.[2] When you eat anything, or do any kind of work, never think of the results, good or bad, whatever you do or sacrific in your daily life, or whatever you give, or if you fast and go without food, or do any kind of austerity to gain control over your bodies, or you do it as an offering to God. When you walk in the street, let that be an offering to the Deity. It would not be a foolish idea. It is the motive of constant feeling of love and constant remembrance which is meant by devotion.

Devotion means constant remembrance of the beloved When you are walking, or going anywhere, or doing menial work, such as washing the dishes, you should think that is an offering to the Lord.[3] There is no service menial in the eyes of the Supreme Deity, as everything is sacred, and the Lord accepts all such offerings. When you go to the office, offer your office work to the Lord, and say, 'this is thy service'. then you will be free from all anxiety and all the troubles that come up in the course of your daily work. Whether you get the results or not, you will not think of it, then you will have peace, and you will sleep with a clear conscience. This is Karma Yoga, the highest form of worship, and Vedanta

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[2] यत् करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत्।
यत् तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत् कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥९।२७

[3] Just remember the song of mystic Sadhaka Ramprasad, which has already been mentioned before: *mana bali bhaja Kali, iccha haya ya achare' etc.*

teaches that. Show me any other religion that teaches this kind of worship.

Sri Krishna says. "Thus shalt thou be liberated from the bonds of actions which produce good and evil results, and the soul being endowed with the Yoga of renunciation, thou shalt return to me" [4] "Thou shalt be liberated from the bonds of actions that produce good and evil results", for every work is bound to produce a result, and that is bound to come back to the worker and will produce another impression in the mind. That impression will take the form of a tendency to do such work again. That is what we call the bond of action (*karmabandhana*), and the bond of the results of action (*karmaphala-bandhana*). The study of the philosophy of work explains to us very clearly why this law is so inexorable, and this is the universal law of action and reaction Generally the people of the West even belonging to different sects and religions, do not consider this law, and do not know anything about it. India is the only country where this law has been considered so closely, and they have discovered a complete philosophy concerning work and its results, action and reaction. So this bond of action is a great tie, and it ties the soul to the wheel of activity, and there is no rest as long as we are tied down to this wheel of action and reaction. The idea is to do the work and not be tied down to the wheel of

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[4] शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः।
सन्न्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि॥९।२८

The words 'विमुक्तः' and 'मामुपैष्यसि' suggest both *jivanmukti* i.e. emancipation in one's living time, and *videhamukti* i.e. emancipation after the dissolution of the material body. It seems that the *Gita* admits both *jivanmukti* and *videhamukti*.

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"ननश्च सन्न्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा, सन्न्यासः सर्वकर्मणां भगवति समर्पणं—स एव योग इव चित्तशोधकत्वाद् योगस्तेन युक्तः शोधित आत्मान्तःकरणं यस्य त्वं त्यक्तसर्वकर्मा वा कर्मबन्धनैर्जीवन्नेव विमुक्तः सन् सम्यगदर्शनेनाज्ञानावरणनिवृत्त्या मामुपैष्यसि साक्षात् करिष्यस्यहं ब्रह्मास्मिति। ततः प्रारब्धकर्मक्षयात् पतितेऽस्मिन् शरीरे विदेहकैवल्यरूपं मामुपैष्यसि। इदानीमपि सद्रूपः सन सर्वोपाधिनिवृत्त्या मायिकभेदव्यवहारविषयो न भविष्यसीत्यर्थः॥"

action and reaction. To be free from it we offer the results to the Lord, then that will not bind us, and we shall not have to suffer for the works which we have done, so what a gain it is. We are doing the work and not suffering from the results, because we have offered the results to the Lord, the soul is being guided by this Yoga or renunciation. This is a particular renunciation which we can practise now, no matter under what circumstances you may be placed. That is the only sacrifice with which the Lord is pleased. It is the sacrifice of the results of our daily works that is considered as the highest form of sacrifice. Vedanta does not approve the bloody sacrifices which the people practised during the most ancient times i.e. during the Vedic period, but it teaches us that this is the highest form of sacrifice and renunciation When we speak of renunciation, we do not mean that we shall have to throw every thing aside, our family, relations and children out in the streets and go and walk out of the house. That is not the idea. Leave the results to the Lord and you are absolutely free. That freedom is the greatest happiness and peace for one living in the world Now who has attained it? Here a question may arise that the Lord has love and hatred, since He visits His love upon the devotees alone and not upon others. Now you see the idea of this is also discussed in Vedanta Do you believe that God has love for somebody and hatred for somebody? In Christian religions and those of the Mohammedans and the Jews, you will find that God has love and hatred. In the Old Testament, you will find that has been the foundation of Christianity and Mohammedanism, you will find that He rewards some and punishes some, but here you will notice the difference in Vedanta That idea of love and hatred is not permitted by the religion of Vedanta This is the answer "I am the same to all beings, all beings are equal to me I have none whom I love most and none who is hated by me, but those who worship me with love and devotion, they are in Me and I am also in them, because it is natural" [5]

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[5] समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।
ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥९।२९

Although God has neither love nor hatred for any particular individual. He is all infinite, and His love is to be found everywhere. But that human love which is partial and the opposite, hatred do not exist in God. His is absolute love. He has no hatred, and He loves everyone without hatred. If you can imagine such a thing that love is divine. To love for the sake of love, not through attachment is 'pure love'. Sri Krishna says: "Those who have love and devotion for me, feel my love; others who are not devoted to me, do not feel my love". Just as the illustration of fire will show that fire is burning and those who are in direct contact with the fire, feel the heat and enjoy the warmth on a cold day, but those who are away from the fire, do not feel the heat nor warmth. So fire is not to be blamed, because one who is not in direct contact with it, does not get its effects, and others near it, get the results. Can we blame the fire for its apparent love and hatred? The sun shines upon the head of a saint and a sinner alike. If the sinner does not feel the effects of the sun, is the sun to be blamed for that? No, Sri Ramakrishna, my Master, used to give an illustration of lamp that throws light impartially upon him who forges a document or deed and upon him who reads the holy *Bhagavatam*. So those whose heart and soul are purified by the performance of good deeds and unselfish works, and those whose thoughts and ideas are directed toward the Supreme, their heart and soul are to be considered like a polished metal which reflects the light of the divine sun, and when that reflection comes, cannot say that God is partial, because He reflects in particular hearts and not in others. It is not the fault of the reflected substance. A mirror will reflect the light of the sun when it is cleaned, but if you clean an earthen pot, it will not reflect the sun. Are we going to blame the sun, because it is not reflected by the earthen pot? No.

Similarly the reflection of the Divine Sun, the *Atman*, is to be found in those hearts and souls which are purified from selfishness and other impurities, and when the soul is purified, then it begins to shine forth in its true love and devotion and comes easily to the Supreme Deity. Therefore, the Lord says: "Those who are devoted, are in me and I

am in them". They are in direct communion with God. This is the meaning of communion with God, coming in His direct touch. When the sun is shining, we go out and stand in the sun. The Divine Sun is shining all the time. "Even if the greatest sinner worships me with one-pointed devotion", says the Lord, "he must be deemed righteous, for he is a man of good resolution".[6] This is the way a sinner is redeemed, and a sinner becomes perfect through devotion and love. It is not necessary to have a minister, but any one who worships the unchangeable Deity through pure devotion and love, even if he be the greatest sinner, all his sins are redeemed by his devotion and love, and he is righteous. He attains to the path of righteousness, because he is man of good resolution. If you are determined to live a righteous and pure life, from that moment your sins are redeemed, nothing else is necessary, and that determination or resolution is the greatest thing to change the character of a person. A man of firm resolution is always worthy of respect, and the greatest teachers, spiritual leaders, and Saviours are those who make others resolve to live a life according to this determination or vow. They rouse up the best qualities of those individuals, and make them follow their examples.

Sri Krishna says. "Rest assured, O Arjuna, so he becomes righteous and attains eternal peace. And you should know that my devotees never perish".[7] One who lives and worships God, never perishes, wherever he goes after death, he is not going to eternal punishment and damnation, he will continue to love God and attain to eternal peace. Because the Lord

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6 अपि चेत् सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥९।३०

7 क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥९।३१

The seed of this idea of the *Gita* is to be traced in the Vedas In the Rigveda, III 59 2, it has been said· "न हन्यते न जीयते त्वोतो नैनमंहो अश्नोत्यन्तित न दूरात्" ; that is, 'whom you save, no one can destroy or defeat him, and even sin cannot touch him from distance or near'.

does not send anyone to eternal punishment, nor does He reward somebody. Vedanta does not approve of such an ideal of a partial and unjust God, it is our own work and feeling that bring us a proper result in the form of peace and happiness. Sankara has elaborately discussed this question as to whether God can be blamed for the fault of partiality (*vaishamya-dosha*), and he proved that as God has no agency, He is like an impartial witness. Some people have an idea that religion of Vedanta is only for the select few and not for all, but that is not true. And some people have a wrong idea that the Indian women are very badly treated, and there is no salvation for women this is an unfounded story.[8] In this verse, you will find that all people men, women, all the greatest sinners, and worldly people and those doing sinful works will attain to the highest goal of religion through love and devotion. "They find refuge in me" ('मामुपैष्यसि')—says the Lord. Worldly men and women and even those who are of sinful birth attain to the supreme goal if they take refuge in the Supreme Lord, if they love and worship Him and are devoted to Him, nothing else is necessary. That pure love and devotion will be the best form of worship, and this is one side of Vedanta.

I am here discussing the subject which is particularly devotional, but there are other aspects which are just as good and equally beneficial. You cannot get the whole idea of the vast field covered by Vedanta philosophy and religion So you see that any individual, no matter what may be his profession and mode of living, if he has love for and devotion to the Supreme Lord, the *Atman,* his sins are all washed off, and he becomes righteous and attains to eternal peace. Sin, according to

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[8] In some of the cannonical scriptures (*Smriti*) it is often mentioned that 'women are the door of hell' ('नरकस्य द्वारं नारी'), and 'women have neither right in the sacred Vedas', nor 'they will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven'. But these things are mere interpolations or additions by the narrow-minded orthodox and fanatical Brahmins of the time when Brahminism predominated in the society in the mediaeval period in India i.e. in the ironical *brahmanya-yuga.* Otherwise Manu and other Smartas gave a high and honourable position to women Vide Swami Abhedananda: *Women's Place in Hindu Religion* (in 'India & Her People').

Vedanta, is nothing but selfishness, and Vedanta says that any work done with a selfish motive, is sinful This simplifies the whole question, and that selfishness comes through ignorance of our true Self as related to the Universal Spirit. Sankara also says that selfishness is *avidya* or nescience and it binds men in the chain of worldliness (*samsara*). Sri Ramakrishna has also said the same thing. So if we remember that we are the children of God, that we are immortal, that our earthly life is only for a short time, that we are living in eternity and this is not our first and last chance, this is not our real home and our real home is high above this world, we cannot be selfish, and cannot look after this bodily condition alone, and it would be too mean for us to teach. What would be the use of telling lies, or robbing to enrich this little body or even our physical form

So Sri Krishna says: "O Partha (the son of Prithu) even men of low origin, women, Vaishyas and Sudras attain the supreme state of salvation, when they take refuge in me How much it (*mukti*) is attainable by the holy Brahmins, devotees (*Bhaktas*) and warrior and ruling classes (*Kshatriyas*)! If they all take refuge in me, they are freed and attain the supreme good, the *mukti* Therefore, as you have taken the mortal frame in this unreal and painful world, so leaving all phenomenal duties you take refuge in me and pray to me" [9]

We are living in eternity, we the pure and eternal souls. Most people think they have no soul, but, in reality, each of them has a soul If they realize the truth that their souls are immortal, and their soul-life is eternal, then they can never be selfish. The light of wisdom and knowledge will dispel the darkness of ignorance, which is the cause of selfishness, and that is the surest way of becoming unselfish. When the sinners and worldly people living unrighteous life can attain to the highest ideal and the supreme goal through love and devotion, how much more easily attainable is it by the holy Brahmins and devoted saints? The Brahmins and

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[9] मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥
किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।
अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥९।३२-३३

holy persons live a pure and righteous life, undistinguished by any particular caste. Originally we are not distinguished by any particular caste. Any one who lives a righteous life is called a Brahmin. The original meaning of the word 'Brahmin' is: "He who realizes the Brahman, is called i.e. known as Brahmin". ('ब्रह्म जानातीति ब्राह्मणः') Afterwards socially they made it a class of Brahmins. If a sage or saint had a child, and if that son become a seer of Truth, he would be called a Brahmin, and gradually the Brahmins became classified. The Hindu nation is one of the oldest nations, and during thousands of years the Hindus have gone through many changes, social and political too. Consequently, the ideal has changed. At present we are talking of an age when the ideal was different. In those days, kings and princes were great saints, and they were considered to be the ideals of nations. They lived pure and righteous lives.

Sri Krishna was not a warrior by caste (*Kshatriya*), but he became the ideal of all the Brahmins who came to worship Him. So you will see that Brahmins were not the only ones who were considered to be the leaders of mankind. Buddha was not a Brahmin, he was a Kshatriya, Rama was a Kshatriya, Raja Janaka was a Kshatriya. So most of the Kshatriyas or the second caste became the ideals and the spiritual leaders of the Hindus in ancient times.

Arjuna was of the second caste, the warrior caste,[10] and Sri Krishna was instructing and telling him that it was possible for all these sinful people to attain to the highest goal easily through love and devotion. How much more easy was it then for one who was a saint like Arjuna that was the idea. "Therefore having come into this impermanent world be devoted to me" says the Lord. This world is impermanent, perishable, and transitory, and the ideal which we are seeking, is not to be found here, and, therefore, everything worldly must be temporary. We are not after temporary enjoyment for our souls, but we are seeking for permanent peace and happiness, and that cannot be found in anything of this contingent world. If it could be found through money or holding a high official position like that of President, or any other high position, those

[10] Vide the *Gita*, II. 31-32.

who have filled these positions, would be the happiest people in the world. The millionaires are not happy, because all the luxuries are there, but go and see their life and you will see and thank heaven that you are not a millionaire, and so you would not covet such a possession of wealth which drags the soul to the plane of selfishness.

We must not say that all millionaires are like that, because in all countries, there are noble exceptions, but the idea is that no permanent thing can be obtained through wealth or anything that is related to this transitory world. Therefore we should be devoted to that which is permanent and imperishable. Can there be any question about it? Why should we worship the eternal Truth? Because each one of us knows in his soul that this is not the eternal Truth? Because each one of us knows in his soul that this is not the thing that could be found in this world, that eternal peace and happiness, and, therefore, our souls long for that which is eternal, and we know that this world is just like a fantasy. You may look at it, but time will show that this world, to which you have bebecome attached so strongly, is like a dream. It will vanish, and you will come to your senses and see things differently. Then it will come to you to say, 'what a wonder it is to find the people attached to the plane of senses. There is nothing in it, it is empty'.

When that is realized, we are ready for that which is unchangeable and eternal. Until then we are bound to cling to the phantoms of hope, because we have been dragged so long in pursuit of these vain objects which delude us from a distance. Happy is he who has discovered the changeable temporariness of earthly things, and has risen above the sense plane, and put his whole heart and soul after the eternal Truth.

Then Sri Krishna sums up the whole chapter by saying: "Concentrate thy mind on me, be devoted to me, worship me, attain to and bow down to me mentally and phisically. Thus regarding me as the supreme goal and being united to me, thou shalt attain to me in the end".[11] That is the easiest form

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[11] मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।
मामेवेष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥९।३४

of worship. That we should remember and practise in our daily life. You should concentrate your mind on the eternal Truth; it is in your own soul, do not question it. If you hold this thought in your mind, then you are concentrating your mind on the eternal Truth. Repeat these words "Eternal Truth" for a few times and you will get a glimpse of it. Concentrate your minds on the unchangeable truth, be devoted to it, work for it and adore it, praise it all the time, under all circumstances. We should hold it as the supreme goal of life, should try to be united to it in work and out work; that is the end we are sure to attain, that is the eternal Truth. We will enter into the abode of eternal Truth, there is no question of it. "What thou thinkest thou shalt become". If we think of the eternal Truth constantly we will mould our character, transform our being and become eternal Truth in the end. We should begin from this very moment and think that eternal Truth is our birthright, we possess it, we are part and parcel of it already, yet we do not know it. We have not opened our eyes, and have not seen it, but the moment we begin to see it and feel it we have come to the path of realization.

CHAPTER XXXVI

LAMP OF WISDOM DISPELLS ALL IGNORANCE

Now the tenth chapter begins with this verse: "Again listen to my sublime words which I shall speak to thee for thy welfare and thou art selected to hear me. Neither the highest of gods and angels, nor the great souled saints and sages, know my origin, for I am the source of all gods and all great saints No one has ever found the origin of eternal truth, the Supreme Deity, because He is the source of all. He who knows me as birthless, beginningless and knows that the great Lord of the world is the most blessed among mortals, is emancipated from all sins"[1] The very knowledge will come to one who is devoted to the eternal Truth, who loves eternal Truth, who concentrates his mind on the eternal Truth, who works for it and constantly remembers it during the work of daily life

According to religion of Vedanta, God is the source of all activities and all feelings. Everything that is uplifting, everything that makes one spiritual and understand the true nature of things, comes from that infinite source.

The speaker here is the Incarnation of the Divinity. He is Krishna, the Hindu Christ He says: "Everything proceeds from me", because he never forgets his divine nature, and he is one with the Divinity Whenever he speaks about anything. He speaks from that plane of spiritual realization So here he says. "Intelligence, wisdom, absence of delusion, forgiveness, truth, self-control, subjugation of mind, pleasure and

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1 श्रीभगवानुवाच—

भूय एव महाबाहो शृणुमे परमं वचः।
यत् तेऽहं प्रीयमानाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥
न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः।
अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणाञ्च सर्वशः ॥
यो मामजमनादिञ्च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम्।
असंमूढ़ः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥१०।१-३

pain, birth and destruction, fear and fearlessness, killing and non-killing, sameness, contentment, austerity, fame and shame, —from me alone these different kinds of disposition arise."[2]

Intelligence is that power by which we can understand the true nature of things, as well as we can understand the distinction between the real and the unreal, the eternal and the non-eternal, the spirit and the matter. Intelligence or intellect (*buddhi*) is one of the manifestations of *Antahkarana*, the internal organ. There are other manifestations like *mana*, *chitta*, and *ahamkara*. Intelligence is wisdom, and it is that which reveals the truth, by which we can get the true knowledge of our true Self which is Self-knowledge (*atmajnana*). When Self-knowledge is gained, it leads to the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, because, in studying Vedanta, you will find that the true nature of the soul is divine. Divinity is dwelling within us, not far away above the clouds in some regions alone, but he is dwelling in every person or being. He is the Soul of our souls, the Life of our lives, and that is to be understood by the students of Vedanta. He is the *Antarayamin*, because he controls everything from within. And those who follow the religion of Vedanta, will try to feel the Divinity within the soul, nay, they realize the spiritual nature of this universal religion. It is not necessary to go to a particular temple, but the human body is the temple where dwells the Eternal Being who is to be worshipped in spirit.[3] So, by that knowledge you can understand the true nature of religion.

There is a power which deludes the ordinary mortals and makes them mistake the unreal for the real and the non-eternal for the eternal, and you will find that in ordinary persons that deluding power is very strong. Those who think of themselves as one with the body, are deluded and misdirected.

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[2] बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ॥
अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।
भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥१०।४-५

[3] In the *Upanishads*, he has been described as *Purusha* who shines in the lotus of the heart (*'hridaya-pundarike'*).

Those who think there is no such thing as Spirit, are deluded Those who think there is no such thing as immortality, are deluded, because their minds are covered with a veil of self-delusion, they cannot get beyond it. So absence of delusion you will find in the wise ones only, who have attained to spiritual realization and have made progress in spiritual evolution, and when they come to that realization, they become free from delusion, they come nearer to God, therefore, that is a power which proceeds from God and helps mankind Moreover wherever there is absence of delusion, there is forgiveness We always say 'forgive', but as long as we are attached to any particular object, we cannot forgive So wherever there is absence of delusion and there are wisdom and true intelligence, there is forgiveness and there is truthfulness

What is truthfulness? Truthfulness is a quality that fights against falsehood, nay, it is a kind of knowledge that helps us to see what is right and correct. So we must be truthful It is very necessary also in worldly life, but that is where truthfulness is not observed. Ordinary men do not care for truthfulness and their everything tends to be based upon falsehood. But that which is based upon falsehood, cannot make us realize the eternal Truth, because, its foundation is upon truthfulness There is a beautiful definition of truthfulness given by Sankaracharya in his commentary, which is this. "Giving utterance to one's actual impressions with a view to impressing them upon the mind of another—that is truthfulness."[1] What you have experienced or heard or seen, if you express that by giving utterance to it in order to impress it upon the mind of another, that would be truthfulness. If you do not care to express it, keep silent.

Self-control: Self-control means the control of the sense-powers and the subjugation and control of the mind These are all divine qualities.

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[1] "'सत्यं' यथादृष्टस्य यथाश्रुतस्य च आत्मनुभवस्य परबुद्धिसंक्रान्तये तथैवोच्चार्यमाणा वाक् सत्यमुच्यते ।"—Sankara

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"सत्यं प्रमाणेनावबुद्धस्यार्थस्य तथैव भाषणम्",

i.e. that which is established or known by any means of knowledge (*pramana*) and is represented correctly in that way, is truthfulness.

Pleasures and pain: Sometimes pain is more helpful and uplifting than pleasures. People who always seek pleasure, remain attached to the sense plane, but pain helps us more in our quelling peace by rising above the plane of attachment. So pain is necessary. Pain can be known as *vedana* that arises from the separation of God or some beloved ones. The Vaishnava mystics of India, as well as the Christian, Spanish, and Arabian and Persian mystics welcome *vedanta* or pangs separation from the all-beloved God to intensify their desire to commune with the Beloved. Pangs (of separation from the Beloved) or pain is here helpful for the devotees of God.

Birth, existence and non-existence i.e *bhava, bhava,* and *abhava*: Birth is manifestation of that which remained unmanifested Birth gives rise to existence that persists in space and time. Existence can be non-relational and universal when it transcends the categories of space and time. Non-existence connotes the idea of negation (*abhava*), or of unmanifestedness.

Fear and fearlessness, killing and non-killing: Non-killing should be cultivated, because when we learn to recognize the feelings of others, we do not want to be hated or injured or killed by others, so we should practise this upon others, even toward lower animals. The animals have the same fear of death, and have feeling, mind, and soul, so this feeling of non-killing should be cultivated. Try to see the sameness in all beings. The sameness lies in the soul. We should recognize that feeling of sameness even amongst foes and enemies, then all ill-feeling will pass away. You do not have to study books, but all books will be a part of your life. You cannot help but being ethical, if you follow the teachings of Vedanta. He who ealizes the sameness in a wise one, is great and divine.

Now it is a psychological fact that all kinds of fear have their root in the idea of death. All men and animals fear death or dissolution of their material bodies. The *Upanishad* says: *'dvaitad bhayam'* i.e. fear originates from duality, or from the sense of duality. So if we practise or cultivate the idea of sameness or oneness, then we can transcend the idea of duality and death. We should think that our *Atman* is deathless and birthless i.e. immortal, and the body is mortal

and body is quite separate from the *Atman*, and then we will be able to own fearlessness.

Contentment should be practised Very few people are contented. They always struggle after things which are imaginary, and so they are never contented with their present conditions. It brings peace, tranquility, and freedom from worry and anxiety, and that feeling should be cultivated And it should be remembered that hunger or demand is like the flame of the blazing fire and the objects of hunger or demand are like the butter We all know that butter cannot extinguish the fire, rather it intensifies the volume of the fire So hunger or demand or desire cannot bring satisfaction or contentment in the mind, it is desirelessness and control of the senses that can bring real contentment and peace in the mind. So we should practise contentment which means we should control our mind and senses, and concentrate our mind on the *Atman* which is all-bliss and all-peace all the time, and as soon as we will be able to concentrate our mind upon the *Atman*, then and then our desires will be minimised, nay, will be transformed into Divine consciousness, and then and then alone we will get real contentment and peace, for which all men and women struggle hard throughout their life.

We should learn to bear hardship, and go through hardship, physical and mental, in order to strengthen ourselves All austerities, and all voluntary practices by spiritually-minded people are for strengthening themselves to be able to bear the burden of worldly existence.

Be charitable Charity should be practised . it is the first expression of self-sacrifice. Whatever you hold dear to your heart, if you can give a portion of it to another and allow him to share it, you become charitable. If you worship the Almighty dearly, give away a portion of your blessings by way of charity and that is uplifting It brings non-attachment, and brings you nearer to God.

Fame for anything· If you have done any good and have fame, you should try to keep it. But remember name and fame are the bindings that chain the soul to delusion, and lead the soul to the den of selfishness. So beware of the fame

Be ashamed of anything that is wrong and that would be

analysing. But if you glory in wrong-doing, you would do that wrong thing over and over again, and there would be no help for you. That kind of shame should be cultivated. Shame for doing wicked deeds and thoughts helps men in the path of progress.

These different kinds of disposition rise from the Divine source, and they lead to Divinity. That which makes you free from all these bondages, suffering, sorrow etc. and which makes you free from everything worldly, is divine. It is to be practised, and in the end it will reap the results which are extremely spiritual.

Here we come to a Hindu mythological description. Sri Krishna says: "The seven great Rishis, or Seers of Truth, the four mind-born sons of the Creator including Sanaka and Manu, the first men of an evolutionary cycle, and other Manus were born of my mind and endowed with my essence: from them descended all these creatures of the world."[4] The seven great Rishis were the first teachers of the world. The Seers of Truth were inspired by the Divinity, and these are the mind-born sons of the Creator. The Creator first sent out a world, then there would be a son born with His wisdom and power, and so there were four such great ones who possessed the wisdom and power of the Creator, and Manu the first man of an evolutionary cycle and other Manus were born. According to Vedanta, evolution takes place in cycles, and in each cycle there is the first man who is called Manu. From Manu perhaps, came the name, man. These two words have a relation, and man is called 'manu'.

There was intellect, and there was the sense power, and spirituality came from the divine source. Sri Krishna says that

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[4] महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथ ।
मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥१०।६

(a) The seven Rishis are Bhrigu (or Vashista), Marichi, Atri, Pulaha, Pulasta, Angira and Kratu. (b) Four Maharshis are Sankara, Sanandana, Sanatkumara and Sanatana. (c) Fourteen Manus are Svayambhuva, Svarochisha, Uttama, Tamasa, Raivata, Chakshusa, Vaivasvata, Savorni, Daksha-savarni, Brahma-savarni, Dharma-savarni, Rudra-savarni, Deva-savarni, and Indra-savarni. In the *Puranas*, these names have been mentioned.

all the great teachers of the world received this wisdom from me, the infinite Supreme Spirit. "He who knows, in truth, this glory and divine power of mine, is endowed with unshaken realization, there is no doubt of this."[5] The glory and divine power must be known, God dwells in everything and He is the source of all these powers, wisdom, and all forces that are spiritual and uplifting. When we realize and know this, then we have received unshaken realization and attained to it. It could not be destroyed by any other influence or power. There is no doubt about it The Divinity possesses all these divine powers and infinite wisdom, and that is the first thing we should learn.

The Divinity possesses infinite wisdom, and all these powers are manifested in the world. If we can think of a source from which all these powers proceed, and if we can think of the common source of knowledge manifested in the world by the great teachers and Incarnations of God, then we can get a glimpse of that infinite wisdom which is the source of all intelligence, and having attained to that glimpse, we cannot but be drawn to that infinite source. We must worship and we cannot help it. The greatest of the souls of human beings will bow down before that infinite wisdom.

"I am the origin of everything, and everything evolves from me. Knowing this the wise worship me with love, they cannot help it."[6] The minute you feel the grandeur and great-

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5 एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥१०।७

Now what are the *bibhutis* of Yogas? These are glories and powers, and these two words connote the idea of all-pervasiveness and all-powerfulness (*sarvatmakatva* and *sarvasaktimatva*) of God, the Purushottama.

6 अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।

इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधाः भावसमन्विताः ॥१०।८

The word *-aham* means here Paramatman, Vasudeva Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

अहं परं ब्रह्म वासुदेवाख्यं सर्वस्य जगतः प्रभव उत्पत्तिकारणमुपादानं निमित्तं च स्थितिनाशादि च सर्वं मत्त एव प्रवर्तते भवति । * * इत्येवं मत्वा बुधाः विवेकेनावगत तत्त्वा भावेन परमार्थतत्त्वग्रहरूपेण प्रेम्णा समन्विताः सन्तो मां भजन्ते ।"

ness of that source of wisdom, you cannot but bow down and salute that infinite source, because that is the origin of everything. All these various forces of nature, physical, mental and spiritual, manifested that spirit, and there is nothing greater than that.

What could be greater than that infinite source of wisdom? Can you imagine anything greater than the infinite? No, it would be impossible, "Therefore, the wise ones," said Sri Krishna, "worship me with love." We see critics and theologians say that religion of Vedanta does not teach the worship through love, and this can only be found in the Christian religion, but the whole philosophy of love, of which a portion is to be found in Christianity, is to be found in Vedanta. Christianity gives one a portion of love, the love of a son to his father or a slave to his master, but the other portions are not taught in it. The love of father and son is cultivated in India, nay, all phases of love have been practised and through that practice wonderful results have been obtained in India. So no Hindu needs to be taught the worship through love, because no other religion can teach the worship through love to one who is already well-versed in it and practises it daily in his life.

But before we can worship through love we must have knowledge that leads to that worship. We should have knowledge of His greatness, His divinity, glory, and His infinite powers, etc. All this knowledge leads to that worship, devotion, and feeling of love. You cannot help loving that great One. Worship through love is described here.

"With their hearts fixed on me," says the Lord, "with their souls resting on me, instructing each other and ever glorifying me, they are content, and they rejoice."[7] We will have to give our heart and soul to God, and we must fix our minds upon the Supreme. All the senses should be absorbed in Him, and when the heart and soul are absorbed and filled with the Divine Being, you cannot help speaking about it. "Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh", it is true. So it is here mentioned that when you are filled, and your heart is filled

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[7] मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥१०।९

with divine thoughts. You should instruct each other, and speak about it. If you are interested in Vedanta, you cannot help speaking about it The supreme teachings are so wonderful that you cannot stop your mouth, because the heart will speak out. And you cannot help glorifying the Supreme Being, because He is so dear to your soul, He is the Soul of your soul, Life of your life, source of your intelligence and existence, and the source of your being, the giver of all pleasures and happiness, peace, and tranquillity that you have received during your life-time How can you help glorifying that Being? And when you do glorify Him, you are contented, and you must rejoice, and there is no other feeling which can develop this feeling of rejoicing or happiness that comes to the soul when the full expression of the heart's love takes place

So when we worship God, we must see this thing whether we have done it properly or not, whether our hearts are fixed on Him or not, whether our souls rest in Him or not Our hearts may be fixed on temporary objects of the world, and if you think of these thoughts at the time when you are supposed to be worshipping God, your worship is not perfect and your heart is not fixed upon God Therefore, your worship is only on the surface. It is not deep, and it is not the worship of the heart. If your soul rests upon external objects, your worship is not perfect. So the best form of worship, according to universal religion of Vedanta, is through one-pointed concentration and meditation and that is worshipping in spirit, and that you learn in Vedanta Sri Krishna further says. "To those who are devoted to me all the time and worship me with contentment and love, I give knowledge of understanding, by which they realize or get me as the innermost *Atman.*"[8] The *buddhiyoga* is a faculty of clear understanding or appreciating the Real, and 'when a devotee wholeheartedly worships me, surrenders him on me and knows me as the ultimate goal," says the Lord, "I make his doubt clear, I make his mind transparent by removing all modifications and distractions, I help him to cut asunder the knots of his mind, and thus all his

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[8] तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥१०।१०

karmas (actions) have their end, and he reaches me and realizes me as his soul and essence."[9]

Rituals and ceremonials are good, because they help us in gathering our thoughts and stringing them together. So the mind, through the power of sensation, will rise above the worldly plane. Whenever you smell burning incense, that will lift you above the plane of the world. Then the worldly thoughts will not come to the mind. When you have beautiful flowers around you, you would offer them to the Supreme. Therefore, rituals and ceremonials are observed by the Roman Catholics and other sects of the dualistic religions. They are not to be condemned; they are all right. They have their place and are all authorized in Vedanta. All those who wish to find these ceremonials, can have a plenty of them. We can give more of these than any other religion can ever furnish, and still we lead the minds of the devotees from the surface, deeper and higher above the plane of our intellect through love, and reach the highest plane.

When you cannot meditate or sit in silence, if you have some friend, go and talk about that wonderful truth that fills your heart and soul, and that would be a part of your worship. Instruct others, and that would be a part of your worship. So, at the time of worship, we must remember and examine whether our hearts and souls are filled with the Divinity, whether our senses are absorbed in Him, and whether we see with our eyes the presence of the Divinity. In that case, our sight will be changed. When we look at the face of a person, instead of seeing the human side, we will see the divine side which is everywhere. If we do not do that, the fault is in us, and our own sight has become worldly. But every woman should be regarded as a representative of the Divine Mother.

God is our mother, nay, He is the father and the mother at the same time. So the presence of the Divine mother in women and Divine father in men should be seen. The soul is sexless, still the same sexless souls appear through the

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[9] Sankara said:

"येन बुद्धियोगेन सम्यग्दर्शनलक्षणेन 'मां' परमेश्वरमात्मभूतं आत्मत्वेनोपयान्ति प्रतिपद्यन्ते * * ।"

forms which signify particular sexes. When we say God is father and mother, we do not mean any particular sex, but beyond both. As all sexes proceed from God, they are equally great and divine. That sublime thought you can get alone in Vedanta, and no other religion has furnished it in such a beautiful way as Vedanta has done.

When you hear any music or any sound, can you feel the presence of the Divinity in that sound? No, but it can be done. Any kind of sound will appear to you sweet and divine, and through that sound you will hear the celestial music and feel the presence of the Divinity. Nothing is bad, everything will receive the divine touch. But until then you have good and bad, because good or bad life lies in your mind and not outside of you. The same thing will appear to you good or bad under certain conditions. If your mind is projected to a certain phenomenal line, it will be good or bad, but if it is projected to a thing from the highest standpoint, your perception will be deeper, and you will see, nay, feel the all-pervading, omnipresent Spirit dwelling under the cover of good and bad.

We will have to devote all works of our life to God, and feel the presence of the Divinity in the works we do in our daily life, then all these works are acts of worship. Think of God and at the same time think of yourself as serving the Divine Spirit through these works, no matter how small the work is. There is nothing small or low in the eyes of God. The lowest of the low worships Him and is dear to Him just as much as the holiest saint, because God is the Soul of the souls of the lowest.

As I have already explained before that nothing is hated or loved by God, everything is equal to Him; otherwise He would be partial and unjust. The idea of the Devil has no space in this philosophy and religion. The Satan. the creator of evil, does not exist there. These are all imaginations that had their place in ancient times, but now it is the time for us to rise above that idea; not to think of it or hold to it, but to rise above it, and to see if we can harmonize our religion with the highest discoveries of science and philosophy Particularly it is the age of science and reason, and, in this rational scientific age, we must give the illustrations of science,

and of Mimamsa or any other things of the bygone days. So mix science with philosophy and religion, and make these three into one, and that is the mission of Vedanta in this scientific world, and that is the religion of the twentieth century. Vedanta was preached in this country, not to create a sect, but to show that all these can be harmonized. There is no quarrel among them Moreover science and philosophy stop after going to a certain point, but you will notice in Vedanta that we start froI there and push from that through psychology and different branches of knowledge, then through religion, then through art, music and everything to God. All these are different paths or methods which lead to the same goal. We should, therefore, offer our heart, our external senses, our life, and our soul to God. This offering we should do every time when we sit to worship in meditation upon the Divinity. We have these practices in Vedanta Society (in U.S.A.). Every afternoon we have meditation, and that is the form of worship in silence, no words are necessary when you are going to offer your heart and soul to God. Whom are you going to speak to? What is the use of praying loudly or offering any particular form of prayer? Pour out the feelings of your heart before the altar of the Supreme. If you repeat a certain form of *mantra* or prayer, it will be just like a certain repetition. Your mind may be thinking of something else, it may be the Wall Street (in America),[10] or any other place. What good can you get from that kind of prayer? Nothing. So put your heart before your ideal. Whatever name appeals to you, repeat that mentally,- as all words are his names. So when the devotees worship in this way, what do they get through this ever-devoted worshipping? They would live to gain that devotion of right knowledge by which they attain to me.

Here you will notice that those who worship through love, attain to the highest knowledge of the Supreme. The knowledge of truth comes to them. The highest knowledge and the highest love go hand in hand. Knowledge leads to love, and love leads to higher knowledge. And remember what Sri

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[10] The Swami was then delivering this *Gita* lectures in the Vedanta Society, in America.

Ramakrishna, my Master, has said He said that pure love (*prema*) and pure knowledge (*jnana*) are one and the same There are two kinds of knowledge, one from reading books or perception of the senses, or through ordinary knowledge, and other is the realization i e knowledge of realization which is something superior. When that superior knowledge becomes a part of our being, we become religious When we have made ourselves a part of the Infinite, we feel it That feeling comes through love and long worship and practice. It is not mere words, but it is the most practical thing. If we sit with God and practise for a few minutes, we will see for ourselves.

The Lord gives the higher wisdom to those ever-devoted and to those who worship Him through love What has that knowledge to do? That gift of knowledge is not very desirable What will it do? "Out of my compassion and mercy for them I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness of ignorance with the effulgent light of wisdom"[11] Now what is this darkness of ignorance which makes all beings separate from the Supreme Deity, forgetting our true nature, thinking of ourselves as one with body, being attached to worldly and transitory things and not realizing the difference between the real and the unreal. This ignorance is the false-knowledge (*mithya-pratyaya*) for which men take the spirit as the matter —the rope as the snake[12] It deludes men and makes them forget everything. That is the nature of darkness or ignorance that makes one selfish, and everything that proceeds from selfishness is more or less sinful. Therefore, when that darkness is dense, sin is dense also, and the soul becomes soiled and, consequently, becomes imperfect. The lamp of wisdom is lighted by the presence of the Divinity in the soul of a sincere devotee and that light destroys the darkness of ignorance. The lamp of wisdom is beautifully described by Sankaracharya in his commentary, which runs "The lamp of wisdom, or the lamp of discriminatory knowledge, is fed

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[11] तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥१०।११

[12] Sankara also said· "मिथ्याप्रत्ययलक्षणं मोहान्धकारम् ।"

by the oil of pure devotion." The wisdom is compared to a lamp, the oil of pure devotion will be in that lamp. "Fanned by the wind of earnest meditation on me and through their devotion that lamp is lighted, furnished with the wick of right intuition, purified by the cultivation of piety, chastity and other virtues held in the soul and heart which are completely detached from all worldly concerns placed in the wind-sheltered enclosure of the mind, withdrawn from sense objects, and untainted by attachment and aversion generated by the incessant practice of concentration and meditation."[13]

We should sit in a quiet place to concentrate and meditate but, at the same time, having devoted love our hearts should be purified by the cultivation of purity, chastity, and other virtues. These things are necessary and then, when the lamp is lighted, that light would disperse the darkness of ignorance. And when ignorance is destroyed, that soul becomes free from sin. Here there is no minister necessary; there is no need of it, because your higher soul will be the minister between the ego and the Supreme Spirit, and that is holy. The minister is in each one of us. We must learn it, begin to feel the presence of the minister called Christ, or Buddha, or Krishna, or Ramakrishna. It is the Divinity in us, and by holding that Divinity in us, we will reach the Divinity of the universe, and that is the idea. If there were no touch of the Divinity within our souls, we could not reach Him, we would have remained cut off and separated, we could not have reached Him and would have needed some external meditator like a bridge to go over the gulf. But that is not necessary. We are the children of God. We are sons and daughters of the immortal Spirit, and that feeling we can get through the worship with love, and through meditation, concentration, etc. All worldliness will vanish, and we will attain to peace and tranquillity in this life. That happiness knows no bounds, and is not dependent upon external conditions.

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[13] "'ज्ञानदीपेन' विवेकप्रत्ययरूपेण भक्ति-प्रसाद-स्नेहाभिषिक्तेन मद्भावनाभिनिवेश-वातेरितेन ब्रह्मचर्यादिसाधनसंस्कारवत्प्रज्ञाबर्तिना विरक्तान्तःकरणाधारेण विषयव्यावृत्त-चित्तरागद्वेषाकलुषितनिवातापवारकस्थेन नित्तप्रवृत्तैकाग्र्यध्यानजनित-सम्यग्दर्शनभास्वता 'ज्ञानदीपेन' इत्यर्थः।"—Sankara.

That happiness which once attained, will never be forgotten, and will bring unto us the peace everlasting, and that peace is the ideal or goal of all religions We would not have to wait until after death, but enjoy it in this life and rise above ordinary conditions, and sorrows and sufferings This is the ideal of Vedanta.

CHAPTER XXXVII

EVERYTHING IS MANIFESTATION OF THE LORD

You know that in the universal religion of Vedanta the idea of Incarnation of the Supreme Deity is very strongly accepted.[1] Religion of Vedanta accepts all the Incarnations, or the divine manifestations, that have taken place at different times amongst different nations. In this universal religion, there is no one particular manifestation which is considered to be the only Incarnation, or the only real manifestation, and no one else. That idea of exclusiveness you do not find in this philosophy and religion of Vedanta.

Sri Krishna, the speaker of the *Bhagavad Gita,* was one of the oldest Incarnations of the Divinity in India. He has been worshipped for over 3000 years as the Incarnation of the Supreme Deity, and his disciple was Arjuna. Standing in the midst of the battle that took place in India about 4,000 B.C. Arjuna, who was the commander of one of the parties, asked his charioteer, who was Krishna, the Incarnation of the Divinity, many questions of deep significance and eternal varieties. Those who have read the *Mahabharata,* and the first chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita,* know and understand the conditions upon which the battle for the establishment of righteousness took place; and Sri Krishna took the lead in that fight. But

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[1] In the Introduction of the Commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita* (*Bhashyopakramanika*), Acharya Sanakra has discussed about the Incarnation of God (*Isvara-avatara*). He said:

"स च भगवान् ज्ञनैश्वर्यशक्तिबलवीर्यतेजोभिः सदा सम्पन्नत्रिगुणात्मिकां वैष्णवीं स्वां मायां मूलप्रकृतिं च बशीकृत्य अजोऽव्ययो भूतानामीश्वरो नित्यशुद्धमुक्तस्वभावोऽपि सन् स्वमायया देहवानिव जात इब च लोकानुग्रहं कुर्वन्निव लक्ष्यते * * ।"

Sankara said that *Isvara* assumes the human form with the help of his own inscrutable *maya* which is known as the primordial Energy or *Prakriti,* so as to do good to the human society, and not only Sankara, but also all Commentators like Ramanuja, Nimvarka, Madhva, Ballabha, Srikantha, Baladeva, Sridhara, Srikara and others admitted this theory of Incarnation (*avataravada*).

after hearing all these discourses in the ten chapters of the *Gita* we have learned that Sri Krishna, whenever He spoke of Himself, whenever he used the expressions 'I', Me, Mine always referred to the Supreme Deity, the Omnipresent Spirit, and never to the individual mortal man. I have also explained it before.

After He had said He was the beginning and end of the universe, and He had existed before the world was created etc. Arjuna asked him this question, "Thou art the Supreme Brahman, the Absolute, and the Supreme Purifier art thou, all the saints declare Thee as the eternal Spirit divine and primal God, primal Lord of the universe, unborn and all-pervading So said the divine sage Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa, and Thou, and Thyself also sayeth to me the same thing."[2]

Arjuna wished to know how far it was true. He had heard that Sri Krishna was the Supreme Brahman, the absolute Spirit and Supreme Abode and also the Supreme Purifier, but he wanted to see and know something more positively about the manifestations. This chapter will lead to the wonderful transfiguration of Sri Krishna, the transfiguration which is more particularly and beautifully described than the transfiguration of Christ. Sri Krishna will show in the eleventh chapter that He is the all-pervading Spirit. "I believe to be true all this Thou declarest to me, neither gods, nor *Devas*, nor bright spirits, nor angels, nor the *Danavas*, know thy manifestation",[3] said Arjuna.

Arjuna believed that Sri Krishna was the Incarnation of God, and His glory and manifestation and power were unbounded. "Thyself alone, the highest of spirits, knowest thy

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2 अर्जुन उवाच—
परमं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।
पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥
आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिनारदस्तथा ।
असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषिमे ॥१०।१२-१३

3 सर्वमेतादृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसी केशव ।
न हि ते भगवन् व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥१०।१४

true nature. By Thyself art Thou the creator of all beings, Lord of all gods and the Ruler of the world".[4] So you see how he addressed Sri Krishna, the Incarnation, and, in the same way, Sri Krishna is addressed today by his followers. There are thousands and thousands of followers who worship Sri Krishna and regard Him as the Incarnation of the Supreme Deity.

"Thou alone knowest Thy true nature by Thyself". No one can know God except Himself, we cannot know God. Now it is a fact that God, when known by any other being, is no longer God. The absolute Deity, when known by any other mortal, has become limited and would be no longer God. So, in order to know God, each person must know himself. The part of the Divinity in us will be able to see that Divinity in the universe, and that part which is mortal in us, will never be able to know Him, and that is the reason why we should first of all unfold our divine nature in order to know God. God cannot be known by any mortal being, and if any mortal being knows God, then that being must be regarded as no other than God, because like attracts like, and *brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati.* In the Old Testament, Moses and other prophets said repeatedly that no one could see God face to face, and that is true, because the moment you come face to face with the Infinite, your finite nature will be dissolved i.e. your finite nature will be reduced to nothing. But still you do not lose your individuality, because your individuality depends, not upon your material nature, but upon that part which is immortal in you. "Thou knowest Thyself by Thyself". So God is known by Himself alone, and when any other such character has known Him, you must remember that it was through the divine power that the subtle character could get a glimpse of the Supreme Deity. All the attributes of the Supreme Deity were given to Sri Krishna, who, in his divine aspect, is the generator of all beings. He is the Lord of all, God of gods, and the Ruler of the world.

Arjuna says: "Graciously do Thou tellest me all Thy divine manifestation, by which glories Thou abidest, pervading

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[4] स्वयमेवात्मनात्मनं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।
भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥१०।१५

all these worlds".[5] He wants to know more particularly about the manifestations in the universe, how He manifests Himself in the universe. "How shall I know Thee, ever meditating upon Thee, O Yogin, and in what various objects art Thou to be seen and observed by me?"[6]

One thing you will notice in this verse that God as the absolute Spirit cannot be comprehended by the limited human mind. The human mind cannot reach the Absolute, but He can be comprehended through some attributes, or through some form or manifestation. The unchangeable Reality of the universe, which is pure existence, intelligence, and power, cannot be comprehended easily by ordinary mortals. When we try to worship, or meditate upon the Supreme Deity, or if we meditate upon the Absolute, we shall have to take some idea and get some conception of the Absolute from that idea. First know what we mean by the Absolute, and then meditate on it But it would not be the Absolute, it would be the image or mental picture of the Absolute, and the Absolute is far from that. When you think of God as sitting on a chair somewhere in the heavens, that is your mental picture, but God is far from that. When you worship and pray to God and think of Him as a human being, with a certain expression of face and eyes, these are mental pictures which the devotees and worshippers give to God. A Chinese may have another picture of God, with 20 hands and 100 heads. His mental picture is presented by that form which may be very disgusting to a Western mind, because the Western mind is too particular and much less imaginative, therefore, a Chinese mind will not accept a two-handed God. So, if you cannot give God 20 hands and 100 heads, how can He be different from an ordinary mortal? That may be his conception, and his conception may be just as good as his who thinks of God with two hands. You get that mental picture through the education which you have received from your childhood from books. The natural tendency is to

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5 वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥१०।१६

6 कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्तां सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।
केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्तोऽसि भगवन् मया ॥१०।१७

imagine a God just like a human being, and you give Him a human form, and you cannot get out of that conception of the human being as the highest and Lord of the universe. Therefore we give a human form to God. But whether we give a human form, or an imaginary form, still there is nothing but an imaginary or an ideal picture. You may see that form at the time of worship. You may visualize it, but that will not be the actual, that would be only the mental picture of the Absolute. So whenever you meditate, you will notice that you cannot meditate without giving some form, or imagining some ideal picture, or uttering a name, but you cannot. If you are to meditate on the omnipotence of God, you will have to repeat mentally 'omnipotence', and then the thought and name will go together, and you will form a picture of omnipotence in the mind. These three will go together and cannot exist without each other, and, therefore, in worship we need symbols. Name and form are the symbols. The ideal picture is a symbol. So here Arjuna asks Sri Krishna: "How shall I know Thee, ever meditating on Thee, O Yogin, and in what various objects art Thou to be comprehended by me?"

God is all-pervading, but on what various objects shall we have to meditate, in what way does He dwell in all beings and all things, and what objects should we accept for meditation? So Arjuna asks to Sri Krishna: "Declare again in detail Thy powers and manifestations, for I am not satiated after drinking with my ears the nector of thy glory, I like to hear it over and over again, although I have heard many things about Thy divine meditation, still I like to hear it again".[7] Then Krishna says: "Now I shall tell thee the principal divine manifestations of mine. Although I am unlimited, nothing can limit me, I am the all-pervading spirit, still I will declare some of the divine manifestations of mine".[8] Here you will get an idea

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7 विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।
भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥१०।१८

8 श्रीभगवानुवाच—
हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।
प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥१०।१९

of the Absolute, the all-pervading Spirit. "I am the Spirit seated in the heart of all beings; I am the beginning, and middle and end of all beings".[9] Can you imagine a substance sitting in the heart of all beings and which is the beginning and middle and end of all beings? This is a problem you will have to solve by yourself; find out what is dwelling in your heart, and what is the beginning and middle and end of yourself, and that is God and the Divinity in you. If you have done that in yourself, you have found the Divinity in the universe. This is the thing you have known in Vedanta, and knowing your own true self, dwelling in your heart, you know God. In short, by knowing yourself you know the Lord of the universe. So God is not very far from you, He is dwelling in your hearts in the form of spirit. He is the essence of our existence, the Soul of our souls, the essence of our Being. If you know that you exist, that very knowledge, and existence, and self-consciousness, all these proceed from that spirit that is dwelling in your heart.

As, on the one hand, He is dwelling in the hearts of all living beings, so He dwells in the hearts of all animate objects. The essence of all forms is God. Some people may think that it is Pantheism, but that is not true. Vedanta does not teach that matter or force, or any form of matter is God, but it is the essence of every existence, the life and soul of every object whether animate or inanimate. Every object dwells in and through God, and begins and ends in God, but not in the material form. The Lord says: "I am the sun of all the etherial bodies, the moon of all the constellations".[10] Here He is telling all the different things which are considered to be objects of worship. Some people worship the sun, some people worship the moon, so these bright objects, and objects of luminosity, are considered to be the symbols of the Supreme Spirit. By worshipping the sun as the giver of light and heat and protector of the earth and all vegetation etc., we get very grand ideas, and sublime feelings

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9 अहमात्मा गुड़ाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यञ्च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥१०।२०

10 आदित्यानामहं बिष्णर्जोतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥१०।२१

come to our hearts and then we worship and bow down before the omnipresent Spirit that is shining through the light of the luminous sun.

Mind is one of the symbols through which God, the infinite absolute Spirit, could be realized and worshipped. If you think of the mind of a great sage like Christ, or Buddha, or Krishna, and if you imagine that mind as the seat of the supreme absolute Spirit, you will get the Supreme Being more quickly and will realize Him. Of the senses mind and intelligence are the most essential in all living beings. If you can think of intelligence of the living beings, you will find that intelligence proceeds from that infinite source of knowledge and wisdom. Whatever is intelligent in this world, is a part of the Divinity. Matter and force are not intelligent. Intelligence can never be produced by matter and force, or by their combination. Intelligence is uncreated something, and that is co-eternal with matter and force. Intelligence is not a result of matter and force, but, on the contrary, it can be shown that it existed even before matter and force began to manifest in various forms.

So intelligence of all beings is a part of the Supreme Intelligence. We do not worship God who is unintelligent. It is not like worshipping force, or matter, or some unintelligent something, because by worshipping that we do not realize anything. God is the source of all intelligence. Think of the absolute intelligence, and not dead matter and insensate ether etc.

"Of all creations I am the beginning, middle and end". Take for instance this earth. It began at a certain period, millions and millions of ages ago. It exists today, and will come to an end. That which existed before the beginning of this form of the earth, and that which will exist after the dissolution of this form of the earth and that which exists today, is that infinite existence, which is unlimited and ever existent Being. It may be a combination of matter or material particles, but go still farther. Do not stop at the material particles, but find out the cause of these particles, and you will find that all these material particles are nothing but a certain state of force or energy. And that energy that exists, is governed by cosmic intelligence, and there is cosmic intelligence in

the beginning, middle and end of that creation. Therefore Sri Krishna says. "In all creations, I am the beginning, middle, and end of all energy. I am self-knowledge". We are all longing for knowledge. We do not find a human being who does not want to know something. He has a craving for knowledge, but he does not know what the best or highest knowledge is.

Sri Krishna says: "I am the knowledge, I am self-knowledge". Self-knowledge is the idea of 'Know-thyself', said Socrates. From the Delphian Oracle, Socrates received this answer. Best of all knowledge is "Know-thyself". Not only he, but all the great sages of modern times say the same thing, because self-knowledge is the source of all other knowledge. The *Upanishads* of India declare: 'आत्मनं विद्धि' i e 'Know-thyself'. Can you know anything without knowing that you exist? Can you have a longing to know anything unless you know that you want something, or that you exist? So that self-knowledge is the foundation, therefore, it is a part of the divine knowledge. About this Sri Krishna says. 'I am the truth-seeking argumentation which is started for the knowledge of the absolute Truth". That which makes us come nearer to the absolute Truth, is the best argumentation, therefore it is a divine manifestation. Of all the letters I am the vowel 'A'. This sound A (अ) is the foundation of all other sounds, therefore, anything that is the foundation, or exists in all other sounds, would be the simplest, and that which is the simplest, would be the best, because God is not a complex material. He is the simplest thing of the universe. The soul is also the simplest thing, and anything that is complex, is not divine. The Lord says: "I am the inexhaustible time, and the dispenser of the fruits of actions". What is time? Beginning, middle and end are the indispensable parts of time There is no such thing as time, there is only one eternal presence, and only one element is in constant succession, and when we think of one set of successions, we call it time and that leads to eternity. Therefore, eternal and inexhaustible time is one of the manifestations of the Divinity Anything that is eternal and immortal, and anything that is intelligence, is the manifestation of the Divinity.

In India, they worship Kali, the embodiment or personi-

fication of eternal time. Kali and Mahakala (Sakti and Siva) are one and the same.[11] They make a figure of Kali with terrible eyes and a fierce form, but that form is the symbol of time. Time destroys anything and everything, therefore, destructive elements are added to that form and make it look horrible, so as to rouse that feeling that it is the destroyer of everything, and that is time. We must go beyond time in order to find the Absolute, the essence of time as well as the dispenser of the fruits of actions. We perform our works and through these works we get the results, but there is an eternal law that produces those results, and the dispenser is the almighty Spirit. He is the mode by which that universal force is appearing in nature, and we know that the univrsal force is nothing but what the religionists would call the almighty Will. And that which is the foundation of the almighty Will, is the law, and, therefore, the almighty Will is the dispenser of all causes and their results, or the giver of all fruits and actions.

"I am also death", says the Lord. Death is one of the symbols through which we can worship God. Death is the surest thing in the world. Death is called the universal and inexorable law. From the smallest insect up to the highest man there is notihng so certain as death. Therefore death is the symbol of time (Kala or Mahakala) which is the destroyer. People who do not understand symbology, go to India and find fault with all those horrible symbols. Death is symbolized as horrible picture with skulls and bones and everything you could find in a desert place where hundreds and thousands of people have died and their dead bodies lie scattered. This horrible picture is brought before the mind of the worshipper, so that

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[11] In Tantra philosophy, Siva and Sakti are one and the same divine intelligent Principle. Siva is conceived as static, whereas Sakti, as dynamic. That is, for the sportive play (*lita*) or world-manifestation Siva assumes the form of Sakti, and then one and the same static dances on the breast of the Siva means Siva is manifested as Sakti or Kali. In Tantra, Sakti is not inert and unintelligent, but like Siva, she is the all-intelligence and all-consciousness (*chaitanyamayee* and *jnanamayee*). Siva and Sakti remain in their primal or causal state co-existently (*chanakakare*), as the positive and negative parts of a pea remain as an undivided whole. Sakti, in Tantra, is not a *maya* or unreality but is known as the *Mahamaya* or absolute Reality.

he may understand that death is everywhere and that which remains after death, is divine.[12] When this whole universe is destroyed, there will remain the one universal Will. The Western religionists have learned to worship God only through beauty, but the Eastern people have taken both sides. You worship God through birth and life, but through death you have not learned to worship Him.

Sri Krishna says: "I am also death, the destroyer of all; yet I am the origin of all". The origin and destruction of all things proceed from that one source. God is also the origin of all that shall be in future. Death means nothing but transformation. Therefore destruction in the sense of annihilation or absolute destruction means only a change. The body decays, or is desolved into its elementary particles, and the body will take some other form, and that is death. But the soul does not die, because the soul is not material. Intelligence does not die, because it is immortal.

The Lord further says: "Of the faminine forms I am prosperity, speech, memory, constancy, intellect and forgiveness". These are all feminine terms in Sanskrit, and give the idea of a gender to all qualities, and have feminine terminations. Fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intellect, constancy, forgiveness, these are the best virtues which we should cultivate. Through these we will reach the Divinity. "To err is human, to forgive is divine". Whenever you pardon any wrong done there, you bring in your unselfish nature and manifest your divine qualities. In the same way, it can be said name or fame is not the same as prosperity, but that which is good and accepted by all the wise ones, is divine. So nothing could be better than good name, or true fame. Now,

[12] Death has been symbolized as Siva in the form of a corpse (dead body). The figure of corpse is again symbolized as the state of staticity or inactivity. Inactivity is no other than the state of unmanifestedness or *avyakta*, and manifestedness is *vyakta*. Siva lies under the feet of dancing Kali which means Siva is inactive or static, and His active or dynamic phase or manifestation is Kali or Sakti. As the sun and its rays, or the fire and its burning power, is nondifferent i.e. one and the same in the Tantra philosophy, so is Siva and Sakti, and so is unmanifestedness (*avyakta*) and manifestedness (*vyakta*). Death and life are counterpart of the same all-conscious and all-intelligent Principle, the *Atman* or Brahman. So death is recognized as divine.

what is prosperity? Is it taking millions from your neighbours and cutting their throat? No, that is not prosperity. Prosperity is that which you possess without going an inch beyond the path of righteousness. That is to be claimed, but if you become a millionaire by robbing another, you will learn that in course of time that would not be prosperity. So true prosperity is different.

Constancy is another virtue. Be constant, firm, and not vascillating or changeable. Get the highest ideas and stick to them forever. Nothing is higher than the divine idea, no matter under what conditions you may be placed. That is loyalty and faithfulness, and that should be cultivated. Do you think that a person would be able to find God, if he is blown in every direction? That person would never find anything, but he is weak. There is a saying in India, 'either I shall accomplish that ideal or give up the body'. If the body goes to pieces, never mind, but never sacrifice your principle. That kind of determination or resolution is necessary, and that is one of the manifestations through which God can be worshipped. Whenever you will see a great character, there you will find that great constancy. But those who do not have that constancy, do not gain that high ideal. "I am the energy of the energetic, I am victory, I am perseverance; I am the goodness of the good" says the Lord. All these things should be considered as divine manifestations, and through these divine manifestations God can be beyond manifestations or conception, need not bother us. I am the victory of those who seek to conquer, I am the silence of all secrets. We ask you to go into silence and to make your mind silent, then God will come. If you can make your mind absolutely dormant, you will find there is God.

People think, 'why does Vedanta teach us to go to meditation and sit in silence; why does it not teach us how to roar and to rush?' In this noise, they are far from God. The more you are silent, the nearer you are to God. Silent worship is the best. Those who cannot observe silence, have no knowledge of religion and also no realization of spiritual life. Silence about all secrets is the wisdom of the wise, and all wisdom comes in silence. "I am the end of all beings". No being, whether moving or unmoving, can exist without me.

There is no end of my divine glory. "By all these I referred to the constance of my manifestation." These are only a few of the things He has given in order to present and point out his vast manifestations of the Divinity. In short, the Lord says: "Wherever there are power, beauty, and glory, know them to be a portion of my splendour". Anything that is beautiful, powerful, and glorious, proceeds from the Divinity. "Wherever you see any beauty or true beauty, you should bow down. You should realize that power comes from the Divinity. What is the use of all these details to tell you that He produces and sustains this whole world by a portion of His infinite Being? Whatever things you perceive with your senses as existing in this world, is sustained by a portion of the Infinite Being, and know that to be really so."

The essence of everything is the Infinite Being. Existence, intelligence, and bliss are of God. God dwells in all things. One-fourth of Him sustains the phenomenal world and the other three-fourths are beyond our mind, intellect, and conception. But they are the source of existence, intelligence, and bliss, and that source is the Absolute, the unmanifested portion of the universe. The manifested portion of the universe is sustained by what is called the personal God, the Creator and Projector of all phenomena out of His own Being, and that which is beyond personal, is impersonal. God according to the universal religion of Vedanta is both personal, impersonal, and beyond both, and is dwelling in all beings. He is in all things, yet He is God in nature, the Soul of our souls, the Life of our lives. Him we should worship with our life, pray to Him and upon Him we should bestow all the fruits of our actions.[13]

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[13] वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।
इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥२२
रुद्राणां शङ्करश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।
वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ।२३
पुरोधसाञ्च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ ! बृहस्पतिम् ।
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरामस्मि सागरः ॥२४

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।
यज्ञानांजपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थाबराणां हिमाल्यः ॥२५
अश्वत्थः सर्ब्बबृक्षाणां देबर्षीणाञ्च नारदः ।
गन्धर्बाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥२६
उच्चैःश्रबसमश्वानां बिद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।
ऐराबतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणाञ्च नराधिपम् ॥२७
आयुधानामहं बज्रं धेनूनामस्मि बासुकिः ॥२८
अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां बरुणो यादसामहम् ।
पितृणामर्य्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥२९
प्रह्लादश्चाम्मि दैत्यानां कालः कल्यतामहम् ।
मृगाणाञ्च मृगेद्रोऽहं बैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥३०
पबनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।
झषाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नबी ॥३१
सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यञ्चैवाहमर्जुन ।
अध्यात्मबिद्या बिद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥३२
अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।
अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताऽहं बिश्वतोमुखः ॥३३
मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्भबश्च भविष्यताम् ।
कीर्त्तिः श्रीवाक् च नारीनां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमाः ॥३४
बृहत्-साम तथा साम्नां गायत्रीच्छन्दसामहम् ।
मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥३५
दूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।
जयोऽस्मि व्यबसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्वतामहम् ॥३६
बृष्णीनां बासुदेबोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः ।
मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कबीनामुशना कबिः ॥३७
दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।
मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥३८
यच्चापि सर्ब्बभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।
न तदस्ति बिना यत् स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥३९

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां बिभूतीनां परन्तप ।
एष तुद्देशतः प्रोक्तो बिभूतेर्बिस्तरो मया ॥४०
यद्यद्बिभूतिमत् सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।
तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽंशसम्भवम् ॥४१
अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।
बिष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत ॥४२

Literal Translation of the Texts:—Sri Krishna says that He has pervaded the whole universe with His divine presence. As for example, of all the Vedas, He is the Samavada, of all the *Devas*, He is the Indra, of all the senses, He is the mind; of all the living beings, He is intelligence or consciousness, of the eleven Rudra, He is Sankara (Siva), of all the Yakshas and Rakshasas, He is Kuvera; of all the eight Vasus, He is Agni; of all the highest monutains, He is the Meru, of all the priests, He is Devaguru Vrishaspati, of all the commanders, He is Kartikeya; of all the rivers, He is the Ocean; of all the Rishis, He is Bhrigu, etc. In this way, Sri Krishna has described that He is the Omakara, Japayajna, Himalaya, sacred Ashvattha (tree), Narada, Chitraratha, Kapila, Uchhaishrava, Airavata, King, Vajra made up of the bone of Dadhichi, Kamadhenu, Kama, the originator, Vasuki, Ananta, the king of the serpents, Varuna, Aryama, the king of the Patris, Yama, the king of death, Prahlada, Kala among the counters of the numbers, Garuda among the birds, Vayu, Dasarathi—Rama, Makara among the fishes, and Ganges among the rivers. In fact, says Sri Krishna, "O Arjuna, I am the creator, preserver and destroyer of all the phenomenal objects. I am the salvation among all *vidyas*, and *vada, jalpa* and *vitanda* of the Tarkikas. I am the first divine letter 'A' of the Omkara, I am the Mahakala and I am the distributor of results of all works. I am the Death, and I am the greatest good of all future goods and also the cause of this greatest good. I am Kirti, Sri, Vak, Smriti, Medha, Dhriti and Kshama, the seven wives of Dharma. I am the Brihad-Sama among the Samans, I am the Gayatri among the riks, composed of meters, and I am Agrahayana among the months and spring i.e. Vasanta among the seasons. I am the tricks (*chala*) of the game of dice, the valour of the strong, victory of the conquerors, the perseverance of the struggling or striving men and *sattva* among the qualities".

Sri Krishna further says that He is Krishna, Arjuna's friend, among the Vrishnis, Arjuna among the Pandavas, Vedavyasa among the Munis and Sukracharya, the preceptor or master of the Daityas. Again He is the punishment, principle, silence of all secrets, and knowledge of the wise. "O Arjuna", says Sri Krishna, "I am the origin or primal cause of all beings of the universe; I am the existence (*satta*) of everything,

sentient and insentient, and all beings live or exists in Me. My powers are infinite, and, in this way, I described in short all my powers. And the things which are regarded as quality, good or energy, evolved as a part and parcel of my power. Or, O Arjuna, you need not know all these powers that I possess, but only remember that everything in this universe is covered by My one-fourth part, and other three-fourths are in the heaven and that is immortality.

Now from this description we know that *Atman* or Brahman is the origin and the ground of all objects, animate or inanimate, of this universe He pervades everything material, mental, and spiritual by His presence, intelligence, and consciousness, and without Him, everything of the universe is meaningless and baseless, and this secret has been discosed in the eleventh chapter of the *Gita* where Sri Krishna has described the *Visvarupa-darshanayoga* i.e. Divine transfiguration of Sri Krishna.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

ALL-PERVADING FORM OF GOD

The eleventh chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* is devoted to the discussion of the transfiguration of Sri Krishna. You have read of the transfiguration of Christ in the Bible, but this transfiguration had happened many centuries before Christ was born. So the idea of transfiguration is not new to the world. After the instructions that are contained in the tenth chapter Arjuna said. "Listening to thy words regarding the mystery of the soul which thou hast graciously spoken to me, my delusion has disappeared."[1] He has come to know that the world is immortal and indestructible, the soul in its true nature is one with the Supreme Deity, the soul cannot be destroyed, and cannot be killed although the body may be killed. Therefore, he says, 'my delusion has departed'. So long Arjuna had the idea that the soul was one with the body and by the destruction of the body the soul would be destroyed, he was confounded, but after hearing all the instructions of Vedanta given by Sri Krishna, he realized the immaterial and immortal nature of the soul. He also heard that the soul or spirit of Sri Krishna was the same as the immortal Spirit, and it was divine. He also learned of his glory, and heared about various manifestations that are described in the nineth and tenth chapters. So he said: "I have heard at length of the origin and dissolution of beings, and also thy indestructible glory." All these Sri Krishna had described in previous chapters, as you will remember it thus said, "So it is as thou declarest thyself to be."[2]

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1 अर्जुन उवाच—

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।

यत् त्वयोक्तं बचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥११।१

2 भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ बिस्तरशो मया ।

त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥११।२

He did not doubt that the true spirit of Sri Krishna was divine, and was one with the Supreme Deity. Though self-effulgent Deity, Arjuna knew that Sri Krishna was also full of all glory, omnipotent, omniscient, and all-pervading, still he said "I desire to see thy divine form as *Isvara,* or the Lord of the universe."[3] So long he was giving his instructions as a spiritual teacher and as his charioteer, but now, after hearing of all his greatness, glory, and divine powers Arjuna desired to see the actual manifestations of which he had heard so much and eager to see his divine form as *Isvara. Isvara* is the creator, or the first-born Lord of the universe as well as the ruler and governor of the universe. He is the same personal God which is worshipped by all nations under different names. You must not think that the personal God of Vedanta is different from the personal God of the Christians or other nations. God is one, but only His different aspects have been realized, understood, and worshipped. The same God is worshipped under the name Jehovah, or Father in heaven, or Allah, or Divine Mother, or Brahman. The Divine Entity has taken many names and forms in order to fulfil the desires of the worshippers and devotees.

"O Lord, if thou thinkest that it can be seen by me, then

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"'अशोच्याननशोचस्तमित्यादि' षष्ठाध्यायपर्यन्तं त्वंपदार्थप्रधानं यत्त्वया परमकारुनिकेन सर्वज्ञेनोक्तं बचो वाक्यं * *। तथा सप्तमादारभ्य दशमपर्यन्तं तत्पदार्थनिर्णयप्रधानमपि भगवतो बचनं मया श्रुतमित्याह। * * सर्वात्मत्वादिसोपाधिकं निरुपाधिकमपिचाव्ययमक्षयं मया श्रुतमिति।

[3] एवमेतद् यथत्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर।
द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥११।३

Sankara said. "तथापि द्रष्टुमिच्छामि 'ते' तव ज्ञनैश्वर्यशक्तिबलबीर्यतेजोभिः सम्पन्नं 'ऐश्वरं' वैष्णवं रूपम्।"

It means that though Arjuna was fully aware of the indeterminate and formless (*nirguna* and *nirakara*) aspect or nature of Bhagavan Sri Krishna, yet he desired to see His determinate aspect with divine form, as the Supreme Deity, or the Brahman, is endowed with both the aspects and at the same time devoid of all aspects.

show me, O Lord of Yogins, thy infinite Self".[4] He does not know whether it would be possible for him to see that divine form of Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna was the Incarnation of the Supreme Deity, but the form which he assumes, was the human form. Although through a human form He manifested divine powers and qualities at every moment of his earthly career, still Arjuna wanted to see the infinite Self which was eternal, and which remains even when the human form of the incarnating Self is dissolved.

"O Lord of all Yogins" i.e. Sri Krishna is called the Lord of all Yogins, because He was worshipped by all the great Yogins, and he himself was a great Yogi. There is one attribute which is given to God and that is 'Lord of all Yogins'. All 'Yogas' proceed from Him and end in Him, and He is the Lord who is worshipped through the various forms of Yoga. Then Krishna said: "O Partha, Arjuna, behold my manifestations by hundreds and thousands of different sorts, shapes and colours, see the wonderful sights that thou hast never seen before. Behold in my body the twelve Adityas, eight Vasus, eleven Rudras and Ashvini-Kumaras and also fortynine winds and many other wonderful objects. And behold in my body the whole world, animate and inanimate and whatever else thou desirest to see but," he said, "thou shalt not be able to see me with thy mortal eyes, therefore I give thee the heavenly sight i.e. spiritual sight, and behold my divine glory."[5]

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[4] मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।
योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मनमव्ययम् ।११।४
"प्रभवति सृष्टिस्थितिसंहारप्रवेशप्रशासनेभ्यः इति प्रभुः ।" —Anandagiri.

[5] श्रीभगवानुवाच—
पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।
नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥
पश्यादित्यान् वसून् रुद्रानश्विनौ मरतस्तथा ।
बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥
इहैकस्थं जगत् कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद् द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥

He cannot be seen with mortal eyes except through material forms. Therefore when we wish to see the infinite grandeur and greatness and eternal might of the Divinity, we cannot see with mortal eyes, and that is one thing which people of modern times cannot understand, and they think that eyes are all in all. There are spiritual eyes and what we can perceive with spiritual eyes, cannot be seen with mortal eyes. That idea has been strongly expressed in these words when Sri Krishna says: "Thou shalt not be able to see me with thy mortal eyes, I give thee heavenly sight." Here is the grace of God. Sri Krishna gave Arjuna the heavenly and spiritual sight i.e. he opened that spiritual eyes of Arjuna by which he could see the divine glory.

"Having thus spoken", Sanjaya said, "the great Lord of all Yogins showed Arjuna the supreme form of *Isvara.* Sri Krishna transfigured Himself into that divine form which is eternal and omnipotent. The description is very beautiful. With many heads and eyes, with visions of wonderful heavenly ornaments, heavenly garlands, heavenly ugments, and all wonderful and boundless divinities, and with faces on all sides. By 'faces on all sides' you will know that God is all-pervading. His face is on every side i.e. He is looking and seeing on every side what is going on. He is all-pervading. He is not like the limited mortals who can see on one side and do not know what is going on the other side, but the description that God has many mouths and many eyes shows that all his eyes are turned in different directions. He can see what is going on in an atom as well as in the highest solar system. His sight does not depend upon material conditions as our sight does, because He is the essence of all beings, and He dwells in all things. If the splendour of a thousand suns were even to present itself at once in the sky at the same time, that would not be equal to the glory of the Supreme Being." He is full of light. Here light is

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न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।
दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥११।५-८

The word 'गुड़ाकेश' (गुड़ाका–ईश) means the controler of all senses (*jitendriya*).

given as his glory, because light is symbolic of intelligence. It is not like any earthly or material light, but the light of intelligence which radiates from that infinite source of knowledge and consciousness."[6]

Then Arjuna saw with awe and delight in the body of the God of gods the whole universe divided into all those planetary systems. His body was not limited by any particular form, but, in His body, he saw all the planets and stars and everything, and the whole universe with organic and inorganic beings. Then, filled with wonder, with his hair standing on end, he bowed down with his head and, with joined hands he addressed the Lord,[7] says: "O Lord, I see in thy body all the gods and also multitudes of other beings"

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6 सञ्जय उवाच—

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन् महायोगेश्वरो हरि ।
दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥
अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।
अनेकदिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥
दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।
सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ॥
दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद् युगपदुत्थिता ।
यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद् भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥
तत्रैकस्थं जगत् कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।
अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥११।९१३

7 ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः ।
प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥११।१४

8 अर्जुन उवाच—

पश्यामि देवास्तव देव ! देहे,
सर्व्वांस्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान् ।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थ-
मृषींश्च सर्व्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥१५
अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं
पश्यामि त्वां सर्व्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।

He sees in his body the Creator, the first-born Lord of all the angels and bright spirits and mythological gods and goddesses. He sees all in his body, and he says: "I see in thy body all the gods and all the multitudes of various beings. I see many hands, many mouths, many feet, but I cannot see the beginning, nor the middle, nor the end of that universal form, but saw everything in your body, with many hands and feet." That shows that all living creatures with hands and feet are dwelling in his body. His form pervades the universe, and the whole material universe forms the material form of the omnipotent Divine Being. That is a grand idea. The whole universe is His body, still we do not see the beginning, nor the middle, nor the end of His body. If we cannot see the beginning, the middle, nor the end of the universe, how can we expect to see the beginning, middle or end of that which pervades this universe?

Further Arjuna says: "I see a maze of splendour shining on all sides; I see in these Being hard to look at, as the

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नान्तं न मध्यं पुनस्तवादिं,
पश्यामि बिश्वेश्वर! विश्वरूप ॥१६
किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणञ्च,
तेजोराशिं सर्व्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम्।
पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्
दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥१७
त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं,
त्वमस्य बिश्वस्य परं निधानम्।
त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता,
सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥१८
अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तबीर्य-
मनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम्।
पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रं,
स्वतेजसा बिश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥१९
द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि,
व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्बाः।

burning fire, as the dazzling sun." As you cannot look at the dazzling sun for a long time, nor the blazing fire, so Arjuna could not look at Him, He was such a maze of splendour and radiance that Arjuna's eyes i.e. his spiritual eyes were dazzled. "Thou art the imperishable supreme object of knowledge, the great abode of the universe, Thou art unchangeable protector of the eternal religion, I know that Thou art the everlasting spirit," he says. That imperishable, that which is worth-knowing, and that which is the eternal abode of the universe, is divine. That is unchangeable. The protector of

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दृष्ट्वाऽद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं
लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं माहात्मन् ।२०
अमी हि त्वां सुरसंघा विशन्ति,
कोचिद्भीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति ।
स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसंघाः,
स्तुबन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः ॥२१
रुद्रादित्या बसबो ये च साध्या,
बिश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।
गन्धर्बयक्षासुरसिद्धसंघा,
बीक्षन्ते त्वां बिस्मिताश्चैव सर्बे ॥२२
रूपं महत् ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं,
महाबाहो ! बहूबाहूरुपादम् ।
बहूदरं बहूदंष्ट्राकरालं,
दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम् ॥२३
नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकबर्णं,
व्यत्ताननं दीप्तबिशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा,
धृतिं न बिन्दामि शमञ्च बिष्णो ॥२४
दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि,
दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म,
प्रसीद देबेश ! जगन्निबास ॥२५

the religion is the spiritual Lord who governs our souls. It is not any sectarian religion, or any special religion of any particular nation, but it is the universal religion which Vedanta is trying to explain before the world. It is non-sectarian religion which comprehends all doctrines, creeds, and denominations, and it is religion of the soul longing to meet the infinite, the absolute, and struggling to become perfect, to attain to spiritual omniscience, and is the ideal of all religions.

"I know that thou art the everlasting Spirit." Arjuna comes to realize that through the help of his spiritual eyes. When he saw that wonderful sight i.e. this wonderful transfiguration, he came to realize what is everlasting and what is eternal. "Without beginning, middle or end, with infinite powers thou art. The sun and the moon are the eyes, the burning fire is thy mouth and thou art scorching the universe with thy radiance." He could not in the first place see the beginning, the middle, and the end of His form, but still he

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अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्यः पुत्रा,
सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्घैः ।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ,
सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुखैः ॥२६
वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति,
दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु,
संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमांगैः ॥२७
यथा नदीनां वहवोऽम्बुवेगाः,
समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।
तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा,
विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥२८
यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा,
विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।
तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोका
स्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥२९

sees that the manifestation of powers is infinite in variety, and he could not deny that.

The sun and the moon appeared to Him as his eyes. the eyes of the universal form, the eyes which are looking at us in the sun and the moon. All the suns and the moons can be compared to the eyes of the eternal Being, because He has many eyes. The burning fire is His mouth. Anything that is burned up by fire, is burned up by the Spirit, because fire is considered to be the mouth of the Divinity, and it was for this reason that in ancient times they used to sacrifice oblations into the sacred fire. The Parsees and the Zoroastrians have kept fire for thousands and thousands of years, and still they have fire. They consider it to be the mouth of the Supreme Deity. So, in India, during the Vedic period, they used to keep the sacred fire and pour butter and rice and all kinds of sacred things into the fire in the name of the Lord, and whatever was eaten by the fire, has eaten in the name of the Lord,

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लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानाः समन्तात् ;
लोकान् समग्रान् वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत् समग्रं,
भासस्तवोग्रा प्रतपन्ति बिष्णो ॥३०
आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो,
नमोऽस्तु ते देववर ! प्रसीद ।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्मादयं,
न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥३१

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

"Arjuna said: I see all the gods, O God, in Thy body, as also hosts of various classes of beings: Brahma, the Lord, seated on the lotus-seat, and all the Rishis and heavenly serpants (XI.15) I see Thee of boundless form on every side with multitudinous arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes, neither Thy, nor the middle, nor the beginning do I see, O Lord of the universe, O universal Form (16.) I see Thee with diadem, culb, and discuss, a mass of splendour shining everywhere, very hard to look at, all around blazing like burning fire and sun, and immeasurable (17). Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme Being worthy to be known. Thou art the great Abode of the universe; Thou art the undying guardian of the eternal *dharma*. Thou art the ancient

and they would invoke all the spirits in the fire, and from the fire would come out the *Devas* through the form that had been the ideal of the devotee. You will find the same idea in the Bible. When God appeared to Moses, He appeared in the form of fire with smoke on Mt. Sinae. That idea you will find amongst all primitive races, and especially in India and Persia. Long before the time of Moses that idea had been common and God appeared in the form of fire. Fire-worship appeared in the Vedic period and was very common in India. In the first verse of the Rig Veda, there is a reference to Agni, the same as fire. Arjuna has, therefore, said: "We salute that fire who is the source of all, even of the Devas, the mouth of the Supreme, the bearer of oblations to the Deity and the giver of all wealth and prosperity." So that fire is considered to be the mouth of the Lord, and the same fire is worshipped afterward, and then the worshippers begin to see the spirit of fire, that which gives fire its existence and its life and power. That spirit is not that material fire, but the essence

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Purusha, I deem (18). I see Thee without beginning, middle or end, infinite in power, of manifold arms; the sun and the moon being Thy eyes, the burning fire Thy face; heating the whole universe with Thy radience (19). This space between heaven and earth, and all the quarters are filled by Thee alone. Having seen this, Thy marvellous and awful form, the three worlds are trembling, O high-souled Being. Thee in thy universal form (20). Into Thee, indeed, enter these hosts of Suras; some extol Thee in fear with joined palms; 'May it be well', thus saying, bands of great Rishis and Siddhas praise Thee with hymns complete (21). The Rudras, Adiyas, Vasus, and Sadhyas, Visvas and Asvins, Maruts and Ushmapas, hosts of Gandharvas, Yakshas and Siddhas, they are all looking at Thee, all quite astonished (22). Having seen Thy immeasurable form, possessed O Mighty-armed, of many mouths and eyes, of many arms and thighs and feet, and of many stomachs, and fearful with many tusks, the worlds are terrified, and I also (23). On seeing Thee (Thy form) touching the sky, blazing in many colours, with mouths wide open, with large fiery eyes, I am terrified at heart and find no courage, nor peace, O Vishnu (24). Having seen Thy mouths which are fearful with tusks and resemble time's Fires, I know not the four quarters, nor do I find peace; be Thou gracious, O Lord of gods and sacred Abode of the universe (25). And all these sons of Dhritarashtra, with hosts of princes, Bhisma, Drona and that son (Karna) of a charioteer, with the warrior chiefs of ours, enter hurrying into Thy mouth, terrible with tusks and fearful to behold. Some are found sticking in the gaps between the teeth with their heads crushed to

of fire, and is afterward considered to be the Deity, the Supreme Spirit. The Deity, the Spirit, dwells in everything It is not the material light we see. That which is behind the material fire, is the spiritual fire, and that is the fire of intelligence and is divine.

Further Arjuna says. "Scorching the universe with thy radiance which proceeds from thy infinite body, thou art keeping everything alive and moving" That which manifests activity, depends upon that radiance or heat or warmth which proceeds from the spiritual fire of the Divinity. The space between heaven and earth and all the quarters are filled with that alone. He sees something in that space where we do not see anything. With his spiritual eyes He sees that space covered by something, with wonderful spiritual beauty. 'Having seen this, thy marvellous and awful form, the three worlds are trembling," says Arjuna. He sees in that manifestation that all nations are bowing down before Him with awe and reverence, with feelings of adoration and worship. He saw many wonderful sights which I have described here and many things which aroused the feeling of adoration and reverence in Arjuna. Afterward he heard a voice from Sri Krishna with His infinite body, He was speaking to Arjuna· "Behold I am the world-destroying god of death, no energy is destroying the world except through me."[9]

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powder (26-27) As many torrents of rivers flow direct towards the sea, so do these heroes in the world of men enter Thy flaming mouths (28) As moths hurriedly rush into a blazing fire for destruction, just so do these creatures also hurriedly rush into Thy mouths for destruction (29) Thou lickest up devouring all worlds on every side with Thy flaming mouths, filling the whole world with flames Thy fierce rays are blazing forth, O Vishnu (30). Tell me who Thou art, so fierce in form. I bow down to Thee, O God Supreme, have mercy I desire to know Thee the original Being I know not indeed Thy doing (31)" (Also consult translations by Swami Abhbedananda).

9 श्रीभगवान् उवाच—

कालोऽस्मिलोकक्षयकृत् प्रवृद्धो,
लोकान समाहर्त्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे,
येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः ॥३२

He is showing the future of all these hundreds gathered in the battle-field to fight. They are all dying and are falling, and death is overcoming all of them, and everybody is lying prostrate on the battle-field. He sees this before the battle begun. "Except thee none of these warriors shall live." "Therefore, do thou rise and obtain fame, conquer thy enemies and enjoy thy freedom, I have already shown thee everything. Be thou the instrument."[10] He is showing that they were destroyed by their own *karma* and were destined to fall on the battle-field and to be destroyed, and that those warriors who had gathered there, would bear the pains of death, and Arjuna was merely the instrument. You know for certain reasons all these wars happen, and people are drawn to these wars, and are killed. It is the destructive power of this universe that brings them under these conditions. If you look at all the misfortunes that happen to a nation from a higher standpoint, you will see there is a law working behind those misfortunes and these events that destroy the peace of the world. It is not the fault of the individual, as we are all marching along in one direction, not knowing exactly where we are going and what we are going to face. Perhaps, thousands will be killed by a sudden accident, and then another thousand will take their place. These destructive things like famines and plagues come and take us, and produce all kinds of misfortunes among us. And there is a similar law that guides all misfortunes. They are not accidents. That is the idea that is converted by these wars.

The Lord says. "I have killed Drona, Bhisma, Jayadratha, Karna and other warriors already, and so you feel that they are already dead. Behold they are dead now and, therefore, rise, obtain fame that thou hast killed thy enemy, and conquered thy enemy, and thus enjoy thy kingdom.[11] The kingdom of

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10 तस्मात् त्तमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व,
जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव,
निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥३३

11 द्रोणञ्च भीष्मञ्च जयद्रथञ्च,
कर्णं तथन्यानपि योधवीरान् ।

righteousness was meant here. The enemy was unrighteousness, hypocracy, and lying, and all these acts, thoughts, and deeds are similar. And that can be applied to all individuals Each one of us is standing in the battle-field of the world and are fighting amongst innumerable enemies, and all these evil influences that are trying to drag us away from the path of spirituality and virtue and to bring us within the influence of temptations and vices are present before us. We are fighting against them. We are fighting against all the environmental conditions that are forcing us to be overcome by these powers They are our enemies, and if we stand on the side of righteousness, and if we have faith in and devotion to the Lord, He will show us that all these enemies are dead, and we would become victors and obtain our kingdom, which is the divine kingdom or spiritual kingdom and not the earthly kingdom.

You will find that in the *Bhagavad Gita* there are two sides the one is universal and the other is mythological The universal side can be applied during the life-time of our individual self, no matter where we are and to what nationality we belong. It will appeal to us and we will be able to apply it under all circumstances.

The other side would be that connected with the traditional or historical event which was handed down to us at the time of the battle of Kurukshetra about 1400 years before the birth of Christ. But if we put that aside, we find that it is extremely valuable for us to know and to take it in a spiritual sense, and that transfiguration will be seen by every mortal when the spiritual eye will be opened through worship, devotion, and grace and mercy of the All-mighty. Then we will see that death will overcome our enemy, but we will remain alive. And, therefore, Sri Krishna says that everybody is dead here except his own sincere devoted disciple. The true disciple of the Lord will never perish. This is one thing we should remember, and if we can be a true disciple of the Lord, there is no fear, and death can never overcome us. That is a great lesson we should learn through this description.

मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा,
युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान् ॥३४

"Be the instrument" says the Lord. The eternal divine will is working in the universe and is performing the deeds that the Divine Being thinks best and most proper. And, in our daily life, we are thinking and are performing these by our power and efforts, but we must remember that we are nothing but instruments in the hands of the almighty will. We cannot do anything without being guided and directed by that omnipotent will. We are all instruments, but we forget that we are instruments. Through vanity, self-conceit, and egotism we think we are doing this or that, but we will be able to change or transform this into another thing. And when we open our eyes and come to realize the divine power, we feel that all these attempts have been vain and our ideas and thoughts were imperfect. The true knowledge is that which makes us realize that we are the instruments under the direction of the almighty will.

Therefore, Sri Krishna says to Arjuna that the individual soul is the Divine Spirit within us, and if we take it in that light the individual soul is then the instrument in the hands of God, or the Divine Spirit. Take it from the standpoint of *bhakti* or devotion and love, then we feel and say like this: "Thou art all in all; let Thy will be done, I am only the servant and the instrument of my Master." Then we become like the instruments ready to serve always. No other relation would appeal to us except the relationship of faithful and devoted servants. That would be *bhakti*. When you take it in the sense of the Divine Spirit, that would be the knowledge side (*jnanamarga*). The knowledge side would be equal to the *bhakti* or devotion side in the end. The one would be the emotional and the other the intellectual, but both would be mixed together to make a harmonious whole, and we will not be misled or misdirected. Then we will know what we are doing, and will understand the path and reach the highest goal without forgetting even for a moment what we are really doing.

So Sri Krishna has said to Arjuna: "Do thou rise and obtain fame, conquer they enemies, and enjoy thy kingdom. I have shown the truth about that already. Be thou only the instrument in slaying thy enemies." This idea is grand and unique in the religious history of the world. You will find in

no other book such a beautiful description. Every sentence is full of deep philosophy and spiritual insight which can be applied in many different ways.

All these great commanders were on the enemies' side whose names are given in the first chapter. Arjuna was fearing how he would be able to conquer, because they were much stronger and more powerful than he. But Sri Krishna already told and showed him that they were already dead, as they were killed or destroyed by that Supreme Power. But that destruction was not annihilation, it was rather the punishment for unrighteousness that they had brought upon themselves by their own deeds. Sanjaya reported to Dhritarastra that after hearing these consolling words of Sri Krishna, Arjuna saluted, and trembling with fear and overwhelmed with a feeling of devotion and love he began to pray. He prayed to Sri Krishna, the Infinite Spirit in His universal form [12]

Arjuna says "Right it is that the world rejoices in glorifying Thee and all the sages, saints, gods, *Devas*, bright spirits, and angels bow to Thee, why should not all these beings worship Thee when Thou art greater even than the Creator i e the source of the Creator, the first-born Lord of the universe? Thou art infinite and absolute. Thou art the Lord of all and the abode of all Thou art the imperishable One, the being and the non-being, and that which is beyond the being and the non-being "[13] The Divine Spirit is beyond the animate and

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12 सञ्जय उवाच—
एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य,
कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।
नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं,
सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥३५

13 अर्जुन उवाच
स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या,
जगत् प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षां स भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति,
सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसंघाः ॥३६

the inanimate, and that is also the same as the universal form of Sri Krishna.

"Thou art the primeval Lord, the Master, the most ancient Being, Thou art the governor of the universe, Thou art the abode of the world. Thou art the knower, the object of knowledge and the abode of infinite existence. Thou art many-sided, Thy form is universal. I bow down to Thee again and again, because Thou art the Master of all living creatures and of the world, Thy power and glory are infinite, Thou pervadest everything, Thou dwellest in all beings and Thou art one with all beings. Through friendship I have called Thee my friend, and called Thee Krishna, O friend, but all these expressions I uttered, not knowing Thy grandeur and Thy glory, not knowing Thy infinite, eternal Being. Either through ignorance, or through my love, which I have for Thee, I have addressed Thee thus. Sometimes I have joked with Thee and ridiculed Thee; and sometimes I have been with Thee, sitting together, walking together, or lying down on the same bed—all these I have done either through ignorance or through love. Now I beg pardon and forgiveness for all these things which I have done, not knowing Thy splendour. Thy majesty, Thy glory, and Thy infinite omnipotence."[14]

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन् महात्मन् !
गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।
अनन्त, देवेश, जगन्निवास !
त्वमक्षरं सदसत् तत् परं यत् ॥३७

[14] त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराण-
स्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यञ्च परञ्च धाम,
त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥३८
वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशांकः,
प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः,
पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥३९

"Thou art the father of all living creatures and of all inanimate objects. Thou art worshipped by all nations; Thou art greater than the greatest. There is nothing in the universe that can be equal to Thee."[15] How can there be anything greater or more powerful? Here you will notice that Arjuna was addressing the Lord as the Father of the universe. Father, in Sanskrit is *Pitar*, the same as Pater in Latin. *Loka* means realm. God is the Father of the universe i.e. the Father of all animate and inanimate objects.

"I salute Thee and bow down to Thee and worship Thee. Thou art the terrible One. As the father forgives his son, as the friend forgives another friend, as the lover forgives his beloved, even so dost Thou forgive me for all I have done through ignorance and through love."[16] How nice is the idea

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नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते,
नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व !
अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं,
सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥४०
सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं
हे कृष्ण, हे यादव, हे सखेति ।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं,
मया प्रसादात् प्रणयेन वापि ॥४१
यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि,
विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।
एकोऽथ वाप्यच्युत ! तत्समक्षं
तत् क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥४२

15 पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य,
त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो,
लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥४३

16 तस्मात् प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं,
प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यं,

of father and son. God is addressed as the father, as a friend, and as a lover. Really God is our Father, our Friend, and our beloved Lover. "I am filled with admiration, wonder, fear, and reverence. My heart is overwhelmed with the feeling of devotion. Do Thou show me Thy other form that I can grasp this form of Thine which is beyond my grasp, O Lord of all. I wish to see Thou as I saw Thou before as the Lord, endowed with crown, mace and wheel (*chakra*). O Lord with thousand hands and all-pervading form (*visvarupa*), show me Thy form of the Son of Vasudeva, with four hands."[17] Arjuna wants to see the same human form. He could not bear that terrible sight for a long time. It was too dazzling and overwhelming, as he used to see Him.

Then Sri Krishna says: "Thou art the first who hast seen this great universal form. I have shown it to thee through my kindness, because Thou art my beloved disciple. Neither through reading the scriptures, nor through sacrifices, nor by meditation, nor by austerities or charity or good works, am I to be seen in the same way as thou hast seen me. Therefore, instead of my terrible form, I am showing thee my previous form, and thou look at it with contentment."[18]

पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः,
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥४४

17 अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा,
भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं,
प्रसीद देवेश, जगन्निवास ॥४५
किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्त-
मिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन,
सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्त्ते ! ॥४६

18 श्रीभगवान उवाच—
मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं,
रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात्

Saying thus, said Sanjaya to Dhritarastra, Sri Krishna showed Arjuna His previous pleasing form with four hands, and consolled and encouraged him.[19]

Therefore, when we have become instrument in the hand of the Lord without whole heart and soul, through His grace the spiritual sight comes. Then one will be able to see that which is beyond the reach of all the good works that I have already described Sri Krishna showed to Arjuna his human form and then Arjuna was pleased. With His present form He encouraged the mind of Arjuna who was trembling with fear and reverence and devotion. When Arjuna returned to his normal state of consciousness, he began to feel heavy, as it were, as a result of that wonderful sight. It was too overwhelming and powerful for him to bear for a long time. And, so, seeing the Lord's normal form, Arjuna says: "O Janardana, now I am in tranquil and natural state to Thy human-form."[20]

तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं,
यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥४७
न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनै र्न दानै-
र्न च क्रियाभि र्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके,
द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥४८
मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढ़भावो
दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ् ममेदम् ।
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं,
तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥४९

19 सञ्जय उवाच—
इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा,
स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं,
भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥५०

20 अर्जुन उवाच—
दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥५१

Sri Krishna says: "It is very difficult to see that universal and infinite form which is eternal and everlasting, and which thou hast seen just now, but those who have extreme devotion and are earnest and sincere seekers after Truth and those who worship me with faith, love, and reverence, can see me in that form, and can, after the dissolution of the body, enter into that Spiritual Being, which is the Lord of all. That is the abode of infinite peace and happiness, and that is the ideal of all religions. Now the whole chapter He summarizes into this verse: "O Pandava, he who works for me, he who holds me as the highest ideal and is devoted to me and does not care for any other company or friends or relatives, and he who has no enemy and is kindly to all living creatures, never injuring any one, and who never hates, nor kills, enters into me after the death of the body. He comes to me and dwells with me forever and ever."[21]

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21 श्रीभगवान उवाच—

सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः ॥५२
नाहं वेदै र्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ॥५३
भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ! ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुञ्च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुञ्च परन्तप ॥५४

22 मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः संगवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ! ॥५५

Sankara also said:

"अधुना दर्वस्य गीताशास्त्रस्य सारभूतोऽर्थः निःश्रेयसार्थोऽनुष्ठेयत्वेन समुच्चित्य उच्यते—मत्कर्मकृत् मदर्थं" प्रभृति ।

Anandagiri said:

"तदेवं भगवतो बिश्वरूपस्य सर्वात्मनः सर्वज्ञस्य सर्वेश्वरस्य मत्कर्मकृदित्यादिन्यायेन क्रममुक्तिफलमभिध्यानमभिवदता तत्पदवाच्योऽर्थो व्यवस्थितः ।"

That is, Sri Krishna instructs about the path of gradual stage of emancipation (*krama-mukti*) by showing his all-pervading universal divine form (*visvarupa*) to Arjuna and all the devotees who are in the path of devotion and love (*bhaktimarga*).

CHAPTER XXXIX

RESIGNATION BRINGS ETERNAL PEACE

Now begins the twelveth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita.* In philosophy and religion of Vedanta, you will notice that the eternal Truth, the Reality of the universe, is described as both personal and impersonal or, in other words, God of the universal religion of Vedanta, is both personal and impersonal—determinate and indeterminate (*saguna* and *nirguna*). From the second chapter up to the tenth we have heard many discourses descriptive of the eternal and impersonal aspect underlying all phenomena of the universe. That eternal aspect of Truth is unchangeable, is the source of intelligence, and is the essence of our existence. It is the Soul of our soul, the Life of our life, and is the infinite basis of consciousness etc.

The same eternal Truth, or the absolute Reality, appears as personal God, as we find it in the eleventh chapter In this last chapter, we discovered that Sri Krishna in his wonderful transfiguration showed to his sincere disciple that He was not only the Incarnation of the Divinity, but was the *Isvara* or was the determinate personal God whose gross physical body was the material universe, and perhaps most of you will remember what a wonderful description of that universal form of the Divinity, or personal God, was given.

In the last verse of this eleventh chapter, Sri Krishna says that after telling his disciple Arjuna that that vision of God-consciousness was not a common thing, but very few were ever blessed with that Godconsciousness, or vision of the universal form of the personal God which through grace He showed to him. But those who were devoted to Him and worshipped the Supreme Lord through one-pointed i.e. whole-hearted and whole-souled devotion and love, would see and realize that form, and would have the same God-vision as he had After saying this, he says in that last verse "He who works for me, regards me as the Highest, is devoted to me, and is free from all attachments, and who is not unkindly to any creature, attains

to me in the end,"[1] referring by "Me" to the personal God, who is worshipped under different names and forms. Here you will notice a thing that no particular name of any personal God is given. That Divinity of which Sri Krishna was the manifestation, had no particular name like Jehovah or Allah. All these attributes like Father, Mother etc. were given also by Sri Krishna to the Supreme Deity, who is the personal God of Vedanta, and that gave rise to this question which was asked by Arjuna in the first verse of the twelveth chapter: "These devotees who, always devout, worshipped the personal God, and those also who address the imperishable and unmanifested absolute Being—which of these are better and more advanced?"[2] He found that in the first ten chapters, the worship of the imperishable, absolute, and impersonal Being was given and, after seeing the transfiguration of Sri Krishna, he asked Him whether to worship the personal side of God is superior to the universal impersonal form. Sri Krishna asked Arjuna to be devoted to that form, and this gave rise to this question, whether one should be devoted to the impersonal side of the eternal absolute Being, or to the personal side of the personal God with the universal form, and Arjuna also asked Sri Krishna that among these disciples who were the best and most advanced, so that he could follow them. Here begins this question of Arjuna about Bhakti Yoga.

The Lord says: "Those devotees or Bhaktas who fix their minds on my universal form with passionate devotion and supreme faith, are, in my opinion, the best of the Yogins; that is, they are the most advanced."[3] Those who are devoted to this personal God, are most advanced and better. Here you

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[1] Vide the *Gita*, XI. 55.

[2] अर्जुन उवाच—
एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।
ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥१२।१

[3] श्रीभगवानुवाच—
मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।
श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥१२।२

will notice that although the worship or adoration of the impersonal God is considered to be the right and higher thing, still He declared that the worship of the personal God whose body is the whole universe, was more helpful and more suited to ordinary minds of the mortals.

The personal God is the Lord of the whole phenomenal universe. He is omnipotent and omniscient. He is free from all imperfections and ordinary desires such as human beings possess, and He is free from ordinary relative and selfish love and hatred such as are shown by the ordinary mortals. As in other passages it is described that God of the universe has no one whom He hates and no one whom He loves in the ordinary sense, but His love is all-pervading, and His love is equal to all creatures He is full of love, justice, mercy etc, and all the attributes that the Christians and dualistic religionists give to their personal God, are also given to the personal God of Vedanta, and there is no difference. He is a Spirit, who is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, true, and one as well as the repository of all the blessed qualities like justice, love etc He has no particular form, yet the whole universe is His body He can take any form if He likes If we give Him any particular form, like the human form, we limit Him, and make Him merely human, and, in this way, we limit His infiniteness

And there is one point where Vedanta excels all other religions that make Him only human is trying to make Him personal. Of course, He can become a human God in order to satisfy the desires of His devotees. The half of his question was asked and answered, and the other half of the question was in his mind. That question was "What would become of those who worshipped or were devoted to the Supreme who is the absolute and impersonal Being, or the Lord of the universe?" Were they not as great and advanced as the other devotees or Bhaktas who worshipped the personal God? And, in these two verses, this idea is explained.

"To them who contemplate the imperishable, the unmanifested and all-pervading, the unthinkable, the all-moving and the unchangeable substance of the universe, having limited powers and senses, regarding all beings alike, and engaged in doing good to all living creatures, they also do attain to

Me, the Supreme."[4] Those who worship the Absolute, the impersonal God, the impersonal eternal Truth, the unchangeable, that which is beyond our thoughts, beyond the reach of our intellect, beyond our minds, and is indescribable, reach the same goal, and there is no difference. So you see how liberal broad, and wonderfully tolerant the religion and philosophy of Vedanta are! Those who worship the unknowable, attain to the same goal as those who worship the personal God under a particular name, or through a particular form. Those who worship God of the Christians, will attain to the same goal as those who worship the universal Truth of the Brahman, or under any other name, as Allah, or as Mother Divine; and that is the very cause of all existence. That God, or eternal Truth, is one, only His aspects are many or vary. Some have realized certain aspects, others have understood other aspects, and have fights and quarrels trying to convert people from one particular faith into another. According to the universal religion of Vedanta, all these fights and quarrels proceed from ignorance, fanaticism, and bigotry, and the sooner they are stopped the better it would be for the world. But that truth has not been realized by the sectarian religions. On the con-

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[4] ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यञ्च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥
संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहितेरतः ॥१२।३-४

Regarding 'कूटस्थं' Sankara said:

"'कूटस्थं' दृश्यमानगुणमन्तर्दोषं वस्तु कूटं—'कूटरूपं कूटसाक्ष्यम्' इत्यादौ कूटशब्दः प्रसिद्धो लोके। तथाच अविद्यादि अनेकसंसारबीजमन्तर्दोषबन्मायाऽव्याकृतादिशब्दवाच्यतया—'मायां तु प्रकृति विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम्', 'मम माया दुरत्यया' इत्यादौ प्रसिद्धं यत् तत् कूटं तस्मिन् कूटे स्थितं कूटस्थं तदध्यक्षतया अथवा राशिरिव स्थितं कूटस्थम् अतएव अचलं यस्मात् अचलं तस्माद् ध्रुवं नित्यमित्यर्थः।"

Madhusudana Saiasvati said regarding 'कूटस्थं' — "यथा कूटकार्षापणं कूटसाक्षित्वमित्यादौ। * * अतएव सर्वविकाराणाम् अविद्याकल्पितत्वात् तदधिष्ठानं साक्षिचैतन्यं निर्विकारमित्याह अचलम्, * * अचलात्वदेव ध्रुवं अपरिणामि नित्यम् * * (एतादृशः शुद्ध ब्रह्म मां पर्यपासते * *)।"

trary, the sectarian religions have preached that their gods are the only ones, they have no regard for any other doxy, and all others are heterodoxy.

In the whole religious history of India, toleration has been the aim, and no religious persecution has ever been known. So you see those agnostics who are devoted to the unknown and unknowable something, will have the same goal, if they are sincere and earnest, because God, some say, is unknown and unknowable. The moment He is known He is no longer God, He is a relative Being. The moment we know God with our limited mind and intellect, He ceases to be God the infinite Being, or the absolute and eternal Truth, therefore, in this sense, God is always unknown and unknowable by the mind and intellect, but He is more than knowable to the devotee By his spirit a devotee of God reaches the Divinity, enters into Him, stays with Him, and becomes one with Him, in the end That is one thing which is very seldom understood by the doctrinal religionists of the world.

What is worshipped, is truth But how can the Absolute be worshipped? That point has not been clearly understood by most of the dualistic believers, who believe in a personal God and think that the Absolute, or the Impersonal, cannot be worshipped They think that praying loudly and requiring certain things and burning incense, are the only form of worship, and no other higher forms of worship are possible. Worship in all its phases has been studied in India as in no other country. and other countries can learn much by coming in contact with India.

Upasana means worship, and that means holding the ideal before the spiritual eye. If we try to reach the ideal in spirit and if we concentrate our mental faculties, all feelings on that ideal remain in that state for a certain length of time and that would be the real worship. Sit quietly, concentrate your whole heart and soul upon the divine ideal, no matter whether it is absolute, or with a particular form and name, but try to approach it and commune with it, be one with it, and let the current of thought remain unbroken, so long you will worship the real in spirit. It requires no external ritual or ceremony, as any one can do it at any time. You do not have to go to any place of worship, but worship in the form of *Upasana* is

the close relation of the soul to God, the divine Ideal, and that kind of worship is the highest form of worship.[5]

That worship is ignored by those who advocate the ceremonials and external forms of worship, but worship in silence is much greater, more beneficial, more uplifting, and more spiritualizing than these external forms of worship.[6] Therefore, when you worship the eternal Truth, what will you do? If you can grasp the idea of the unchangeable Reality, or the eternal imperishable Substance of your own being, and if you direct your heart and soul toward that Reality and let the current of your thought run unbroken for a certain length of time during meditation, you will rise above the plane of ordinary consciousness, and will enter into Godconsciousness. You would come back again with your heart full of peace and happiness, with knowledge a thousand times increased and purified, and all the blessed qualities would begin to flow into your soul, and you would realize that transfiguration of which you read in the scriptures. That would be the second birth. Every time you go into that state, you will come out as a new being radiant with divine glory, and your spiritual insight will begin to appear. Then your spiritual eye will be opened, and you will see things differently. Then the ordinary relations of

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[5] उपासनं नाम * * उपासस्य अर्थस्य बिषयीकरणेन सामीप्यमुपगम्य तैलधारावत् समानप्रत्ययप्रवाहेण दीर्घकालं यद् आसनं तदुपासनमाचक्ष्यते ।

[6] The mystic Sadhaka Ramaprasad (of Bengal) held the similar view when he sang:

জাঁকজমকে করলে পূজা অহংকার হয় মনে মনে ।
(তাই) লুকিয়ে তাঁরে করবে পূজা
জান্‌বে নাকো জগত-জনে ॥

that is, 'if we worship God, or the Divine Mother, with pomp and grandeur, there arise vanity and egoism. So worship Him or Her in silence, then no one will know about it.' Sri Ramakrishna also said it in a different way:

'ধ্যান করবে বনে, মনে ও কোনে',

i.e. meditate in the secluded place, or in the jungle, in the mind and in the corner of the room, so that no one can disturb you. The mystic Echart also said that God whispers (in the ear) in silence.

life will have new meanings to you, and all the trivial disturbances of worldly life will not produce any effect on you. You would look at all these lower ideals to which you are clinging at present, thinking they are real and eternal, as mere trivialities resulting from selfish motives that you go through. All kinds of work which now satisfy your selfish desires, you would laugh at them, because they would seem so trivial, foolish, and childish. You would think all these pursuits as a waste of time. Then you would get a glimpse of your own eternal home, the abode from which you have come.

That is real religion. The doctrines and dogmas are non-essential. They have mostly deluded the minds of the masses and made them more ignorant instead of making them more spiritual. The object of religion is to dispel the darkness or superstition and bring you nearer to the face of the Truth, so that you can solve the problems of life with the greatest satisfaction. When that is not done, you will only follow the doctrines and dogmas what Mr. So and so says, and all these will bring confusion to you. That which makes one spiritual, as well as makes one realize the Supreme Being and the relation which the individual soul bears to that Being, is religion. And that religion we preach, and we practise, and Vedanta teaches that spiritual religion. Therefore, that religion we all can practise under all circumstances in all countries, and everywhere, because it has no doctrines, no creeds, and no dogmas. Its creed is eternal Truth, its dogma is the worship of the eternal Truth, and its religion is universal. But, at the same time, we must remember that worship of the personal God has been considered by Sri Krishna to be the better, as He explained it in the *Gita*. Because greater is the struggle of those who fix their thoughts upon the unmanifest, the impersonal, and the absolute, for the goal of the unmanifest and the impersonal God can with great difficulty be also attained by the embodied mortals.

Here we get the reason. Greater is the struggle for those who fix their thoughts upon the unmanifest, because whenever you try to fix your thoughts upon the unmanifest, you will have to withdraw your thoughts from the manifested body. As long as you are attached to your own material body, as long as you think of this body as a part of yourself, if you fix your thoughts

on the Absolute, you will have to separate yourself, but it is a great struggle. You will have to acquire an immense power of self-control and self-abnegation. You will have to kill your attachment to the body, otherwise it will drag you down to the material sense plane and, if you cannot overcome the influence of the body and senses, you will not be able to rise above the plane of physical consciousness, and you will have to struggle harder; but it will be easier for those who have overcome the influence of the body and senses, and whose senses have been under perfect control. Those who have been trying concentration in the Yoga class, would find how difficult it is to fix the mind on something which is higher than the material, or than the sense plane, and that difficulty will become stronger, if you try to fix your whole heart and soul, and your thought and mind upon the Absolute for a long period of time. You will not be able to do it perhaps, and you would come to see that it is almost impossible. The power of the flesh would drag you down and would not let you rise above the physical sense plane.

All the impressions you have gathered through sense perceptions will wake up and create disturbance in your mind, and will make it restless, and you will not be able to attain to peace and happiness. Therefore, Sri Krishna says that the goal of the unmanifest can with great difficulty be attained by the embodied mortals. It is true that there are also struggle and difficulty to fix the mind upon the personal God and it is not so easy a thing. But try to fix your mind upon a personal God, and see how few times you succeed.

It is true that to attain to perfect concentration upon the personal God through love and good works in the name of the Lord, there is a great struggle, but there will be a still greater struggle and more difficulties will be felt in trying to fix your mind upon the Absolute. The Absolute is so far beyond our reach, because it is unthinkable, and unapproachable through senses. The minute you begin to think of it as above relativity, you will have to rise above thoughts, and when thoughts arise, you will have to push them aside. How difficult it is.

Again, the sense of I, me, mine, the earthly relations and all these possessions, rise before you. The monks try to get rid of all these ideas, because they want to purify them-

selves and to fix their whole heart and soul upon that realm where there is no I, me, mine. They renounce everything cut off all connections, and go into the silence where they will not be disturbed by noise, or any kind of perception, or any other demand upon them. The result of both is the same, but one is easier. Worship of the personal God is much more easy than the other path, although the result will be the same in the end.

So we understand why the worship of the personal God is easier for those who have attachment to the body, have earthly desires and worldly tendencies, and are not able to rise above all these attachments, and are not able to withdraw themselves from all attachments of the flesh and all the diseases, conditions, and environments.[7] But still there are those who are more self-controlled, possess the power of concentration and can go into silence for at least an hour or half an hour in the midst of all this busy life and rush and worry of New York City They have no worry or anxiety. There is nothing that disturbs them They can easily worship the absolute Truth and attain to the highest goal through that path

It depends on the tendency of the individual. Some people find it much easier to go by that path which is the most difficult one for ordinary beings. Therefore, they choose it and follow that path with earnestness and sincerity with good results at every step. Therefore, Vedanta does not set up any particular path for all, and it prescribes different paths. So let any one follow it according to the capacity, tendency, and power, which each one possesses. "But those who wor-

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7 क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।
अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्भिरवाप्यते ॥१२।५

(a) "क्लेशोऽधिक एव क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तु अक्षरात्मनां परमार्थदर्शनां देहाभिमान-परित्यागनिमित्तः । * * 'देहवद्भि' देहाभिमानवद्भि 'अवाप्यते', अतः क्लेशः अधिकतरः ।"—Sankara

(b) "सर्वकर्मसंन्यासं कृत्वा गुरुमुपसृत्य वेदान्तवाक्यानां तेन तेन विचारेण तत्तद्भ्रमनिराकरणे महान् प्रयासः प्रत्यक्षसिद्धस्ततः क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामित्युक्तम् ।"
—Madhusudana Sarasvati.

ship Me, the personal God, with one-pointed devotion, renouncing all thoughts and actions and regarding Me as the supreme goal, such devotees whose whole heart and soul are fixed on Me, I deliver ere long from the ocean of death and misery."[8]

Here Sri Krishna proclaims before the world that He is the Saviour of the world. No one can declare this without having the consciousness of being the Saviour of mankind, and that means His being is the deliverer of error as well as deliverer from death and misery. He who saves the life of a drowning man, is called the Saviour, and, in this sense, the original word Saviour is used.

God is the deliverer from the ocean of misery, suffering, sorrow, disease, and death in which ordinary mortals are almost drowned. The true devotees worship Him, the *Isvara*, with one-pointed devotion i.e. devotion which does not know a second. Another thing is regarded important as the divine ideal and it is renouncing all fruits of actions. It means performing the works of daily life but not for the results. The results really go to the Lord. The true devotees do the duties of their life with perfect satisfaction, but they do not seek the results. That is called Karma Yoga. The Karma Yogis practise it during their daily life when they are bound to do their works and do their duties. "Regarding me as the highest ideal"—which is nothing but the attainment of divine consciousness, or divine communion. "Such devotees whose whole heart and soul are fixed on Me, I deliver from the ocean of death and misery, suffering, sorrow and evil."[9] All these are ordinarily understood as the results of sin, because sin produces death, misery and evil, so He delivers His devotees from misery and sin. Thus He becomes the Saviour.

Here we should consider whether we mean the external Saviour, to save through external effort, as an ordinary human

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[8] ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।
अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥
तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।
भवामि न चिरात् पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥१२।६७

[9] Vide the *Gita*, XII. 6.

being would save another drowning man. Now the personal God Himself is the Saviour, and He saves the soul by appearing before the devotee and by helping the devotee with spiritual help. His help is always with us, but we do not feel it on account of our intense attachment to the world and pleasures of senses. The wind of divine grace is constantly blowing, but that wind is not felt by the boat which has not roused its soul. The boat on the surface of the water which has aroused the soul, feels the wind of divine grace, and that soul is the soul of devotion. The purified heart is the soul roused by the power of devotion. When the heart is purified, we feel that current of divine grace appearing as the will of the personal God to save mankind

The original meaning of the Saviour and the method of saving have been forgotten by the theologians, but the truly spiritual souls feel that and, therefore, do not care what the theologians say They reject their theories and go straight and ahead, and find out the true meaning. The spirit of all these teachings is entirely different from the ordinary meanings which you gather in schools and in theologies. Reading books and commentaries is not religion Therefore, it is said in Vedanta that all this gospel of words with fine commentaries and argumentations and rationalizations are good for deluding the people, but they do not help us in getting salvation. We could cover all the Christian world with theologies that we have in India, and we reject them. Do you think we could accept those of any other religions? No, because they are just as bad as those which we reject. From the Vedic period down to the present day you will find that many books have been written. You will require twenty life-times to read all these books they have written, and the finest, most logical, scientific, and philosophical arguments have been given in them, but still they do not help any one in reaching the comfort that comes to our souls through devotion and worship of the eternal Truth. So, even if we have sinned during the whole of our lifetime, yet if we worship the eternal Truth, or the personal God, we will find a deliverer within us, no matter whether we believe in any particular deliverer or not, the Saviour will come to us He is bound to come, because it is an eternal law that whenever the devotee is ready for

salvation, there appears the Saviour, and the form of the deliverer depends upon the desire and quality or character of the devotee.

If he has any particular choice of the form of the Saviour, he will find the Saviour in that form. He may come in the form of Christ. No body has seen the form of Christ, we may have seen the pictures, but all these pictures have been drawn or painted four or five hundred years after his crucifixion. Photography was not in existence at that time. We may imagine him with light hair, or with dark hair. He had neither light nor dark hair, nor brown nor black, no one of the theologians or priests could tell it for certain. I have seen thousands of types of His figure in Italy in paintings and sculptures, each artist has tried to represent Him in his own way. I was in great confusion; I asked which one I should accept. I would accept none, and that was the best and most rational decision I could come to.

Sri Krishna says: "Fix thy heart on Me, concntrate thy thoughts on Me, and in Me thou shalt undoubtedly live hereafter."[10] This is the substance of His teachings. It is the simplest form of religion. Can you fix your mind on God? No matter what particular form of God you believe in, but can you concentrate your thoughts on Him? If you can, in the end, after death, you would live with Him. This is the essence of all religions. You can apply it in Christianity, in Mohammedanism, in Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Joroastrianist or any other law.

Why should we concentrate on Him and fix our mind on Him? Because He is the absolute Reality. If we fix on something which will vanish, our thoughts will wander in space without any permanent foundation or support. If we fix our mind on ordinary mortals, they will pass away. If we fix it

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10 मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत उर्ध्वं स संशयः ॥१२।८

The words 'अत उर्ध्वं' suggest the idea of *krama-mukti* by the worship of the determinate (*saguna*) Brahman or the personal God. Sankara said that by *upasana*, or by concentration and meditation upon the indeterminate (*nirguna*) Brahman, one attains instantly *sadya-mukti* with the immediate awareness of the Divine consciousness.

on human beings, they will go through evolution and change, and his own personality is the product of his own thoughts, desires and tendencies. We have no control over that. Even if we do try to follow some particular soul, we shall be left behind. Perhaps, that soul will advance and rise to a higher plane where we would not be able to go, because we may not have reached that state of advancement. Therefore, the object of our concentration, feelings, intellect, and our whole life would be subject to changes. And where can we find anything except in the eternal Being, the absolute Reality, which is both personal and impersonal?

The personal has one aspect. The impersonal is more true than the personal, because it is eternal. All the great teachers of the world after having the experiences of the world, have declared that everything of the world is changeable, evanescent, transitory, and ephemeral except God who is unchangeable and eternal. Then fix thy heart and soul on God, and there will be no danger. Earthly possessions you will never be able to carry with you. What good will they do you? They may bring you momentary satisfaction, but that is all. All earthly sense-pleasures will bring momentary satisfaction, and the more you wish for it, the worse you will become. That is one eternal Truth. Therefore, consider in the quiet moments and think over what is eternal, find out and fix your heart and soul on that, no matter under what conditions you may be, or under what circumstances you may be placed. You must love it, hold on to it, and feel it with earnestness, firm faith, and conviction. Then you will live in the eternal Truth, and that is what the religion of Vedanta teaches us how to live in the eternal Truth, so that the whole of our emotions, feelings, and love and desires and efforts may not be in vain, but will be fulfilled and will bring solution of the purpose of life.

Sri Krishna says: "If thou art unable to concentrate thy mind steadily on Me then seek to reach Me by the Yoga of constant parctice."[11]

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11 अथ चित्तं समाधातु न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम्।
अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय ॥१२।९

If you say, you cannot concentrate your mind on God. It is very difficult, and your mind is distracted by earthly ideas, impressions, and conditions, and so Sri Krishna advises that if you concentrate your mind steadily on Me, try to reach Me by the Yoga of constant practice.'

Sit quietly every day in your own room, and you will find that practice makes perfection. In three months, you will find you are another being. Go and practise, and if you have once succeeded in developing the power of concentration, you will be able to fix your mind on God, whether personal or impersonal, and you will come to realize the divine communion with Him, and you will ultimately reach the goal so that after death of the body, you will find an eternal realm where there is neither suffering nor death but only eternal peace.[12]

Sri Krishna says further: "If thou art unable to practise, devote thyself to doing works for My sake, for by performing works for Me thou shalt attain to perfection."[13] If you say that you have no time to parctise, and are so busy with works, then work for God, do not seek the results, give the results to God, and do everything in the name of God. Then you will be working for the divine ideal, not for anything else,

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Sankara said:

"अभ्यासयोगेन चित्तस्य एकस्मिन् आलम्बने सर्वतः समाहृत्य पुनः पुनः स्थापनमभ्यासः तत्पूर्वको योगः समाधानलक्षणः।"

In this connection Anandagiri forwarded two methods for concentration: (1) 'एकं आलम्बनं स्थूलं प्रतिमादि समाधानम्; (2) 'ततोऽभ्यन्तरे विश्वरूपे'।

Madhusudana Sarasvati forwarded three methods: (1) 'प्रथमं प्रतिमादौ बाह्ये भगवद्ज्ञानाभ्यासः' (2) 'तदशक्तौ भागवतधर्मानुष्ठानं' (3) 'तदशक्तौ सर्वकर्मफलत्यागः'।

Patanjali defined 'अभ्यास'—'तत्र स्थितौ यत्नोऽभ्यासः' (१।१३) i.e. repeated effort is known as practice (*abhyasa*).

[12] Here Sri Krishna has also suggested the *kramamukti*, or, in otherward, the *videhamukti* i.e emancipation after dissolution of the material body.

[13] अभ्यासेऽप्यसमार्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव।
मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन् सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥१२।१०

not for all the works of our daily life, including business and everything.

And Sri Krishna says. "If this too thou art unable to do, then, having roused thyself to Me and being self-controlled, do thou abandon the fruits of thy actions, do not seek the fruits of works"[14] If you cannot perform the works for God's sake, do not seek the results of works, abandon the fruits of your works. Every day after performing the works of your daily life say to your Lord, or divine Ideal, 'all the fruits and works of my body and mind go to Thee, they do not belong to me.' When you retire and lie down on your bed, speak to your divine Ideal, thus that 'the works I have performed, will produce their results but let these results go to Thee my Lord' Go and do this as long as you live, and in the end you will be purified.

Make your mind and words coincide. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa also said that our thoughts and words must be one, we should not be thieves of our own thoughts Really if we steal our own thoughts and express certain things in the name of the Lord, we are deceivers. But, in truth, the Lord is not deceived, we only fool ourselves and do not get the results and, consequently, we play the part of a hypocrite. So make the words harmonize with your thoughts, and let them work in perfect harmony, and you will get the results very quickly. Most people ask, 'why are not my prayers fulfilled?" Because your prayers are not in perfect harmony with your thoughts. So resign yourself to the will of the Lord by holding that you are the instruments, all the powers of your mind, senses and body do not belong to you, they are working through you, and you are nothing but instruments in the hands of the almighty Power who is the Lord of the universe. That is the form of worship. After describing the various modes and methods as just as good and great still Sri Krishna says

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14 अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥१२।११

Three kinds of process of *sadhana* have already been mentioned, and they have been suggested in the commentary of Madhusudana Sarasvati And these three methods of process of *sadhana* or *abhyasa* have been summed up in the verse XII. 12.

CHAPTER XL

ATTAINMENT OF GODCONSCIOUSNESS IS UNIVERSAL

In the previous chapter, we learned that the ideal of Vedanta is both the personal and the impersonal Divinity. God can be worshipped as a personal Being and also as the impersonal Supreme Spirit, which is the eternal and absolute Truth. The dualistic phase of Vedanta encourages worship of the personal eternal Truth, while the qualified non-dualistic and monistic phase of Vedanta encourages the worship of the impersonal absolute Truth. That worship consists in meditation, and it is sending our thoughts and ideas toward the Supreme Ideal, and there are various methods by which that eternal Truth can be worshipped. For instance, Sri Krishna describes in this verse: "Fix thy heart on Me, the absolute Truth, concentrate thy thoughts in Me, and in Me thou shalt undoubtedly live hereafter. If thou art unable to concentrate thy mind steadily on Me, then seek to reach Me by the Yoga of constant practice."[1] You must learn to concentrate first, and concentration can be developed through practice. Our mind is ordinarily distracted by the objects of the eternal world. Our mind is busily engaged in various works, and when we try to fix our attention on the highest Ideal, we find that our mind is not under our control and, so, in order to bring the mind under control, we should practise and devote a little time every day in trying to concentrate our mind on certain objects.

The object should be at first a gross material or concrete object, then from a concrete object we go to the abstract, and from that we go to the Absolute. Just as in practising shooting, first we try to get a big target, then gradually we go to finer and finer points, and gradually we develop that power and faculty by which we can aim at the finest point. Similarly, in trying to focus our mental functions upon the finest and most abstract object which is beyond our mind

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[1] Vide the *Gita*, XII. 9.

we cannot succeed at once. So we must try from the grosser and more tangible objects at first, and then gradually come higher and higher, and that is called the Yoga of constant practice. If you are unabel to practise it, we have already explained, devote yourself to doing works for the sake of the Lord. If we do works for the sake of the Lord and all the works we perform like this during our daily life, then these works would be the means by which we should be able to attain to the highest goal of all religions, for, "by performing works for My sake thou shalt attain to perfection" said the Lord.

Perfection is the ideal and this means the attainment of Godconsciousness (*brahmanubhuti*). We must feel that we are divine and are in touch with the Divinity. The Divinity dwells within us. He is the Soul of our souls, the Life of our lives in Him we live and move and have our being, we cannot do anything without being guided and directed by the almighty will. The individual will working in us is only a part and parcel of the universal will which is called the will of God, and when we understand that these bodies and minds are nothing but the instruments through which the divine will is working, we do not care for our earthly ambitions and earthly objects and do not long for these earthly pleasures, but we look upon them as trivial and of no consequence. In that state of perfection, all bondages will be torn off, all the knots of desires will be cut assunder, and all the desires of ambition will be fulfilled.

The highest ambition of human life is to be perfect, and when that is fulfilled, all other ambitions are included in it. "If these two thou art unable to do, then, having resigned thyself to Me, the Supreme Spirit, and being self-controlled. do thou abandon the fruits of all actions," says the Lord. If we cannot work for God, or for the Supreme Deity, then having done all this work for work's sake and not seeking the results of our works if we realize our own mental conditions and the nature of the forces by which we are directed to do different actions, then we find that these forces do not belong to us as individuals, but they belong to the universe. There is one mind or mental current that is running through the universe, and that is called the cosmic mind or *Prakriti*, and when that mind

manifests itself through the individual body, it becomes the individual mind. Just the force of attraction is all-pervading, the life-force, wherever there is a manifestation of it, is expressing itself on the material plane, but that life-force does not belong to any particular being. Life-force in me and you, does not belong to me or to you, but it belongs to the universe, nay, it belongs to God who is universal; and when we realize it in this way, we find that all the activities of minds and bodies are done, not by merely individual power or forces.

When these forces are working through us, they must bring their results and, even when we do not care for the results and do not want them, they are bound to come. Simply by desiring the results we create anxiety in our minds and get into a disturbance, and that does not bring the result quicker, but makes everything unpleasant and also makes us unhappy in the end. Therefore, we should not be anxious about the results, but should perform our duties with the utmost ability resigning the results to the hands of the Almighty who is working in the universe.

Indeed, knowledge is better than steady practice. For instance, when you go to church or to any place, you are told to practise something, or to go through certain rituals and ceremonies. Ordinary people follow that practice, but they do not produce such results as the practice which is based upon knowledge. Therefore, knowledge is greater and brings better results than steady practice.

Meditation is better than knowledge, because by that power we make that knowledge which is vague and indefinite at first and is a part of our being. You receive knowledge by reading books and studying nature, but if you wish to make that a part of your being, you will have to assimilate that knowledge and make it a part of yourself so that at any time you would receive the benefit of that knowledge.

Resignation of the fruits of actions exceeds meditation, and when it gets to the real truth of the universe, or when we get into the core of the Truth of that knowledge, we are in a position to resign ourselves completely to that Truth, and that resignation brings a great peace and comfort. When you are struggling hard to obtain a certain thing and with all

your efforts, you are not accomplishing exactly what you wish to have and, after that time, when you see that you have done your best, then you resign and say, 'all right, I cannot do anything better, I have done my best.' Then along with that resignation come peace and rest, and that enjoyment of peace and rest means something which is worth-having.

Perfect peace instantly follows resignation Whenever we are struggling to get along in this world and to understand the purpose of life, and if we accomplish it in this life with all our efforts, then come true peace and happiness. Jesus the Christ just before the crucifixion was very much worried and did not know what to do. He prayed, "O Lord, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me". After the first prayer He had no peace. He prayed again and had no peace, and after that He prayed for the third time saying, "It be so, Lord; let Thy will be done, not my will but Thy will be done. Father, into thy hands, I commend my spirit." That was resignation, and, in all great teachings, we will find that resignation is the result of all great attempts, and with that resignation come wonderful peace, happiness, and strength. And it is for this reason that all the great teachers of the world try to resign themselves, and from the bottom of their souls they say, "Lord, thy will be done."

Our individual wills may produce great results, but this will be limited in the end, because the individual will is limited in its nature. The person who has attained to peace and perfection in this world, is like an ideal. His life is the ideal life, and he is worshipped as the Saviour of mankind. And here you will find the most beautiful description of one who has attained to perfection and Godconsciousness. You must have read in the Bible, the ideal life of the Sermon on the Mount, but here you will find something described which has never been excelled by any religious teachers in any part of the world

Sri Krishna says. "He who hurts no creature, who is kind and compassionate toward all, who is free from attachment and egotism, who is equanimous in pleasure and pain, who is forgiving and contented, meditative and restrained and firm in faith, whose heart and soul are directed to me, is dear

to me."[2] Take any one of these characteristics: "He who hurts no creature". A perfect man is one who will hurt no creature. In fact, there is no hatred in God. If there is hatred in God, that God is man-made God, He is anthropomorphic God, and we do not regard that God as the ideal of the universal religion.

A perfect man must be kind and compassionate toward all, and his heart must weep at the misery and suffering of any living creature before his eyes. He must be free from attachment. He must not have any particular attachment to any particular object, and he must not have any egotism. We must not say, "I can do this, or that, because his "I" must melt away into that universal "I" and he will say, "Whatever is mine, is thine, whatever is thine, is mine". He must feel that wonderful unity or oneness which will make the individual human divine like a living God on this earth. Pleasure and pain will not affect him. He will remain equanimous, because the farther we are away from the animal plane, the nearer we come to that oneness. God is above pleasure and pain. If He were affected, we would not hold Him as the ideal, and a perfect man, being nearer to God, must rise above pleasure and pain.

A perfect man will forgive, because he pities those groping

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[2] अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।
निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥
सन्तुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढ़निश्चयः ।
मर्यार्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥१२।१३-१४

Madhusudana Sarasvati said that the word 'दृढ़निश्चयः' means स्थितप्रज्ञः who thinks, 'I am not doer (of any work): I am not enjoyer, but I am the secondless Brahman, the intelligence-existence-bliss' ('अहमस्माकर्त्रभोक्तृः सच्चिदानन्दाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म')।

Regarding मर्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिः Madhusudana Sarasvati said "मयि भगवति वासुदेवे शुद्धे ब्रह्मणि अर्पितः मनोबुद्धिः समर्पितान्तःरणः ईदृशो य मद्भक्तः शुद्धाक्षरब्रह्मवित् स मे प्रियः मदात्मत्वात्।" The word 'मदात्मत्वात्' means the devotee (Bhakta) is non-different from Bhagavan, the Lord of the universe.

in the darkness of ignorance. God never forces. A true prophet is one who never forces, and those of ancient times who used to force, were not so divine. Force is not and should not be in the character of one who has reached perfection. "To err is human, to forgive is divine", and a perfect man must be contented with anything Contentment is very rarely practised by ordinary people, because they are taught to have ambition. They encourage their ambition, and do not have contentment. You will find this contentment is a great virtue. In India, the people, though they suffer from poverty, still have wonderful contentment. The people of India in general, do not think that they are very poor, but are more happy and contented than any other people on earth. Because they practise contentment, and that would be a great thing in this country to teach among the poorest classes. They must be contented with their powers and ability and what they already possess. They should not go out and try to be millionaires by robbing other people of their property, but should try to earn their living by honest means, and exercise truthfulness and kindly feeling.

We must be meditative. We must not forget the ideal of our life We must keep our mind fixed on the highest ideal. The world cannot be the ideal, because the world is transitory That which is eternal, unchangeable, everlasting, and almighty and which is the source of all consciousness, intelligence, and power, should be the ideal. We must practise self-control, otherwise we would be disturbed by anger, and the trivial things that we constantly come in contact with. Environmental conditions ought not to produce sensations in our mind. Our senses are like the wild animals, and if we let them loose, they will go and destroy everything, and they will try to do everything to enrich themselves, and that would be lack of control. But a person who has reached perfection. should try to show control under all conditions.

He should have firm faith, and that is a constant companion of all knowledge. You are sitting here, and you have faith in yourselves that you are sitting here. If the whole world says you are not sitting here, but some other being is sitting there, you do not believe it all. This kind of faith is based upon self-consciousness. So when you have that con-

sciousness and feel that you are one with the Divinity, if the whole world says that it is not so, you would not believe it. Firmness in faith must be firmness through knowledge, but when it is not backed with knowledge and existence, it is weak. When a man has reached perfection and firmness and when he knows it is so and his faith is not based upon any error, his heart and soul are directed toward the eternal Truth. His heart and soul are directed toward the Highest, because he finds the absolute Being in everything. Then his heart and soul are fixed, he finds the eternal Truth. Therefore, he does not care for anything which is not one with the eternal Being. Such a man who has reached perfection, is the most beloved of God.

We must learn to be kind to all living creatures. Other living creatures are afraid of us, because we have the feeling of injuring them. The moment we have dropped that feeling, they are no longer afraid of us. Look at the squirrels in the park. When you feed them, they will jump on your shoulder and have no fear, because you are not going to harm or injure them, therefore, they are absolutely free. That feeling we should cultivate. That feeling of injuring others we should try to avoid as much as we can during our daily life, and by doing that we should come nearer to our highest ideal.

"He by whom the world is not affected, who is not affected by the world, who is free from self-esteem, envy, fear, and anxiety, is the most beloved of Me", says the Lord.[3] We must not become a nuisance to the world, must not become a burden to the world, to society, to our neighbours and to our country. We must not be affected by any people, and must not affect them unpleasantly. This is a thing which very few people practise, but one who has reached perfection, lives firmly in the world without disturbibng any person, and without being disturbed by the world. He has no fear or anxiety and no envy for anything, because he has attained to the Highest. He has no self-esteem in the ordinary human sense; but he has self-esteem in the highest sense; he has self-esteem

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[3] यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः।
हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो य स च मे प्रियः ॥१२।१५

on the highest plane, a spirit which is esteemed by all. He knows he is conscious of his divine nature, but not in an egotistic way, and, therefore, he becomes the beloved of the Divinity. That should be the ideal and we should hold it in our mind always that 'no soul, no living creature, be disturbed by me'. Rise above all disturbances; is this impossible? No, it can be practised, and if we hold that ideal and try to mould our character according to the ideal, we can do it during this life, and that is what the Vedanta teaches. It makes us understand the ideal first and then moulds the character according to the ideal, not because it is said in some book. It is based upon facts and we get the results right now. You do not have to go through any particular kind of belief or any particular demonstration or dogma, but you take it naturally rationally. Follow this ideal, mould your character and become perfect, even in this life.

"He who is free from all thoughts of wants, who is pure and vigorous, who is above all temporal affections, is free from worldly agitations, and who has abandoned all passions, who is full of devotion, is beloved of Me," says the Lord.[4] We must not depend upon anybody, but depend upon eternal thing, and that is Truth. We must not depend upon any mortal. Why should we depend upon any mortal for earthly objects? If we serve the eternal Truth, do you think we shall mind earthly objects? They will come to us and, if we practise constantly we shall find we are perfectly happy without the things which ordinary mortals want.

Purity must be practised. You must be pure in thought, in word, and in deed, and you must live a pure life. What made the martyrs give up their life? Purity and faith in God inspired them. Show the standard of purity and the world will worship you. A man or woman who can show purity of character, will be worshipped. He is the ideal of all.

We must be full of vigour and strength. Do you think physical strength is meant here? We do not worship the

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[4] अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥१२।१६

tiger for his physical strength, or a lion for his power and vigour. Show the higher strength and the world will bow down to you. That strength comes from Divine realization. True knowledge is power and strength. If you know that the Divinity is dwelling within you, if you know that you are the son of God even if the whole world goes to pieces, you will stand firm like an eternal rock, and no one can injure you.

Be above all temporal affections, but affections should be spiritualized and made into divine affections. When we know that love is God and all forms of affections are nothing but different phases of that one divine love, then we can spiritualize them. Then earthly objects of senses will vanish, and the higher affections will take their place. Therefore, we should rise above all earthly affections, and make them divine. Be free from all worldly ambitions which disturb the mind, and bring unrest to the soul, because if we have a passionate endeavour for an earthly object, there is no end of anxiety connected with it. Go and live in a city and see how happy that man is, and then you will not covet his aspirations and anxieties. Because it is a thing which a wise man would not care for. There is no peace in it, and a wise man likes that which brings peace and happiness to the soul.

"He who neither rejoices nor hates, neither grieves nor desires, who has renounced merit and demerit, who is full of dvotion, is dear to me", says the Lord.[5] "He who neither rejoices nor hates"—it must be a very cold, indifferent state. No, it is not a state of indifference; it is not ordinary rejoicing over some good luck, that would not be the highest ideal, that kind of rejoicing would not be desirable. That kind of hatred which exists in ordinary small minds, is not desirable The person who grieves, is sorrowful, because he has lost certain things, or because his relative is dead, and not knowing the real condition of the soul he grieves for. That is the result of ignorance, therefore, that grief is not desirable. We must not be slaves to ordinary desires. We must rise above those merit and demerit, and we must rise above all relativity, because the absolute Truth is beyond merit and demerit, beyond

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[5] यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान् यः स मे प्रियः ॥१२।१७

like and dislike, and beyond ordinary pleasures and pain. Is that state possible? Yet, when you enter into the innermost nature of your being, you will find in yourself something that is absolute and remains the same, whether you have enjoyment or unhappiness, pleasure or pain. It is the same. It is the constant equanimity. The moment you have found that, that very moment you have risen above all relativity and ordinary plane of the world.

"He who is the same toward both friend and foe, the same also in honour and dishonour, in heat and cold, in pleasure and pain, who is the same in all these dual existences and conditions of life, who is content with anything, and is homeless, steady-minded and full of devotion, is perfect and, therefore, is dear to Me", says the Lord.[5] Each one of these qualities you will find in all the great characters of the world.

"To friend and foe". We have our friends and foes as long as we are on this plane of relativity, but when we begin to see that all human beings are children of immortal Bliss, irrespective of caste, creed, or nationality, then all appear to be friends, and there is no foe. When there is no foe, how can there be a friend? Because, friend and foe are two relative terms. They are all divine, when we have risen above all distinctions of friend and foe. And thus we have come to that higher realization of divine kindliness in respect of all human beings. Therefore a perfect man is one who is kindly to all in that way, just as God is kindly to all.

"In honour and dishonour": Dishonour is a very injurious thing for a man who lives in the world, but if we can rise above that distinction, then if any one uses a disrespectful term toward us, or any kind of treatment which is not very desirable, we may show outwardly our resentment. But if we can hold our mind above that and remain undisturbed in the world, that state is much better. What are honour and dis-

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[6] समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।
शीतोष्ण सुखदु.खेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥
तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् ।
अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान् मे प्रियो नरः ॥१२।१८-१९

honour? If you come to analyse them, you find there is nothing in them. He who does not honour the divine in you, is ignorant, and that which is not divine in you, should not be honoured by anybody. Why should we demand honour and respect when we are not worthy of honour and respect from others? We honour one who is worthy of honour and respect, and that is because of the Divinity, and if we can recognize that Divinity in us, then we have risen above honour and dishonour.

The word dishonour is nothing but an empty vibration of air. Anybody can say anything to you and these words said would produce a kind of wave in your mind, or an attitude of restlessness in your soul, but you must exercise self-control and not get so disturbed by certain waves of air and waves of words that can come from another person. And, therefore, if we live in this way in this world, we are not of the world. The world will try to take advantage of such persons, and will try to kill them, but still if we go on with that ideal, the person who at first had tried to take advantage, will become different, just as wild animals will become kindly to any one who has no thought of injuring them. Those who at first tried to take advantage of you, will at length be drawn to you. They will see the greatness in you, though at first they hated you. It has been the way in all countries, in all ages.

If those do not take proper care of you in the world and do not respect you, what do you care? You are serving your Ideal, and you are trying your best to be one with highest Ideal. You are trying to rise above the ordinary plane, therefore, nothing ought to disturb you, or make you unhappy.

"Homeless": The whole world is your home; you do not live in one particular spot, such as most people would call their home. Christ was homeless, and why should we not try to be just as comfortable in one place as in another? Or in our home, why should we have attachment to particular conditions? Do you not think it is weakness to be under particular conditions? We should be able to go on and live under all conditions. Take the great examples of the teachers who are going through all kinds of hardship. They are perfectly happy. So why should we tie ourselves down to be

slaves to any particular condition of home comforts? We are weakening ourselves and destroying that wonderful power of conquering environmental conditions which we possess.

We should also train our children in that way from the very beginning. Let them bear all hardships, and remain happy under all conditions. That kind of training is much better than to allow them to be delicate and sick and limited in power and strength.

We must not be fickle, whenever we hold an ideal as the Highest. But we must stick or cling to it, and that which is not the highest, we should not care to hold as the ideal.

We should practise restraint of our tongue. Too much talking is not good, but it is a waste of energy. When two people meet, they are constantly talking. There are some persons who cannot sit quietly, and they talk to the wall or the door. It is a habit. They cannot keep quiet, and that is a great disease. Every day we should sit quietly for a few minutes at least, and practise silence for half an hour, and that would be quite enough, and after that we would gain such a tremendous power and strength that we would be able to keep silence in times of agitation and disturbance. When people are trying to injure you, you can exercise that restraint and power of self-control, and that will come through practice. You will find that these great seers never waste their energy. There is a saying, 'he who talks much, must talk in vain', and it is true. Therefore, we must practise that restraint of the tongue.

All these things, if we try to practise during our daily life and hold as ideals, we must succeed in getting some of these virtues even in this life, and as such as we obtain them in this life it is a gain. And when we pass away, we cannot take anything with us except our character or nature which is developed in this life. The character or nature is the property of the soul, and that property will not be lost. So, if we have practised self-control and have remained truthful and gained knowledge and wisdom, these will remain with us forever. Other things which we require during our earthly existence, we will have to leave here, and even the material body which we call our own, will be left behind. But that

which is our soul-life, will develop and go from one plane of existence into another, rise higher and higher through the process of evolution, and will reach eventually the ideal goal, and become perfect in the end.

Vedanta teaches that each individual soul is bound to be perfect in the end, and no soul will be left behind for ever. Such one is marching toward the highest Ideal, and will reach perfection and Godconsciousness in the end. From the lowest animal we have come up to this state of existence by going through different grades of evolution. We must have taken millions and millions of years in different cycles of evolution, but we are going onward and forward. We are marching toward the ideal goal of perfection, and whatsoever we have accomplished in this life, is a gain to us. So far as we have advanced, we should not have to go back to gain that much. What a great consolation it is to know that we are marching onward toward perfection. Consciously or unconsciously we are fulfilling the purposes of life and evolution and these ideals. If we keep them before our mind, it will help us in attaining to that goal in shorter time, because the ideal of Vedanta is to lesson the period of evolution and to make the individual soul go through many different grades in one space of existence and make the progress quicker. Therefore we need practice.

All these great teachers like Christ, Buddha and Ramakrishna have given their examples to the world to have that ideal and in one life, much can be done. Ordinary people ideal, and in one life, much can be done. Ordinary people by their own desires. Their tendencies are on a lower plane, their spiritual eye has not been opened, and they do not long for that which is eternal and everlasting, because they do not know that there is such a thing as eternal and absolute Truth, they do not know that there is such a thing as a purpose of life, therefore, they do not care for it. But wise men are those to whom these higher truths are open. They can understand the purpose of life better and long for realization, and such persons will be the ideal.

"Those who follow this eternal law as spoken above, endued with faith, regarding Me as the highest goal and are

devoted to me, are exceedingly dear to me", says the Lord.[7] This is the eternal law that in reaching perfection all the qualities that are manifested by those who have reached perfection are eternal. You do not have to go to any particular religionist to get it. You may not belong to any religion or sect or creed, but still you can attain to perfection, because these are eternal laws, and they produce their eternal results under all conditions.

Attainment to perfection is as universal as the divine Being is universal. So the attainment to Godconsciousness is universal. All nations and all individuals, living in all ages, have held the same ideal. Whether they have attained to it or not is another question, but they have had the same ideal from the very bginning of existence upon this earth. The same idea is given by the Vedanta philosophy, and the plan of reaching that ideal is also given. Therefore the Vedanta philosophy is not only a philosophy and a religion, but is the most practical philosophy and religion. It is not limited by any book, nor by any particular set of teachings, but takes in the ideals which are based upon eternal laws, and propagates them amongst the people, and tells them to follow and reach

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[7] ये तु धर्मामृतामिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।
श्रद्धधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥१२।२०
पाठभेद—'धर्म्यामृतमिदं' ।

It has been said in the *Varttika*:

उत्पन्नात्मावबोधस्य ह्यद्वेष्टृत्वादयो गुणाः ।
अयत्नतो भवन्त्येव न तु साधनरूपिणः ॥

These have been said in the second chapter of the *Gita*, while describing the state of *Jivanmukta* or *Jnani*.

The real contention of the verse XX, said Madhusudana Sarasvati, is the attainment of the indeterminate Brahman through contemplation of determinate Brahman by means of *shravana*, *manana* and *nidhidhyasana* of the *Mahavakya* "नदेवं सोपाधिकब्रह्माभिध्यानपरिपाकान्निरुपाधिकं ब्रह्मानुसंदधानस्याद्वेष्टृत्वादिधर्मविष्टस्य मुख्यस्याधिकारिणं श्रवन-मनन-निदिध्यासनान्यावर्तयतो वेदान्तवाक्यार्थतत्त्वसाक्षात्कारसंभवात् ततो मुक्त्युपपत्तेर्मुक्तिहेतुवेदान्तवाक्यार्थानुययोग्यस्तत्पदार्थोऽनुसन्धेय इति मध्यमेन षट्केन सिद्धम् ।"

that even in this life. Because whatever is accomplished in this life, will be a property of our soul after death. Perfection does not begin in the grave, but we must remember that. Some say that if we live our daily life, we will attain to perfection after death, but that is not so. Our future will be the resultant of the present. "What thou sowest, thou shalt also reap", and that is another eternal law. If we wish to be perfect after death, we must try and be perfect now, and as far as we are advanced in this life, so far we will be after death. There may be progress after death, but that progress will take time. We will have to go through many stages of evolution in order to reach the end of all progress. Then why should we not try now, in this life, if that be the ideal? We know that ordinary things of the world cannot satisfy our souls, if they could, we would have been perfect already. But the most essential thing for raching perfection is to know the eternal Truth i.e. to reach Godconsciousness, to feel that the Divinity is dwelling in us, and to realize that each individual soul is potentially perfect, and to become conscious of it is the ideal. That which is potential, must be made actual. When we become conscious of it and bring it on the plane of consciousness, that is a great thing, and Vedanta will help us in attaining to that.

CHAPTER XLI

WE ALL ARE IMMORTAL AND INDESTRUCTIBLE

Now we will begin with the thirteenth chapter. In this chapter, discrimination between *Prakriti* or nature, or matter and Spirit, or the material body and the individual soul or *Purusha*, is given. This discrimination is one of the essential things for the attainment of Godconsciousness. We must learn the difference between matter and spirit, or the material body and the soul, or nature and the source of intelligence which is beyond nature.

Sri Krishna said: "There are two terms or elements· *Prakriti* and *Purusha,—Kshetra* and *Kshatrajna,—Jnana* and *Jneya*, I would like to know these things. This body is called *Kshetra* and he who is conscious of it, is called *Kshetrajna.*"[1] The word *Kshetra* literally means a field where they grow corn and other vegetables etc., and, in that sense, it may mean this body is the field for reaping the results of our works. These

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[1] (a) प्रकृतिं पुरुषञ्चैव क्षेत्रं क्षेत्रज्ञमेव च ।
एतद्वेदितुमिच्छामि ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं च केशव ॥१३।१

(b) श्रीभगवनुवाच—
इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।
एतद् यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥१३।२

Sankara, Madhusudana Sarasvati and others did not accept and explain this first verse (No A), and they regard the second one "इदं शरीरं" * * etc. as the first one But some included this verse No. A so as to complete the numbers of the verses of the *Gita* which are counted as 700.

Sankara mentioned in the beginning of the commentary on the second verse that in the seventh chapter, two natures of God have already been mentioned and they are *para* and *apara Prakriti*, composed of three qualities like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, is known as *Kshetra* and *apara*, being the material cause of the world-appearance, and *para* is the individual soul known as *Kshetrajna*, pertaining to God, who with the help of these two *prakritis* performs acts of creation, preservation and destruction.

works may be of this life and also of previous lives. In this body, we reap the results or effects of the works, which we did in our previous incarnations, as well as those of our own performed works during our lifetime. Some of these works may not produce the results in this incarnation that will be paid up. When a man suddenly dies without reaping the results of his own works, performed during his lifetime, do you think that these works will cease to produce their results? No, they will remain stored up in a seed form and bring their results later. Some may come after death, others which may be obtained only on the human plane, will come only when the soul will reincarnate in a human form on this plane of existence, and he who is conscious of it, is called *Kshetrajna*, the knower, the conscious soul.

There is this difference, the material body is not conscious of itself, but there is something in a living man who is conscious of the material body, and this consciousness is not the same as the material body, nor is it the result of the combination of matter or the material forces. It is something immaterial, distinct from matter, or the combinations of matter. This discrimination is necessary. When we have learned to discriminate in this way we have understood the difference that exists between matter and spirit, between body and soul. We should also understand then the true relation which this individual soul bears to God. In order to know God, we must first of all know our own souls, because God is finer than our ego. God is the essence of our souls, and when we wish to know God, we must know ourselves first. We will know ourselves not as bodies, but as souls, or as conscious entity, and as not that which is the result of material particles, or of the material forces.

In Vedanta, you will notice that this knowledge is the most important one, and from that gradually there is knowledge leading to the realization of the unity between the essence of our souls and the essence of the Creator. There is similarity, and there is oneness between all these various manifestations in the forms of individual souls or the individual egos of human beings or animals etc.

We have discussed before that when Sri Krishna talks of himself or mentions the persons like I, Me, Mine he never

uses them in the same sense as the ordinary mortal uses those terms in the sense of bodies, but he uses the words of I, me, mine in the sense of the Supreme Spirit and, when we understand that we will see that the great teachers of the world have always used these pronouns, I, me, and mine, not referring to their material physical forms, but meaning only the spiritual and the divine part dwelling in the physical form, and with whom they are identified, or are one.

If we remember this, we will be able to understand the meaning of the sayings of Jesus the Christ, or Lord Buddha or Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Krishna says. "Do thou also know Me as the individual souls of all bodies; knowledge of the body and the soul, of matter and spirit, *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* is deemed by Me as the highest knowledge."[2] Later we learn the fundamental principles of the philosophy of Vedanta. The Lord says. "Do thou know Me as the individual souls in all bodies," and here the individual souls are nothing but the images or reflections of the Supreme Deity, and we must not forget that. Gradually we would be able to understand the meaning of the word reflection or image, but first of all, we must know that our conscious entity is related to the supreme conscious entity of the universe. The supreme or cosmic conscious entity is God. The Lord has said: "The knowledge

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[2] क्षेत्रज्ञञ्चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज् ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥१३।३

In most of the edition of the *Gita*, this verse No. 3 is given as No. 2.

Sankara explained this verse elaborately, as this chapter on the *Kshtra-Kshetrajna-vibhaga-yoga* i.e. division of *jiva* and *Isvara* is very important one. Madhusudana Sarasvati gave the essence of this verse 3 (or 2). He said. "सर्वक्षेत्रेषु य एकः क्षेत्रज्ञः स्वप्रकाशचैतन्यरूपो नित्यो विभुश्च तम् अविद्यारोपित कर्तृत्वभोक्तृत्वादि संसारधर्ममाविद्यकरूपपरित्यागेन मामीश्वरं असंसारिणं अद्वितीयब्रह्मानन्दरूपं विद्धि जानिहि * *। अत्र जीवेश्वरयोराविद्यको भेदपारमार्थिस्कतृभेद इत्यत्र युक्तयो भाष्यकृद्भिर्वर्णिता ।"

Here it should be remembered that *Kshetra* means the individual soul *(jiva)* with material body, *antahkarana* and other material and mental things, whereas *Kshetrajna* is self-revealing supreme consciousness, which is generally known as God *(Isvara)*.

of the body and the soul, of matter and spirit is deemed by me as the highest knowledge," and from this we know that there cannot be any other knowledge higher than this knowledge of the distinction between matter and spirit. All other knowledge is subservient to this one supreme knowledge, which is recognised as the highest wisdom. A wise man is one who has understood that difference, and one who has not understood that difference, is an ordinary mortal. He is not fitted to attain to Godconsciousness or perfection.

Here various questions may arise as to how is it possible that the individual souls would be one with God? We are going through all kinds of experiences like suffering, misery, etc. and gradually developing in the fields of our intellect, understanding etc. It may be asked as to how is it possible that we should be one with God, or God should be the essence of our souls, or should appear as individual souls? It is the most difficult of all objects of knowledge to know how it is possible that God would appear as the individual souls and at the same time the individual souls would have to go through all these experiences of birth etc. This is one of the greatest mysteries. So we must try our best to find out the correct solution.

All religions are nothing but so many attempts of the human minds to explain that mystery. Some religions leave this mystery as insoluble and unknowable, but Vedanta philosophy does not leave this mystery in that way. The religion of Vedanta tries to explain these mysteries in the most scientific and logical manner. Gradually we will be able to understand how it is possible for the individual soul to go through all these experiences, but yet it is possible for the individual souls to go through all these experiences, yet at the same time it is not different from the essence of the Supreme Deity. When we have understood that, we will be able to say as Jesus the Christ said, "I and the Father are one", and that knowledge is bound to come to every individual soul sooner or later. That is one great consolation which we receive in the study of this great philosophy. Each individual soul will have to realize in the same way as Christ and other great Saviours realized it both before and after Christ. When you will be able to say, "I am in the sun, in the moon, and everywhere I exist," you will say not in a material sense or a physical sense,

but in the sense of the spirit. Then you have understood your omnipotence. Then you will know that you are the child of immortal bliss, and you are not of this world, you are not a children of mortals, but through a mortal you have gotten this bodily form, and this form is nothing but the field for reaping the results of your past actions. The commentators have raised all these questions and objections, and have answered them too. It would not be necessary to go through all the detailed metaphysical discussions, but those who wish to know more about these discussions, can read the translation of Sankarachara's commentary, which runs through several pages.

But the essence of the commentary of Sankara (on the verse 2) is that though the Supreme Deity, the *Kshetrajna* or *Atman*, appears as manifold for many adjuncts or attributes, yet He is above all those adjuncts and attributes. He is all the time above all divisions. In fact, the attributeless *Vijnana* (Brahman-vijnana) seems to be manifold for *upadhis* which are the product of nescience or *maya*. As fire being the nature of heat, heat is imposed or superimposed on the fire, so the *Kshetrajna* or *Atman* being the nature of *Vijnana* or pure consciousness, the *upadhi* of knower (*vijnatritva*) is superimposed on the *Vijnana* But, in truth, *Kshetrajna* or *Vijnana* is not endowed with the category or adjunct of knower (*Vijnata*) but is the pure *Vijnana* or consciousness itself. Therefore the *Kshetrajna* appears as many or manifold for its different *Kshetras* or bodies, but, in truth, it is unique and one without the second.[3]

Sri Krishna says: "Hear from Me what *Kshetra* is and what nature it is, what changes we would undergo, what are their causes and what are their kinds, what is the nature

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[3] Sankara said:

"सर्वक्षेत्रेषु यः क्षेत्रज्ञः ब्रह्मादिस्तम्बपर्यन्तानेकक्षेत्रोपाधिविभक्तः तं निरस्तसर्वोपाधिभेदं सदसदादिशब्दप्रत्ययागोचरात् विद्धि इति अभिप्रायः। * * न विज्ञानस्वरूपस्यैव अविक्रियस्य विज्ञातृत्वोपचारात्। यथोष्णतामात्रेण अग्नेस्तात्त्विक्योपचारस्तद्वत्। यथ अत्र भगवता क्रियाकारकफलात्मत्वाभाव आत्मनि स्वत एव दर्शितः अविद्याध्यारोपितैरेव क्रियाकारकादि आत्मनि उपचर्यते * *।"

Anandagiri also explained the commentary of Sankara elaborately.

of the conscious soul and what power is possessed".[4] Here the Lord is trying to explain through both these questions what the Truth is, what is its nature, whether it is spiritual or material, it is transitory, or is everlasting, what changes it goes through, what causes and produces these bodies etc., and what different forms of bodies are produced from the same cause, and who is the knower of this *Kshetra* possessing certain powers, and what are these powers? These truths have been taught by the sages in various ways and have been described through various hymns and also in the chapters of the aphorisms of Vedanta which is full of reason, and is carrying conviction.

So these have been the thoughts of the ancient sages of India. They explained them first; they searched for the true solution of these mysteries, and in their attempts all these questions spontaneously arose in their minds, and they afterward tried to explain these questions in the most satisfactory way, and the result was this wonderful system of Vedanta philosophy. So Vedanta philosophy and the religion of Vedanta have no founder. The great sages have contributed to it these results, and all these investigators and searchers of nature in the external world found the proper solution of the mysteries of the soul. And when they did not succeed, they turned their attention inside and began to study their own souls, and there they discovered the solution. As we all know by trying to study nature externally, so the modern scientists have arrived at different solutions, and most of them have left most fundamental ones as unfathomable mysteries.

Brains like those of Spencer, Huxly, or Darwin after studying the material world and making investigations upon the field and knowing good deal about its origin too, have not been able to answer these questions. But is there no other way by which these questions could be solved? The modern scientists would say, no, it is unknown and unknowable, as Herbert Spencer and afterwards Immanual Kant said, but the Indian sages of ancient times declare before the world that it could be known, and that way of knowing is not through the study of external nature, but through the study of internal nature of the in-

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[4] तत् क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक् च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत्।
स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत् समासेन मे शृणु ॥१३।४

dividual soul. The nature of the soul is so subtle and so mysterious that you cannot get at it and understand it by studying the gross material objects, because it is beyond the reach of the gross sense perceptions, and beyond the reach of speech and mind and intellect—*"avammanaso'gcharam."* Anything that we know in the external world, is dependent upon our own self-conscious entity. Whatever we try to know, we know through ourselves, and we cannot go out of ourselves. When we try to know a material object like a chair, how would we do it and what is our knowledge of the chair? We will find that we know the chair in itself, and we know it as we are related to the chair, or as the chair appears to us through our senses. Do our senses come in direct contact with the chair? No, but they are in touch with certain vibrations of etherial particles, and these vibrations are afterward translated into our sensations and percepts, concepts and ideas, etc. So we cannot know the external object as it is, but we know the external object as it *appears* to us. No one has ever seen a chair by itself, but every one has seen the chair as it appeared to him, and that is the difference. So when we are dividing the chair into pieces, or are burning it, or are trying to find out the elements that have made it, we are simply studying the appearances of these elements of phenomena, and it appears to us as are related to and nothing else, and afterward we make or draw inferences from these experiences.

If we try to know the nature of our soul by studying the appearances of the states of consciousness, it would not be possible for us, because all of our knowledge of the external world depends upon our self-consciousness, and this is true of all other knowledge. So first we must know that we are existing and are ready to study and investigate nature. We start away from the source of our self outside, and unless we go back to the centre of our soul again, we cannot know the origin of our soul. Some people like the scientists try to vivesect the brain, but they do not find anything there. They might as well try to find out the soul in the heart, or in the stomach, as the ancient seekers did and failed, so it is only a waste of time and energy to find out soul through matter. So the process should be reversed, and we should find out matter through soul and then come to the right solution.

Here we find the description of *Kshetra,* which is material. First of all, we must know the subtle elements that make up the gross physical body. Then we must know egoism, then intellect, the unmanifested, then ten senses, mind, and five objects of senses, and then the mental faculties, desires, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, relative consciousness, intelligence, and fortitude. This, in short, is called *Kshetra* with its modifications. So we see that mind and desire, pleasure and pain, and hatred are included in the material body, or in the sense body. Mind is only the vibration of finer matter. But there is something higher than mind. The source of our intelligence, existence, and consciousness is higher than the psychic plane. That is a thing which very few people can understand. When the modern scientists tell us that mind is nothing but the vibration of some etherial particles, they are right. The mind is nothing but vibration, but the knower of thoughts and mental functions is not a vibration. The knower is different from a vibration of any kind.

This is the description of the most ancient system of science that was explained by Kapila in the Sankhya system, and in this system you will find the theory of cosmic evolution most clearly explained for the first time. All these subtle elements which are very fine and make up the gross material objects, are the results of still finer substances, as you will find in studying this evolutionary philosophy. In the beginning, there was one unmanifested energy[5] and that energy took the

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[5] The *Taittiriya-Upanishad* (Anandavalli) said:

'असद्वा इदमग्र आसीत्। ततो वै सदजायत।'

Again, the *Aitareya-Upanishad* said:

'आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत्। नान्यत् किञ्चन मिषत्'।

Now these two statements of two *Upanishads* seem contradictory, as if, the former advocated *asat-karyavada* i.e. the doctrine that everything existent evolved from nothing, whereas the later forwarded *sat-karyavada* i.e. the doctrine that everything evolved from something or existence. But, in truth, these two statements of the *Upanishads* are not contradictory. Because the *Taittiriya-Upanishad* said that before the manifestation of the world-appearance, everything was in unmanifested causal form and afterwards evolved name and form (*nama-rupa*) i.e. gross manifested form:

form of atoms afterward, which are nothing but force-centers, and the combination of two atoms became molecules, and the combination of molecules became elements. But the cosmic energy (*Prakriti*), when it was in touch with consciousness (*Purusha*), it produced what we call intellect. The moment when intellect appeared in the cosmic energy, it became self-conscious, and then other desires which were latent in it began to appear The desire of producing or dividing itself and becoming manifold brought out these separate particles of atoms, and gradually different forms began to take place It took millions and millions of years to go through the whole process of evolution beginning with the cosmic energy and ending with the gross material or phenomenal universe (*vide* the cosmology of the Sankhya).

The sense and the sense power came out from the same cosmic energy. From the same energy came also the mind and all mental functions and all the forces appearing on the finer plane of matter. The objects of senses were produced by the same energy. So you see that intellect, mind, mental functions, objects of senses, and gross material forms have all come from that common source, the eternal cosmic energy, the undifferentiated or the unmanifested energy called *Prakriti* or the creative energy.

Desire, hatred and this aggregate, and relative consciousness, which are changeable, are only the reflection on the intellect which varies as the intellect is pure or impure. All these appear as forces and are included on what is called *Kshetra,* or the field or body.

'नामरूपविभागापन्नस्थूलचिदचिच्छरीरकमिदं ब्रह्म प्राक् नामरूपविभागरहितसूक्ष्म-चेतनाचेतनशरीरकमासीत्, तदेव स्वयं स्वात्मानं सदकुरुत,—नामरूपविभागापन्नस्थूल-चिदचिच्छरीरकमकुरुतेति भावः'।

The *Aitareya-Upanishad* confirmed this statement by saying.

'आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत्' i e 'एक एकत्मा आसीत्—नामरूपविभाग-रहित आत्मा आसीत्' and then entering into the souls it manifested itself into names and forms" अनेन जीवेनात्मनाऽनुप्रविश्य नामरूपे व्याकरवानीति'।

There was a system of philosophy which was more materialistic or atomistic, and that system was known as the *Vaisheshika-darshana* of Kanada. This Atomic School of Kanada traced everything to the combination of atoms and molecules, just as the modern scientists have done. They traced all kinds of desires and hatred, pleasure and pain, consciousness and fortitude, to the soul (*jivatman*), and they considered all these as attributes of the soul. Then afterward when a still finer set of thinkers and higher philosophers came, they put these attributes on the material plane and included them into the field or *Kshetra,* or the combination of both gross and subtle materials.

Desire is that tendency of the soul or mind which leads one to seek pleasures when it has already experienced similar pleasures. If you had enjoyed a pleasure, it produced a kind of impression, and that impression leads you to a future tendency to seek that pleasure again, to have it repeated, and that is what is desired. If you have a desire of any kind, you will find that it is a certain pleasure which you have enjoyed and you want to have it repeated. Try to trace the cause, and you will find that every fulfilment of desire leaves an impression on the mind substance, and that is the seed of a future desire, and the more we indulge in the pleasures of different kinds, the more we are sowing the seeds of desire and enjoyment. We cannot quench the thirst for pleasure, and that is the one universal and everlasting law. So that desire is a tendency of the mind substance, and it is on the mental plane. Prof. Green called this desire as 'hunger' i.e. the hunger of the soul that causes attachments and bindings to all kinds of gross and subtle sensations and impressions. But desire is not a part of your soul, because you are the knower or subject of the desire, and desire is the object of your knowledge. But how can the object be the same as the subject? The desire remains in the mind, and you know it. It becomes subdued, and you know it is gone. That shows desire as the object and the object is something different from the knower, the subject. Therefore, Vedanta has refuted that system of philosophy which made desire an attribute or a part of the soul. The European and American thinkers consider the knower as the same as mind. I have already explained elsewhere, (in *True*

Psychology) that knower or *jnata* or *Atman* is not the same as mind, but knower or *Atman* is the illuminator and director of the mind and its functions. *Psyche* or soul is not mind of the Western psychology, but is the *Atman* which is described in Vedanta as pure consciousness and fountain-head of all things of the world, and so I have said that Western psychology has failed to explain the real status of *psyche* or soul i.e Western psychology is the *psyche*-less psychology. Mind is one of the categories like intellect, and egoism, and it cannot appreciate the surpassing glory and beauty of the transcending *Atman*. So Vedanta says that the true nature of the knower is much higher and finer than all, and is higher and finer than desires and tendencies. Hatred is another quality, and cannot be an attribute of the knower. You hate certain things and at the same time know that you hate, and it comes to your mind with a great impulse at certain times, and passes away. When it is in your mind, you know it, and when it goes away, you also know it, and you also know that only a kind of cloud appeared in the pure atmosphere or space of your self and produced a certain veil in the form of hatred or desire. If you analyse hatred, you find that you hate that which gave some kind of pain or suffering before and when you are experiencing some pain or suffering, it leaves an impression on your mind, and that impression when reproduced in the form of a tendency, produces that feeling of repulsion and unpleasant sensation or feeling and we do not want that unpleasant feeling, therefore we hate it.

If you have suffered any kind of unpleasant experience by coming in contact with anything, even other things which would remind you of that experience, you would hate, and it is natural, but these experiences are not in the knower or soul, they are in the mind. You must learn to differenciate between mind and soul. If it were a part of your soul, a constant attribute of your soul would be knowledge or intelligence. So hatred would be a constant quantity, if it were an attribute of your soul.

But there are moments when you have no desire of any kind, still you have knowledge or self-consciousness, which is a constant thing. What is pleasure? It is a feeling that is

agreeable, and it is produced by coming in contact with something of a similar nature. That agreeable or pleasant feeling is called pleasure or happiness, and its opposite is pain or unhappiness, or any kind of disagreeable feeling produced in coming in contact with certain objects of similar nature, and the aggregate is nothing but the aggregate of the senses, sense-powers and gross physical form. Senses and forms make an aggregate. That is, the organs of senses, nerves, etc, put together form an aggregate. So when there is conscious intelligence, it puts the right thing in its right place, otherwise the optic nerve would go to the ear perhaps, and the auricular nerve would go to the hands etc. But we find that everything produces this wonderful harmonious effect, and that is because of the aggregate consciousness of ordinary intelligence. We are all intelligent beings, and this intelligence of ours is the reflection of the higher intelligence or higher consciousness which is known as the all-shining *Atman.*

There is something in our mind which may be compared to a piece of iron. It does not produce any heat or light, but when it falls into a glowing furnace, it absorbs heat and light. Similarly, this intellect, although it is not intelligent by nature or is not self-conscious by nature, still by coming in contact with the source of consciousness or knowledge it reflects on the realtive plane of existence; consequently that reflection is dependent upon the mental or intellectual substance.

And there is another power which is called patience or fortitude. It is that power by which all the senses and the whole body are held up. Sometimes when you are fatigued and exhausted, you hold your self up and do certain things without mind that exhaustion. The system needs rest, but your power of mind can make you do better work even when your system refuses to do good work. If that power had not existed, you would have been dead. The exhaustion would have been so great that it would have been impossible for you to keep up. Here you will notice that these powers and attributes which we have just described, are not only physical, but also psychic, intellectual, and material. They are all to be considered as material. By material you must not take it in its grosser sense, but as results of individual energy or nature, and we have received that through the process of evolution.

These are all subject to change, but that which is the ruler and governor of all these and brings and keeps these together, is the source of our identity in the midst of constant changes, and is something greater and higher than this nature. All these things are the objects of our consciousness or knowledge. None of these can be called the knower, but the knower is higher than any of these, or it is said that knower is the base or ground of all of them.

There are ten sense organs. five of these are called the senses of perception and the other five are the sense of action i.e. *jnanendriyas* and *karmendriyas*. This is a division which you are perhaps not familiar with. Vedanta says there are two kinds of senses, sense of knowledge and sense of action, which include hands, feet, speech etc. The senses of knowledge or perception would be the power of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching by means of eyes, ears, nose, taste, touch. These are called ten senses, but they are all connected with mind which is the internal sense (*antahkarana*). Mind is connected with each one of them. Mind is like the reins and these senses are like the horses moving in different directions, and if the reins be cut, then the horses would go astray, and they would not be able to be brought under control and you would not have any perception or knowledge of the external world.

The five senses of knowledge are the gates through which we come in direct contact with the external objects outside of our bodies. They are the doors through which the vibrations of different kinds enter into our system, and brain is the receiver of all these different vibrations The soul comes in touch with these vibrations in the brain, and then the mind substance which is finer than the particles of brain substance or nervous energy, comes in contact with the objects of knowledge. In this way, if you analyse your own nature, you gradually rise, step by step, from the gross material body to the immortal source of your existence and intelligence. which is the knower or subject, and then you have learned that you have learned your true being. You will find that your true being is not dependent upon the gross material body, but the gross material body exists in and through our soul nature or spirit. Then you would be able to see that you live and move

and have your being in spirit, because nothing would be able to exist, if it were cut off from the source of intelligence, and existence and life and energy. These are the different modifications (*vrittis*) of one substance, and that substance is called by different names. Some call it eternal energy. Eternal energy is different and is finer than atoms and molecules. It is the potentiality of all these material forces and powers and also of all forms that make up the gross physical phenomena of the universe of that energy or force, which is the mother of all material objects, senses, mind, intellect, desires etc. It is uncreated and indestructible. It exists in the universe as the divine energy. It is not produced by any body, but it existed from eternity to eternity. In it, the whole universe remains latent before the beginning of evolution with all these forms, like suns, moons, stars etc. They remain latent, and come out again, and take these different forms. They become visible or perceptible to the senses when the senses come out. If the objects came out alone without the senses and the mind, there would be no universe and no one would know it. So it is a mistake to think that the whole material universe came out first, and then came these intelligent beings. But that it is putting the cart before the horse. On the contrary, you will find first the mind-substance, the cosmic intelligence, and ego came out, and then differenciations between ego and non-ego began. Matter cannot exist as independent of the soul or spirit. They are simultaneous. So, one branch has material evolution and another has subtle evolution, which are not tenable. They have come from the common source, and one has produced these material worlds like the sun and the moon, etc. and the other has produced these different living beings like vegetables and animals etc. Just as the earth has come up through different grades of evolution, so we have come up through different stages of evolution, and the evolution of both has nothing to do with the evolution of the mind or the intellect of animals, and this is a thing which the modern evolutionists do not realize.

Just as senses have come out, so have intellect and mind, and so the material earth, water, air, sun, moon ether etc. have come out. If you can imagine the whole universe as one ocean of impenetrable ether, a jelly-like substance and

that substance containing the potentiality of all these forms of existence, then you could imagine how this world had remained before the evolution began and how it would remain after involution. These germs of life which are etherial, finer than atoms, will remain also in that ocean without taking any grosser or material body or psychical body or physical body. They will remain there until the conditions become favourable and the process of evolution will make it possible for them to come and develop the senses, sense-powers, powers of perception, mind etc., and minute animalcules, or amoeba or protoplasm These are latent, but they are not as developed as in the human being. They are waiting to go through a certain process, and will come out. That protoplasm will also become a human being in course of time. You may doubt it, but it is so. If you analyse the origin of human beings, you will find that nerve and jelly-like substance, and that germ contained all the powers in a latent state and gradually developed through the process of evolution.

Similarly the whole universe has developed from this etherial substance into these gross objects. If you stop all these senses, they do not exist in relation to you By stopping these senses, you have stopped the appearance of these gross material objects in relation to you, and, therefore, you have stopped your world. The world in which you lived, is stopped by stopping your mind If you cut off your mind and disconnect them, your material world and its perception will be separated from you Then you will not know where it is gone, or it has vanished and gone into the darkness of ignorance and sleeping. Then when the sense powers are in direct touch with the mind, the whole thing will again wake up

In your deep sleep state, if one of you suddenly faints, the whole connection will be cut off, and you will not know where the whole thing has gone, but something has produced a veil which has covered the whole thing, and when that veil is lifted, you would begin to see and perceive the objects of senses So when we wish to know the material objects, we must have senses and sense-powers well-developed, and that development depends entirely upon the process of evolution In this way, if we analyze, we find that creation as described in the Genesis, or in the scriptures, does not mean anything.

That creation never existed, but this is the gradual eternal process and is coming through ages, and there is no break or sudden appearance of anything. It is all subject to the laws that govern the phenomenal universe. The individual soul takes these bodies in order to gain experience on the material plane, as well as on the intellectual plane. But, in reality, it is a part and parcel of the one universal spirit which is called God, and which is worshipped by different nations under different names. Therefore, we understand the meaning of that passage which I have just read: Sri Krishna has said, "thou know Me as the individual souls in all bodies." The source of consciousness, or individual ego, is not only the ego but is the same source of consciousness, which is the knower of the universe, or the Supreme Deity, the absolute Truth. Therefore, we are all children of immortal bliss, and we are, in reality, immortal, indestructible, and blissful.

CHAPTER XLII

ABSOLUTE IS THE UNKNOWN AND THE KNOWN

We have already learned that knowledge of the difference between matter and spirit is the highest knowledge This knowledge of the difference, we have learned, comes from discrimination (*viveka*) i.e. from discriminative power of analysis between the real and the unreal—spirit and matter. The spirit which dwells within us, is separate from matter, from mind and body and all the functions of the mind Ordinarily we do not understand this secret, and so we think that our spirit or soul is one with the body, and that is not knowledge. That is called in Vedanta ignorance of the real nature of the spirit. That ignorance prevails amongst the majority of people in all countries, and that ignorance is the cause of all selfishness, illusion, and evil thoughts.

So a student of Vedanta will first try to discriminate between the real and the unreal and then know his real self, or true nature. He should first of all try to understand that he is the *Atman* and not the physical man or woman. Many people of this age do not believe in the existence of a soul. I have met quite a number of people who think that they have no soul i.e. they have no soul-entity other than the material body, but whatever they may say through ignorance should not be counted. They are the *Atman,* whether they realize it or not. Just as though I say I have no tongue, it would be just as absurd as to say that I have no soul, because by the help of the tongue I am talking, and with the help and existence of the soul one is conscious of himself. So, if he denies the existence of the soul, his very existence being in and though that soul, which is the source of consciousness, existence etc.

Vedanta helps us in trying to get a clear idea of the nature of the soul. This body has been called the field for reaping the results of our own works. As, in a field, whatever you sow, you reap. If you sow wheat, you cannot reap barley, so you will have to reap wheat. That is the law of cause and effect, and

we are all bound by that inevitable law, 'what thou sowest, that shalt thou also reap'. This body is the field and, therefore, it is called in Sanskrit *Kshetra* i.e. field for reaping the results of our own works done in this life or in previous incarnations. We must not forget that this present body is the resultant of all the causes that had existed in us before we took this body. Parents are not the causes of our desires of good and evil thoughts. Therefore, the causes lie in ourselves. The soul, when it reincarnates itself, takes with it all the tendencies and desires which remain in a latent form, and in order to reap the results of his previous works, he gets into this field of the physical body (*Kshetra*).

We have also learned that this physical body, this field, has a gross form, and this is made up of subtle particles of matter and forces. When we talk about the field of the human body, we must remember these causes that make up the field, the human body. So by analysing we find that the human body consists of various things. The mind is also a part of the subtle body, and all the mental functions are included in the field, they are not the same as the attributes of our true spirit The subtle elements, egotism, intellect, the unmanifested, the energy, the cause of all forces, ten senses, mind, five objects of senses, desires, hatred, the feeling of consciousness, fortitude—all these are included in the field (*Kshetra*).

So you see that mental and physical organisms and sense-powers are all included in the field (*Kshetra*), and the indwelling spirit (*Kshetrajna*) is the ruler of this field. That description is at the foundation of the knowledge which would come regarding the existence of the absolute truth or reality of the universe. When that knowledge comes, there must be certain conditions for that knowledge of the highest or absolute truth, which is called in Vedanta, the Brahman, the unchangeable Reality of the universe. It is beyond the personal God, because the unchangeable Reality which transcends the categories of time, space, and causation, assumes the forms of real ground (*adhisthana*) and cause (*karana*), and so this Reality is also the ground and cause of God, the Creator. We learned a good deal about the personal God in the *Bhagavad Gita* when we discussed the teachings of Sri Krishna, one of the ancient Incarnations of the Divinity known in India. But

the personal aspect of the Divinity is also the absolute Truth, or the unchangeable Reality. This Divinity is the Purushottama who is regarded as the source of consciousness, existence, intelligence, bliss and love, and that source we must know. We must come in direct touch with that source and realize its relation to our individual egoes.

Now let us cite the verses of the *Bhagavad Gita*, which deal with the conditions that would bring knowledge of Godconsciousness or the Supreme Brahman Sri Krishna has said. "Different *Rishis* like Vashistha and others have described the real natures of both *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*, body and soul. In the four Vedas and Upanishads and other sacred Scriptures, this highest and secret Truth has been disclosed, and has also been sung in different meters and notes, and the Vedic sayings have undoubtedly proved this Truth which is convincing and is full of reasoning, and is no other the Brahman itself"[5] He has further said: "Five subtle elements, egoism, the cause of these subtle elements, intellect or *buddhi*, the cause of igoism, unmanifested *Prakriti*, the cause of *buddhi*, ten senses and mind, five gross objects of senses, desires, hatred, physical constitution or body and its consciousness and fortitude—all these changeable things are included in the *Kshetra*".[6] These have already been mentioned before, and the true nature of *Kshetrajna* has also been explained. Now, true knowledge comes to a person who has these qualifications or qualities like humility, non-killing and non-injuring etc So Sri Krishna says. "The qualifications like humility, freedom from vanity, non-killing (of animals), forgiveness, straight-forwardness, service to spiritual teachers, mental and physical purity, steadiness in spiritual path, self-control and perseverance, absence of attachment (to senses and sense-objects), absence of egoism, constant-

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5 ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक् ।
ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः ॥१३।५

6 महाभूतान्यहङ्कारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि दशैकञ्च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥
इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं संघातश्चेतना धृतिः ।
एतत् क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥१३।६-७

ly finding fault in birth, death, old age, sickness or disease, non-attachment in sense-objects, unswarving devotion to Me by the Yoga of discrimination or non-separation, resort to lonely place, distaste for society of men, constant application to spiritual knowledge, and understanding the end of knowledge or *Jnana*, and what is opposed to is ignorance or nescience, the cause of bondage".[7] The words, 'what is opposed to it' mean pride, hypocrisy, cruelty, imapatience, insincerity and the like—is ignorance, which should be known and avoided as tending to the perpetuation of *samsara* or worldliness.

Now it should be remembered that true knowledge comes to a person who has these qualities or qualifications. There is humility. In order to become a wise man, humility would be the first condition. And so we must be humble, and should not have any self-conceit or egotism. All wise men are humble, gentle, free from egotism, vanity and self-conceit.

We must not injure any living creature, and, therefore, practise non-killing, and non-injuring others, mentally and physically. These are the conditions under which the right knowledge of the Supreme Spirit will come. Forgiveness is another virtue. Be straight forward. If you have anything to say, go and state it in a simple way without having any crookedness in the heart.

Service to the spiritual teacher is one of the great things which is practised in India by these seekers after Truth. When they find a good spiritual teacher, they serve him, and by

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7 अमानित्वमदाम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥
इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनऽङ्कार एव च ।
जन्म-मृत्यु-जरा-व्याधि-दुःख-दोषानुदर्शनम् ॥
असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।
नित्यञ्च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥
मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
बिबिक्तदेशसेवित्वरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥
अध्यात्म-ज्ञान-नित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
एतज् ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥१३।८-१२

serving him get wonderful powers and the powers which are possessed by the spiritual teacher, are transmitted to those who serve him faithfully and loyally. So this is considered to be one of the first acts of one who wishes to become a disciple or a seeker of absolute Truth.

If you go to a school and have no respect for the teacher, you would not learn anything, and if you criticise him all the time, you are not an ideal student. That kind of attitude should be avoided from the very beginning. Our heart and soul must be pure, and should be free from wicked tendencies and selfish motives So purity must be practised. There must be steadiness and not fickle-mindedness. Many people in this country are so fickle that they take up a thing and then give it up. That kind of nature will never learn anything. They will nibble here and there and get a little of this and of that. They are not steady in anything. Therefore perseverance is a great virtue. All the great men of the world have devoted their minds to one thing until they have reached the goal. Fickle-minded people are just like bubbles. They do not accomplish anything in this life. In the business world, those who have been steady and firm, have been successful in their business life, and those who have no steadiness, fail. It is so in the spiritual life.

You must have self-control. If any one says a harsh or unkind word to you, do not return the same but have self-control and forgiveness. That is one of the first steps. We must not let our senses loose in the field of the external world i.e. of the objects of senses. If we let our senses loose, they will go at random and try to enjoy everything and waste time and energy and become attached to all the things of the world and suffer in the end. So we should practise absence of attachment to sense-objects; we must not think that these external objects are a part of our life, that you cannot live without them. That kind of attachment means bondage and slavery. It is worldly, and drags us down to the material sense plane.

There must be absence of attachment to the sense-objects as well as absence of egotism. You must not think that you know everything. You know nothing as yet. The greatest sage of the nineteenth century, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa

used to say, 'Friends, I learn as long as I live'.[8] Therefore you have not learned all. You must not be vain or egotistic, but be humble and think that you know very little. All wise men have that feeling, and that should be practised in life for spiritual development.

Reflection upon the evils of birth, death, old age, sickness pain, and suffering—these things attend our earthly existence and how personal they are! The very conditions of birth are personal. At time of death all the powers of mind and intellect become weak, and we are ridiculed by the people. Whatever we desire, we cannot get. In old ag, how decrepid we become. In sickness how dependent we are, and what sufferings we go through; and in trying to get pleasure, how much pain and suffering we receive! So we should consider all these things, and reflect upon them. Non-attachment we must feel in us. An absence of especially strong attachments for children, wives, homes etc. is necessary. We must not think that children, relatives, and friends are a part of our existence. We should not identify ourselves with their existence, but we should know that they are really children of God. We should keep ourselves free from all foolish attachments and selfishness, and must know that they are souls and not physical men and women, they are souls, and are children of God.

When objects of senses, such as furniture, good health or any of the things, are very attractive, we must not be attached to these things. There are some persons who think that life is not worth-living if they do not possess some jewels. But remember that jewels are nothing of permanent value. Some other persons do not have jewels, yet are very happy. They are not afraid of robbers. All these socalled things of wealth are simply encouraging vanity and self-conceit. We should not allow these to do so. If you have possessions of that kind, you need not feel proud of them. These should not mean anything to wise men and women.

We should have a vision of constant sameness or oneness in everything. We should try to see the same and secondless spirit in all living creatures as much as possible, and in things

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[8] सखि, यावत् वाँचि, तावत् शिखि।

which are desirable as well as in things which are undesirable. In good and evil, we should try to remain undisturbed, and in the experiences of good and evil, we should try to keep ourselves as undisturbed as possible. Ordinary people are easily agitated and disturbed, if anything goes wrong against them That is a weakness which should be avoided. We should try to remain firm and maintain a peaceful attitude even when everything goes against us. That shows spiritual strength, and one possessing this strength should manifest it at every moment of his life If anything went wrong, he would not try to commit suicide as ordinary mortals do sometimes, because they cannot bear it But, if you go through unfavourable conditions and keep your attitude firm and pleasant, you have reached the highest plane of spirituality. And that we should not forget in our daily life.

One-pointed and unswerving devotion to the Supreme Spirit are necessary, and that is one of the conditions which bring highest knowledge and supreme wisdom. You must be devoted to one thing which is the highest and greatest This will bring the knowledge more quickly. If you are devoted to the highest just for a few seconds and then spend most of your time and energy and devotion in minor things, then you would not get the highest knowledge so easily.

Resorting to secluded places you must try to be alone as much as possible. Go to solitary places which are not frequented by ferocious animals or snakes. Where there is beautiful scenery, go and sit quietly, and this scenery will bring peace, and arouse your inner nature, and bring you in touch with the Supreme Spirit pervading the universe. When you are alone, you should not think of trivial things, or worldly things, but try to lift your soul above the mundane plane, and think of the immortal nature, and try to see behind the landscape the source of infinite beauty and harmony, peace and happiness, existence and intelligence, and go behind all this beauty and these beautiful things of the universe. Try to be in touch with the source which is the background of the paintings of nature Wise men generally go alone If you study the life of Christ, you will find that many times He used to be alone for prayer and devotion. During the summer months try to be in country places; go and sit there and meditate for

some time, and select pleasant spots where crowds of people will not come after you.

One should avoid the society of ordinary worldly-minded people. Ordinary people enjoy that society. There is a saying, 'A man is known by the company he keeps'. If you live with dogs, you will learn to howl. If you constantly associate with people who are low and mean-minded, then you would receive the reflection of these tendencies and qualities in your own souls. They will bring out the worst qualities that are latent in you, but if, on the contrary, you associate with the wise ones i.e. the spiritual ones, that company would lift us above the lower animal plane and you would rise above the ordinary selfish nature and become spiritual in the end. Therefore, when it is said, unless you have aversion to the worldly-minded people on the material or animal plane, your animal nature cannot be controlled, that is one of the conditions under which you can get the highest knowledge of spirituality. The knowledge which you receive from books and ordinary people, is not the highest spiritual knowledge, but the highest spiritual knowledge comes from within when you think of the Supreme Spirit. There are books which treat of that highest knowledge, and may give some suggestions, but the knowledge cannot be learned from the outside. Knowledge comes from within when your inner nature is lifted above the animal plane, and when your inner spiritual eyes are opened, you get some glimpses of the highest truth. At that time you become conscious of the Supreme Spirit, and that is true knowledge. Books may give you certain ideas of how to get some particular knowledge, or give descriptions of people who have received that knowledge, but the knowledge itself you cannot get from books. The self must be prepared to receive that knowledge from within and then the books and other things will help you. And that knowledge will come by constant application to spiritual knowledge and to perception of the purpose of the science of breath.

When you study any book of philosophy and religion of Vedanta, you must consider that Vedanta is the science of breath, and deals with the absolute truth, and tries to explain and make you understand the relation which it bears to the absolute Truth. If you understand the purpose of the

science of breath, and if after that you apply yourself to that purpose and try to realize that purpose in your life, that would be the best way. That is the highest knowledge, and any other knowledge which is inferior to this, is known as ignorance. But the knowledge of your spiritual nature, or your internal nature, of that which exists even after death, is a higher knowledge Otherwise ordinary knowledge of external objects, or of such condition of material forces, or insensate nature, is not the highest knowledge, but that knowledge will be helpful to you by dint of which you learn to discriminate spirit from matter, or spirit from insensate nature, or physical organisms or material conditions Then that discrimination will lead you to the higher realization of Truth.

You must have aversion to bad company. The commentator says that the company of such persons as are of wicked disposition and are selfish and constantly find fault with others and criticize other people's character and gossip too much, they must be avoided. You should not sit and talk to such people and encourage such things. There are lots of people who sit in a corner, and gossip, and find fault with others, and think for the time being that they are of perfect character and the best people in the world You must learn to find faults with yourself, and try to reform your own character You should try to see God in others, and that is the most helpful way by which you can rise above the ordinary plane of selfishness and wickedness. So these are the conditions which will help you in getting the highest knowledge, and that is the ideal of all philosophy and religion.

Here Sri Krishna is telling us which is the highest of knowable objects of which the highest has not been known: "That which cannot be known, I will now describe, by knowing which, one attains to immortality."[9] That is the highest of the knowables by knowing which one attains to immortality. That may be called Spirit, or eternal Truth, or the Absolute, or our true nature. They all have the same meaning although they are different in words. So that by which one attains to immorta-

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[9] ज्ञेयं यत्तत् प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते ।
अनादिमत् परं ब्रह्म न सत् तन्नासदुच्यते ॥१३।१२

lity, or becomes immortal, is the greatest of all knowable objects, or objects of knowledge, and that is described later.

That by knowing which one becomes immortal, is beginningless, and must be immortal in its nature. The beginningless Supreme Truth which is called the Brahman, is declared to be beyond relative existence and non-existence. Very few of us understand perhaps what relative existence means. It is the existence which depends upon some other existence, and also depends upon the relation of some other existence. For instance, I live as a human being, I am sitting here, but my existence as a human being in this room depends upon the existence of the earth. If the earth were not here, I could not be here. So my existence is not an independent existence as a human being. Therefore our existence is dependent upon the existence of the earth and the present condition of the earth. If the earth-condition changes, and becomes suddenly too cold or too hot, then our existence as human beings would not be the same, we would become non-existent. That is relative existence. In that way, the existence of the chair, or the house, or any phenomenal object, is a relative existence, because it depends upon some other existence.

The existence of the earth is also relative, because it exists in relation to the sun. If the sun were not there, the earth would not be there. The existence of the sun also depends upon some other things. So everything of the phenomenal world exists relatively, and that existence is also related to the non-existence of something. If the earth were all-pervading, it would not be the earth. The very existence of the sun means that the rays of the sun are not the same those of this universe, so this existence would not be possible if the whole universe were solid like the sun. If the whole universe were solid like the sun, it would not be sun any more. The space is not the same and the earth is not the same, so that is included in existence. The whole exists, because the rest of the space is not the whole. In that way, you see that everything is related. If the whole existence were a human body, there would be no human body. But this whole space would be filled with a solid human body, and there would be neither you, nor I. So the existence of all special objects of the phenomenal world is relative, but this relative existence is not the

same as absolute existence. Absolute existence is that which does not depend upon anything It is self-existent, and there is no other thing upon which that existence depends. If you find anything like that, you will know that you have found the ultimate and absolute truth. Try to find that which exists, but does neither depend upon anything, nor does depend upon your material or spiritual condition, but in all conditions it is the same self-existent something, and that is the absolute existence That absolute existence is God, the Purushottama.

God, in a relative sense, is the phenomenal God who depends upon the world We often give the attribute of creator to God and call Him the creator, but the creator exists so long as there is creation. If there be no creation, there would not be any creator, because the act of creation depends upon the creator. A perceiver is one who is related to and perceiving, and the very term exists in relation to that which is perceived. Similarly the word creator, like the word potter, exists in relation to the work of creation. In that way, we make God relative instead of the Absolute. The Absolute is beyond all sense relationss and exists independent of everything else, and that is the highest object of knowledge By knowing that, one becomes immortal. We must know that in this life, and that is the object of religion and philosophy of Vedanta

Christianity takes up the idea of the Father in heaven, or God who is the Creator, but does not say anything about the absolute Truth. O course, there are some examples of devotees who have tried to realize the absolute Truth, but the special method by which one can easily understand that absolute Truth, is to be found nowhere so stated as in Vedanta, because where ordinary religions end, there is the beginning of the highest universal religion of Vedanta, where ordinary philosophy ends, there is the beginning of the highest realization The soul reaches higher where ordinary senses end When they say the absolute Truth is unknown and unknowable, there is the starting point of science of Vedanta. That which is called unknowable, must be known. Kant said that the Absolute is unknown and unknowable, but his critics said that as Kant determined his Absolute as unknown and unknowable, so the Absolute is, in reality, known to him. Vedanta points out the method of knowledge by special path which is unknown

to the ordinary scientists and thinkers and men of the world. The special path which leads to that supreme knowledge, makes one immortal. That is one of the special features of Vedanta, and, therefore, Vedanta is unique. You may study other systems of philosophy and science, but you will not find the universal method as has been prescribed or advocated by Vedanta.

Different philosophers have given you various ideas, but you cannot live up to them in your practical life. As long as you take a course in philosophy in order to get any degree, that is very good if you are inquisitive, but it is of no use if you do not realize the highest truth of philosophy. The higher and spiritual philosophy is something which you can live up to and make a part and parcel of your life, but in speculative philosophy, you get the ethical and social points of all the existing religions, nothing is left out, everything is taken in, and, at the same time, the spiritual philosophy like Vedanta makes one a knower of Truth. It makes a man higher spiritually and perfect.

That absoulte Truth is not very far from us. It is not absolute being separated from us, but it is very closely related to each one of us. "Because the Absolute has hands, feet and, eyes everywhere. He has mouths and ears everywhere. He exists pervading all".[10] How strange is it that Absolute should have His hands and ears, and feet, and yet He pervades all. That is, all the functions and organisms and organs of senses exist in and through that Absolute. Everything that exists in the phenomenal world, belongs to the Absolute.

We have hands and heads and ears and eyes, but these eyes do not, in fact belong to us, but belong to the Absolute, because later on we shall find that all these powers proceed from that eternal One, therefore they are neither yours, nor mine. These powers exist in the universe, and they manifest themselves in the course of cosmic evolution, and produce these objects of senses, sense-organs, brain, and nervous system etc. So when we say the Absolute has heads, ears, eyes hands, and feet, it is not a mistake, and, in that sense, the Lord of the universe has a physical form, because all physical forms which

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10 सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत् सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरामुखद्।
सर्वनः श्रुनिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥१३।१४

exists in the whole universe, are his forms and not our forms. these heads, He is seeing through these eyes; He is hearing through these ears, He is walking through these feet, and He is working through these hands, yet He is free from all sense-powers. As it is said in the *Upanishad*, that the Absolute has no feet, no hands, no limbs, no eyes, no ears, yet it sees through all eyes, hears through all ars, walks through all feet, and works through all hands". The *Prashna-Upanishad* has also said that though, in truth, the *Atman* is not seer, hearer, smeller, enjoyer, thinker, and doer of any work, yet He sees, hears, smells, enjoys, thinks and does everything "स हि द्रष्टा स्प्रष्टा, श्रोता, घ्राता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्धा कर्ता विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः" (४।९). This seems to be like a riddle. It is because the all-consciousness Absolute is beyond comprehension and beyond mind and relativity, yet it is not far from us, it dwells in us, and works through us. These bodies are nothing but instruments through which the absolute Being is playing the sportive play, and that is one very important thing we should learn. How pleasant and comforting it will be for us to live in this world possessing that supreme knowledge; how happy, peaceful, and restful we will be, if we can hold that absolute knowledge all the time. Selfishness and vanity will vanish instantly when we know that these bodies are the instruments through which the Eternal Being is playing in the material world. These forms and senses and sense-objects are the limitations caused by the insensate nature and produced by its evolution, and when these limitations exist, differentiations take place, and each form appears as distinct and separate, there is one thread going through all and that is thread of Spirit. That is the Spirit which is the source of consciousness and intelligence, and there we will find the absolute truth. It reflects itself in the functions of senses, yet it is free from all the senses. It is unattached, yet it is sustaining all and is free from all qualities and experiences of nature. The *Isha-Upanishad* has dealt with this problem of riddle and has opened the door of hidden treasure. The *Upanishad* has said,

तदेजति तन्नैजति तद्दूरे तद्वदन्तिके।
तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः॥[1]

[1] Vide *Gita*, XIII.15.

Now let me read out one of the commentaries which will explain these lines: स्वयं चलति, न चलति च। बिभुत्वान्न चलति चलनफलव्याप्तिमत्वाच्चलतीतुयुक्तिः। दूरे चान्तिके च—तन्तरात्मया सर्वदेशव्यापित्वात्।'

In fact, the all-consciousness and all-intelligence *Atman* is not limited by any categories of time, space, and causation, and so the *Upanishad* has conceived of the *Atman* as all-pervading. It is the Soul of all souls, and the prime source of everything, physical and mental.

The activity of life or vitality proceeds from the Absolute, though, in truth, the Absolute transcends everything. A particle of the Absolute dwelling in each one of us produces infinite powers and potentialities. All these sense-powers begin to manifest themelves on their planes because of that background which is full of life and vitality, intelligence and consciousness. This insensate nature will not evolve or begin to show any of the powers, if the intelligence of the Absolute (*Purusha*) were not there behind nature. In all the functions of our brain and mind and senses, the same intelligence is manifested each time, but when we try to know the Absolute through the senses, we cannot perceive. Then it is beyond the reach of the sense-powers, and we cannot see it with our eyes, of cannot smell it, yet the powers of smelling, seeing, and hearing depend upon the Absolute. The Absolute is at the back, but sense-powers only make us look forward externally. Externally we cannot see it, so we will have to go to the internal and turn the senses inside, and then we will see it. The ears will hear only vibrations of air and sound etc. The Absolute will not be perceived by the senses, yet the senses exist in and through the Absolute, and, therefore, it is said that the Absolute sustains all.

The Absolute is the sustainer of the phenomenal world. It is the giver of life, vitality, intelligence, and strength. mental and spiritual, and when we enjoy anything in this world, does insensate nature enjoy? No, it is that intelligent spiritual Being, who through mind and sense-powers enjoys the objects of enjoyment and pleasure. It is the intelligent something which enjoys, and, therefore, it is called the enjoyer and experiencer of nature. Nature produces this variety of objects, and we enjoy them. We enjoy them not as a material particle that enjoys another particle, but we the enjoyers are different from the objects of enjoyment.

We enjoy our existence, because we are separate from these material conditions, otherwise we cannot enjoy. If we were one with the material conditions, we would be just like dead matter i.e. like a chair, or a table. A chair does not enjoy its existence, but we do. Therefore there is some difference, and that difference lies in the intelligence which proceeds from the absolute Being. The Absolute exists without and within. It cannot be limited. It pervades space, and exists everywhere, but we cannot see it. This space is filled with the Absolute, but we do not know it. We live and move through the Absolute not knowing, but the moment we feel that, we hesitate to move and we do not care. Then we look at objects with assessment, and perceive the Absolute. We cannot move but we will have to keep our minds in touch with the Absolute, the eternal Truth. When we know that the whole universe is pervaded by that one Supreme Existence, we attain freedom. The Absolute is invisible, yet it appears as moving. It is unknowable, it is too subtle, and senses cannot grasp it, and sense-power cannot reach it, intellect cannot attain to the absolute Being, because senses, mind and intellect are the product of nescience or *ajnana*, and the Absolute transcends nescience.

Therefore, ordinary people and even the scientists and best thinkers say that the Absolute is unknowable. Vedanta also says the same thing, because Vedanta explains that it is so subtle, that it cannot be appreciated by ordinary knowledge. But yet it could be knowable by intuitive knowledge. It is so difficult to know, and, therefore, it is the highest. If it were not so difficult, it would have been realized by everybody, and we would not make such a hard struggle for that knowledge. But because it is known to few only, we must make a special effort to know that during this lifetime. We should leave all other words and engagements, enjoyments and aspirations. We should devote most of our time and energy in trying to know that which is called unknowable. We must not give it up. If we do not succeed in this life with our whole heart and soul, we must still continue, until we have reached the goal. We have already known that it is near, yet it is far away. It is near to the wise men who have known it, and it is far away to those who are on the lower sense plane. It is unknowable

to the unenlightened millions of souls, and it is knowable to the enlightened wise ones. It is the Soul of our souls, therefore, it is the nearest thing, but to the unenlightened seeker, it is far away. They will have to struggle for millions and millions of years, until the enlightenment has come, but when it has come, it is the nearest thing; or it can be said that the Absolute is the nearest thing as long as it is known, and it is the farthest thing, beyond comprehension, beyond reach beyond mind and intellect, when it is not known. So Sri Krishna has said: "Shining by the functions of all the senses, yet without the senses, it is devoid of all attachments or relativities. It is sustaining all and is devoid of *gunas* of qualities, and yet it is the experiencer of all *gunas*. It is without and within all beings. It is the unmoving and also moving, because it is subtle. It is incomprehensible, and yet it is far and near".[12]

This chapter is the most difficult of all. It is the most metaphysical, yet is the most beautiful chapter in the whole book.

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12 सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।
असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च ॥
बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।
सूक्ष्मत्वात् तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥१३।१५-१६

CHAPTER XLIII

WORLD BEYOND THE SENSES

According to Vedanta, the highest of the noble objects is the Supreme Spirit, the Absolute, which pervades all animate and inanimate objects of the universe, and reflects itself in the functions of the senses, yet it is devoid of all senses, and is unattached and free from all qualities and experiences of nature. It is not an insensible or insensate substance, but it is the cause or the source of all existence, consciousness, and bliss, nay, this Absolute has been determinately known or described as the *Sacchidananda* or Intelligence-Consciousness-Bliss, though indeterminately it has transcended all qualities or adjuncts. It exists without and within all beings. It is invisible and also moving, it is unknowable, yet so subtle, it is near, yet far away, it is indivisible, yet appears as divided in beings, it is the separater of all beings, which are knowable and moving, yet generating and inseparable.

It is moving and yet generating means that at the beginning of a cycle of evolution, it produces or projects the phenomenal universe and at the end of that it disappears i.e. at the end the whole phenomenal universe dissolves and goes back to the primordial causal condition of energy—the energy (*Prakriti*) of the Brahman[1] Again after a period of involution the cycle of evolution begins, and at that time the energy begins to evolve and manifest itself in various forms of the phenomenal world The whole philosophy and religion of Vedanta are based entirely upon the idea of involution and evolution of nature in cyclic order. The Christian ideal of a special creation at a definite period of time is not the fundamental idea of Vedanta, rather Vedanta has refuted this idea of creation.

The Absolute, the Ground, is not insensate, but it is the

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[1] This energy or *Prakriti* is recognized as *maya*, the causal nescience that coexists with *Isvara*

Light of lights beyond all darkness, it is knowledge and the knowable, as well as it is the goal of knowledge and of everything, mental and physical. But where does it dwell? It dwells in the hearts of all. That eternal Being is not material substances and is not insensate energy, but it is the illuminator of all physical lights. It is the light of the sun, the moon, the stars and the fire. All other kinds of light are illumined by that eternal substance which is called the Light of lights—the Soul of souls.

It is beyond all darkness. Darkness is here used in a metaphysical sense, and ignorance is called darkness. So long as we do not realize the Absolute, we are in the darkness of ignorance or *maya*, but when that knowledge comes or dawns upon a man that darkness of *maya* is disappeared and divine light of wisdom begins to shine in the souls of the individuals.

The Absolute is knowable, nay, it is knowledge itself, and the goal of all knowledge. All knowledge ends in the supreme knowledge of the Absolute. All other knowledge of the phenomenal world, or of nature, or of any particular part of nature, is a partial knowledge, but when we know the Absolute, that knowledge includes all other knowledge. Knowledge of science, philosophy, religion—all kinds of knowledge are included in the knowledge of the Absolute, because the Absolute dwells in the heart of all beings.

So the Lord says: "That devotee of Mine, who comprehends this, is fitted to be one with Me." That is, the Lord says: "In beings the *Atman* shines as impartible or undivided (*avibhakta*), yet it exists as if divided in being. It is to be known as sustaining and devouring or destroying, as well as generating or projecting Being. It is the Light of lights. It is said to be beyond darkness. It is knowledge (supreme) and the one and only thing to be known. It is the goal of knowledge and is dwelling in the hearts of all. Thus *Kshetra*, knowledge, and that which has to be known, have been briefly stated. That devotee of Mine, who comprehends this, is fitted to be one with Me."[2] Now we understand the

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[2] अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥

ideal of the universal religion of Vedanta. That devotee of the Supreme Being, who comprehends the true nature of matter as well as the true source of the phenomenal universe as the highest of all knowable objects, is fitted to be one with the Absolute. He becomes one with the Supreme Spirit, and becomes perfect, or reaches perfection.

Now what is this knowledge? The word 'Vedanta' means the end of all wisdom, and the end of all wisdom is the Absolute. As I have already explained the knowledge of the Absolute includes all other knowledge, therefore, it is called the end of wisdom Therefore, Vedanta means knowledge or wisdom The word wisdom comes from the same root as the word Vedanta and it means knowledge, or wisdom, or the end of wisdom (*vedanta*) So when we say wisdom, it is wisdom which leads to the realization of that highest knowledge, the ultimate Truth, or which leads to the Absolute We mean the end of Vedanta philosophy i.e. the philosophy which teaches the realization of the Supreme Reality.[3]

Three things are to be considered. first, the nature which evolves and is subject to evolution, second, the individual soul or ego, and third, the Supreme Spirit which governs

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ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम्* ॥

* बिश्ठितम् इति वा पाठः ।

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समासतः ।
मद्भक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्भावायोपपद्यते ॥१३।१७-१९

Regarding 'मद्भक्तः' Sankara said

"मद्भक्तः मयि ईश्वरे सर्वज्ञे परमगुरौ वासुदेवे समर्पितसर्वात्मभावः यत् पश्यति शृणोति स्पृशति वा सर्वमेव भगवान वासुदेव इत्येवंग्रहाविष्टबुद्धिर्मद्भक्तः * * ।"

Sri Krishna says that he is really a devotee, who dedicates everything to Purushottama Isvara, and asks nothing for his ownself But this kind of true Bhakta is rare—'वासुदेवसर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः' ।

[3] It has already been explained that *jnanakanda*, the *Upanishads*, is the last portion i e extract or essence of the four Vedas. *Karmakanda* is different. and it teaches ceremonial functions and their results (*svarga*) The *jnanakanda* or *Upanishad* teaches supreme knowledge that brings God-realization.

them all. Of these three, know that both nature and the soul are beginningless, and know also that all forms and qualities spring from nature. Therefore nature and the individual soul are beginningless. Each of us possesses an ego or a soul, which has no beginning, just as nature has no beginning. No one has ever found the beginning of nature, or matter, or force, or energy, or whatever you may call it. That which appears in the variety of forms and is subject to growth and change and evolution, is called nature. And the ego or the individual soul that perceives nature, its forms, and qualities, and experiences nature, is a knower of nature. We know what nature is. We also know that we are not different here. But these descriptions are generally overlooked by ordinary people. They may be scientists, or philosophers, or agnostics, but they generally overlook this description that there is nature which is subject to growth and change, and there is the soul or experiencer of nature, and all forms and qualities have sprung from nature.

That word 'nature' includes all the sense-organs and sense-powers, mind, material conditions, intellect, intellectual faculties, memory, feelings etc. All these are included in nature, or they are the modifications of nature. They are rather produced by nature, but the soul is the knower (*jnata*) of all these. And we already learned the nature of the soul when we started the beginning of this chapter.

Some people think that nature was created by God and the individual souls were created by God also. But that is not true. Nature was not created by God, and individual souls were not also created by God, but they existed along with the Lord of the universe. Various arguments are given here to establish the truth that God does not create nature, nor did He create the individual souls, but they are beginningless. If the Lord of the universe be the governor of the universe and if He is eternal, then the objects of his government and that which He governs, must also be eternal, otherwise He would not remain as the eternal governor, just as the governor of a state is the governor so long as there is a state to be governed, and if the state did not exist, there would not be any governor of that state. Similarly the governor of the universe is eternal, and if the universe be eternal, and if He (God)

governs all the individual souls today, He governed them before, and would do so in future, otherwise He would not be the eternal governor.

Nature is the eternal energy of the Supreme Being, which is the potential state of all manifested forces in matter. It possesses various qualities which are manifested in the process of evolution, and all these qualities like feeling, sound etc that can be perceived by senses, are a kind of quality. The whole universe is made up of qualities and forms Length is a quality, and so breadth, thickness, colour, whiteness, redness etc are qualities which we perceive with our senses Odour and all those things may be called qualities and they are also produced by nature Nature, the eternal energy, when spread through the process of evolution, produces these different qualities, and appears in manifold forms.

Now Sri Krishna says "Know thou (O, Arjuna) that *Prakriti* and *Purusha* both are beginningless, and know thou also that all forms and qualities are born of *Prakriti*"[1] Really matter and spirit—*Prakriti* and *Purusha*—are the two natures (*prakrities*) of the *Isvara* These two have no beginning. The Lordship of the *Isvara* consists indeed in His possession of the two natures or *prakrities* by which He causes the origin, preservation and dissolution of the universe. The Lord has further said. "As the producer of the effect and the instruments, *Prakriti* is said to be the cause, as experiencing pleasure and pain, *Purusha* is said to be the cause."[5] The effect (*karya*) is the physical body and the instrument (*karana*) are the thirteen senses i.e. five organs of sensation, five organs of activity, *manas, buddhi* and *ahamkara,* located in the body. The five elements (*bhutas*) which build up the body, and the five sense-objects (*vishayas*) which are the emanations of *Prakriti*, are included under the term effect, and all qualities

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[1] प्रकृतिं पुरुषञ्चैव विद्यानादी उभावपि ।
बिकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृति-सम्भबान् ॥१३।२०

'पुरुषश्च संसारस्य कारणं यथा स्यात् तदुच्यते पुरुषः जीवः क्षेत्रज्ञ भोक्ता ।'
—Sankara.

कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥१३।२१

such as pleasure and pain, form of *Prakriti*, are included under the term *karanas* or instruments. Thus, as producing the body and the senses, *Prakriti* is the cause of worldliness (*samsara*).

Sri Krishna again says: "*Purusha*, when seated in *Prakriti* experiences the qualities born of *Prakriti*. Attachment to the qualities is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs."[6]

We must not forget that there are three things: nature, soul, and God. All these are eternal. Each one of them is eternal and beginningless. The individual soul which existed in the beginning of evolution, will continue to exist in some form or other throughout the period of evolution, and then will remain latent in the state of that eternal energy during the period of involution, and will come out again when the new cycle of evolution begins. Nature is the creative force, or the creative source of causes and effects, which is the source of experiences of pleasure and pain, and that is the difference between nature and the soul. Nature is the creative source of causes and effects. The tree is the effect and the seed is the cause. Causes and effects are produced by the creative energy or nature.

The soul is the source of experiences of pleasure and pain. If there were no soul in the universe, there would not have been any sensation or feeling or experience of pleasure or pain. He who experiences different things and feels pleasure and pain, is the soul. That entity or substance is known as the ego or the intelligent being, or the soul. This body is the effect of natural causes, and it contains all the senses, sense-organs, sense-powers, and the fine elements and particles of matter that appear in a gross form as the objects of senses. They are also the causes which produce the aggregate which is called the body. So a body becomes the effect of these causes, elements, and powers. These sense-organs, sense-powers, and objects of senses are also produced by

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पुरुष प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान् गुणाण् ।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥१३।२२

'भर्ता भरणं नाम देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धीनां संहतानां चैतन्यात्मपारार्थेन चैतन्याभासानां यत्स्वरूपधारणं तच्चैतन्यात्मकृत्रमेवेति भर्ता आत्मा इत्युच्यते ।' —Sankara.

nature So nature, during the process of evolution, changes from one state into another, and each state becomes the cause of each successive state and the effect of a previous state. So you see that cause and effect are linked together, we cannot separate the cause from the effect or the effect from the cause, as the chain is inseparable. And this is what is called in Sanskrit, *samsara* When we use the word, it means that state where the individual soul experiences nature, or the qualities of nature, which produce pleasure and pain This is worldliness or our mundane existence on this earth. We have come to this plane to experience pleasure and pain and all other degrees of sensation and feelings This is the world, this is called *samsara*, and the individual soul, when it remains on this plane is, called *samsari* i e it becomes phenomenal being in constant relation to the objects of pleasure and pain The cause of this *samsara* or the world is both nature and the individual soul If there were nature alone and no one to experience a nature, this world would not be the same But if there were individual souls and no nature and nothing to experience, then this world would not be the same So we need nature which will produce these objects and at the same time there must be the experiencer, the knower, and that would make up the world, otherwise this world has no use

Sri Krishna has said that the individual soul abiding in nature, experiences the qualities born of nature, and the identification of the world with the qualities, is the cause of his birth in this world of good and evil.[7] Let us try to understand this clearly The individual soul, abiding in nature, experiences the qualities, born of nature. The individual soul dwells in the body. Let us consider that this body is the result of nature, matter, and forces; and the individual soul, as long as it dwells in the body, may be called as the dweller in nature and experiencing the qualities born of nature Now what are the qualities?

The various sensations, feelings, desires, mental conditions, physical conditions, external objects of senses which produce different feelings of pleasure, pain etc—are the

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[7] *Vide* the *Gita* XIII, 22.

qualities which the soul experiences. The soul could not experience these things, if it were far away from nature, or if it were not dwelling in nature. So the soul must dwell in nature in order to experience the qualities that are produced by nature, hence it is that here we are. And why is it that we are bound to come? What causes the soul to come and take these forms and dwell in them? If a man has a finer form, why does he take a gross material form?

It is attachment to the qualities, or to certain conditions produced by nature. As long as we are identifying ourselves with nature, we become attached to these conditions, and cannot remain without them; and that produces a kind of clinging and a desire to cling to these conditions and that brings us back to these bodies. The souls are drawn to this plane of existence and forced to take material forms in order to experience the qualities of nature and to fulfil the desire or attachment with which the soul comes into the bodies.

Why is this identification of the soul with the qualities? How do we identify ourselves with the qualities? For instance, we say, 'I am happy or unhappy, or healthy or unhealthy, or I am in pain or in suffering'. The suffering may be in the body, but the soul being one with the body, feels, 'I am faint, I am weak, I am thin, I am sick or light or dark in colour, I am old, I am young'. All these show that the soul is identified with the body which is different from the soul. The soul is really neither old, nor young; the soul is neither weak, nor faint, the soul is neither miserable, nor unhappy, as we take it in the ordinary sense. When we say, 'I am faint or thin, I am weak, I cannot walk', we say this through that identification i.e. we do not separate the soul from the body, but we make ourselves one with the body. Then the soul takes upon itself all the conditions and changes that take place in the body. Therefore the soul says, 'I am suffering etc'. All these are the results of the identification of the soul with nature, or with the natural conditions of the body. That identification of the soul with the qualities is the cause of our birth in this world of good and evil. As long as we have that tendency to identify ourselves with the material conditions and qualities of nature, we will have to come back to this earth and will be born again and again.

The soul, in truth, is beginningless and endless. We have come to this earth today. We might have come to this earth hundreds and thousands of times before, and we may have to come again because of this identification As long as the soul has desire to enjoy the body and the pleasures of the body and the senses, the objects of senses, and the external conditions, as long as the soul identifies itself with these conditions and thinks that it cannot live without these conditions, so long as it is attached to nature and that enjoyment will be the cause of its birth on the physical plane in this world of good and evil.

Being born the soul would perform certain acts, and these would produce their results, and he would enjoy or suffer, according to the nature of the work If he has done good works, he would enjoy, and if he has done evil works he would suffer, and this suffering and enjoyment would continue In our experiences of life, we see that it is nothing but a series of sufferings and enjoyments. There is a preponderance of suffering in some, and a preponderance of enjoyment in some. Some people have more pleasure than suffering, others have less pleasure than suffering, that is all, and we are experiencing these things We go to some place of amusement to be happy, and we try to avoid all sensations that are disagreeable or unpleasant. Then all the conditions that bring suffering and misery we try to avoid, and that is the whole of our life on this earth We have been experiencing nothing else. Go and examine your whole life What have you done? You might have done some good and unselfish works that have brought pleasure and happiness in your soul, and always you have tried to avoid something that is going to produce an unpleasant feeling or sensation So this world of good and evil pleasure and unhappiness—is the condition which the soul takes upon itself on account of its identification[8] with the qualities of nature, and because of the desire to experience these qualities. If we analyse our own lives in this way, we come to the bottom of things, and the tendency of philosophy is to lead the individual soul to the bottom of things so as

[8] This identification happens, says Sankara, on account of *adhyasa* (vide *Adhyasa-bhashya*).

to let it understand what it is doing. Instead of living like an animal we should know what we are doing.

Simply making the statement that God sent us here, is not right. What is the meaning then? You do not know God, or what the divine purpose of God is. You do not know why He sent you in this world of *maya*. Try and find out the cause, and that cause is in yourself, and if you would know this, or can unlock the mystery of life, then you make your lives much better, and you would be able to rise above all these conditions and become free from pleasure and pain and all attachments or clinging to life How few people there are who are willing to face death with joy, and how they are ready to face death! How few are there who have the feeling that they have fulfilled the purpose of life and attained the goal of life!

Vedanta philosophy or universal religion teaches us how to fulfill the purpose of life and to attain to the goal of perfection, or the goal of knowledge, and that should be the ideal of life, and all the works of our life should tend towards the fulfilment of that one ideal, the highest.

So the individual soul, abiding in nature, experiences the qualities born of nature, and the identification of the soul with the qualities is the cause of his birth in this world of good and evil. If this be the cause of our birth and rebirth in this world, what would be the remedy for those who do not want to come and be born again and go through these experiences? The remedy is the knowledge of the Absolute as well as the knowledge of the soul and its nature, and practice of non-attachment to the conditions i.e. to the qualities of nature, and that is the remedy. When you have fulfilled certain desires, or when your desire is satisfied, you do not generally care for that thing, or do not want to look at it, and that is non-attachment (*vishaya-vitrishna* or *vairagya*). Then we are no longer attached to those conditions which were very tempting and attractive so long as there was the desire. But when the desire is gone, the same conditions produce a kind of causes, and then you try to get away from it. That is a kind of feeling which you should be able to understand when you try to know the meaning of the word, 'non-attachment'. Live in the world, have all your desires fulfilled, and when they are fulfilled, you must not desire further to live for any-

thing. But your tendency should be to know your true Self i.e. your true nature, and then this world would vanish,[9] and the cause of birth and rebirth would also be destroyed

So, we must have the knowledge of world and its true nature as well as the knowledge of the forces and the creative source which produce matter and forces or energy And where does that force or energy dwell? How does it dwell in the universe, and how does it produce these phenomenal forms and objects of senses? By studying and observing different senses we get a glimpse of knowledge of their true nature But the senses do not lead us far enough, because their limit is within the range of senses and sense-perceptions. So beyond sense-perceptions senses cannot go, and if they go, they go in the form of consciousness (*chaitanya*) being raised above all changes.

Now, what we perceive and see through the limitation of senses (instruments), is *maya* or worldliness That is called the realm of the senses, and beyond the limitation of perception the senses cannot go Then where is the truth to be found? Truth can be found beyond the limit of the senses which are product of nescience, and we find it through intuition where there is limitations of space and time Therefore the true causes of phenomena lie beyond the reach of sense-perception, and, therefore, we should not depend entirely upon our senses, but we take them as a great help in our study of nature and the phenomenal universe. Therefore we should not remain confined within the limits of science. We

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[9] What is the real meaning of 'then this world would vanish'? Is it true that after the realization of the Self or Absolute, the appearance of the world will be reduced into nothingness (*sunyata*)? No, because everything is indestructible and destruction or disappearance means to go into its causal state The world, in truth, is the Essence, or the Brahman (supreme consciousness), and it *appears* as different from the Essence, or the Brahman for non-knowledge of the Essence, or the Brahman. Non-knowledge does not mean absence of knowledge, but it is the false knowledge, or error (*bhrama-jnana*), or wrong knowledge (*ayathartha-jnana*) It is *maya* or *ajnana*, and when wrong or false knowledge is replaced or corrected by right knowledge (*yathartha-jnana*) this world will appear as non-different from the Brahman, and then and then the realized man understands the real meaning of '*Ishavasyamidam sarvam*', the divine verse of the *Isha-Upanishad*

should study philosophy as well, and that will lead us beyond the region of sense-perceptions, and, afterwards, we would rise above the plane of ordinary consciousness through the practice of Yoga i.e of concentration and would rise in the state of superconsciousness, where the individual soul will realize its true nature. Then the knowledge[10] of the Absolute would come to the soul, and we would understand how the soul is beginningless and endless, and what relation it bears to the eternal Spirit, which is the ideal and goal of all knowledge. And that is the object of the universal religion and philosophy of Vedanta.

[10] This knowledge is the super-sensual knowledge which is not involved in the tripartite functions (of knowledge) like subject, object and relation (*jnata*, *jneya* and *jnana*). In the *Yogadarshana* and Vedanta, this process of going beyond the tripartite functions (of knowledge) are known as *triputi-bheda*. *Triputi* of *jnata*, *jnana* and *jneya* is also the adjuncts (*upadhi*), and so for the realization of the *Atman* or Brahman we shall have to go beyond all adjuncts, which are the products of nescience (*ajnana*).

CHAPTER XLIV

THE KNOWER OF THE BRAHMAN IS PERFECT

You have learned that the individual soul is the experiencer of the qualities of nature. Nature includes all the physical as well as the mental powers It includes all sense perceptions and everything that we have in the body and in the phenomenal universe The individual soul abiding in nature experiences the qualities born of nature Identification of the soul with the qualities of nature is the cause of its birth in this world of good and evil What do we mean by the qualities of nature? As we explained in the previous chapter that if the body grows stout, we think of ourselves as stout, if the body be deformed, we think of ourselves as deformed The soul and body are almost one as we think it at present, and the qualities of the soul are ascribed to the body. Instead of thinking of ourselves as immortal souls, we think of ourselves as one with the bodies, and generally we have an idea that our being is one with the body And whenever the body is disturbed, there is this identification of the soul with the body, and there is a superimposition of the qualities of the soul on the body. And thinking of the body as something intelligence is the cause of identification of the soul We identify the intelligent being with the qualities of nature, and that is the cause of our birth in this world of good and evil

I have discussed it before, for the clarification of the idea or notion of identification as well as of superimposition, which create error in the souls Sankara has explained this matter in his commentary on *adhyasa* or superimposition. He says that the subject is the universal Self or *Atman* whose nature is pure intelligence or consciousness (*chit*), and the object comprises whatever is of a non-intelligent nature viz. material bodies with their sense-organs (*indriyas*), internal organs (*antahkarana* having *manas, buddhi, chitta* and *ahamkara*) and the objects of the senses, or of knowledge The object (*vishaya*) is said to have for its sphere the idea or notion of 'thou' (*yushmat*), not the idea or notion of 'this' or

'that' (*asmat*), in order to mark its absolute opposition to the subject or ego (*vishaya*). There happens a mistaken ascription i.e. superimposition or false identification in the sphere of subject and object—ego and non-ego. Sankara says that it is an established fact that the object (*vishaya*) and subject (*vishayi*) that are fit to be the contents of concepts of 'you' and 'we' (respectively) and are by nature contradictory or opposed to each other as light and darkness, cannot be logically identified. But yet we mix the reality with the unreality for wrong knowledge, or for want of discriminative faculty. But this coupling the real and the unreal is erroneous. Now what is superimposition? Sankara says that it is an awareness, similar in nature to memory, that arises on a different basis as a result of some past experience which is somewhat like a recollected thing evolving or emerging from the impression of some past experience. In different language, Sankara has again said that some define superimposition as the error founded on the non-apprehension of the difference of that which is superimposed from that on which it is superimposed. Others again define it as the fictitious assumption of attributes contrary to the nature of that thing on which something else is superimposed. You all know that mother-of-pearl appears like silver, or a stump of wood appears as an evil spirit, but these appearances are false or unreal, and we mix or couple always the unreal with the real, which is an error, and the correction of error brings realization of the *Atman*, which is real all the time, and which is not contradicted by anything. You may go through the original commentary of Sankara, which has explained the problem or mystery of error beautifully.[1] The commentary on error (*adhyasa-bhashya*) is a unique contribution of Sankara to the domain of Indian philosophy.

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[1] युष्मदस्मत्प्रत्ययगोचरयोर्विषयविषयिणोस्तमःप्रकाशवद्विरुद्धस्वभावयोरितरेतरभावानुपपत्तौ सिद्धायां तद्धर्माणामपि * * अध्यासः। * * कोऽयमध्यासो नामेति। उच्यते—स्मृतिरूपः परत्र पूर्वदृष्टावभासः इति वदन्ति। केचित यत्र यदध्यासस्तस्यैव विपरीत धर्मत्वकल्पनामाचक्षते इति। सर्वथापि त्वन्यस्यान्यधर्मावभासनां न व्यभिचरति। * * अध्यासो नाम अतस्मिंस्तद्बुद्धिरित्यवोचाम।"

Different definitions of *adhyasa* were forwarded by the *akhyativadins* and the *anythakhyativadins* and the *Madhyanikas*, said Anandagiri.

Therefore so long as this identification through error remains we shall have to be born again and again. This identification will not cease, but will remain upon the mental conditions. When we have a pleasant feeling, we feel pleased. At that time we identify ourselves with the mental qualities and become one with them, and as long as the soul (*jiva*) has the tendency for becoming one with the qualities of nature, not thinking of the soul as separate from nature and its qualities, so long there will be the cause of our birth and death in this mundane world. But those who separate themselves and think of themselves as the spirit separate from the body, from the mind, from the sense-perceptions, from other mental conditions, are above the ordinary level of humanity. They are wise ones, because they have corrected the knowledge of the unreal by the knowledge of the real, and have reached perfection.

There is another thing in this body. first, we start with nature with mental and material forces. Then we find that the gross material form as well as our sense-organs are made up of forces or energies. Then we see that there is an intelligent something which is the enjoyer and experiencer of all physical and mental conditions. That enjoyer or experiencer is the soul, the individual ego. There is a third something in our bodies, and that is the Divine Spirit. That third something is unknown to most of us, but whether we know it or not, it is there. What is that third something? There is in this body the Supreme Spirit who is the onlooker or witness, or spectator, or the enjoyer, the mighty Lord.

This Supreme Spirit dwells in our bodies, nay, It lives in all living beings and all non-living objects. It is not the same as the ego, and not the same as nature, but it is different from the ego, and is different from the mind and all mental qualities. It is the Witness (*saksi*), Intelligence (*cheta*) and Essence having no attributes (*nirguna*).

What is a witness? When a person is playing the piano or any other instrument, another person may be watching, without taking part in the play watching whether the play is correct or not, and enjoying it or expressing the feeling of satisfaction if it is correct, and that is a witness (*saksi*). When you go to

a concert or an orchestra where hundreds of instruments are played upon, and you stand on one side and watch them, you will stand like a witness, if you do not take part in the music.[2] So there is something in our bodies, the Supreme Spirit, who stands like a witness of all the actions of our bodies and minds. Whatever the ego does, is witnessed by the Spirit. You may think of anything when alone, and think that it is a very secret thing, but it is known by that Spirit which is in your soul already. You cannot hide anything from it; it is already known to the witness.

Whenever we are thinking there is a mental activity, we will find that in that mental activity the witness is watching. So you need not think that whatever you do, is hidden in yourself and absolutely secret and unknown to anybody else. The Spirit, the *Atman*, knows it. The Spirit is the sanctioner. The sanctioner is one who expresses satisfaction. He is always satisfied and happy in His play of watching. When He expresses satisfaction, we feel absolutely happy, and when the ego commits anything wrong, He expresses dis-satisfaction, and does not approve of it. Then we feel pain, and our conscience reproves us, and we are unhappy within ourselves although nobody has said anything to us, still we feel unhappy, because it is not approved by the Supreme Spirit that is dwelling within us.

So Sri Krishna says: "The Supreme Spirit or the *Atman*, is the Witness or Spectator and Permitter, Supporter, Enjoyer, the Great Lord; He is spoken of as the Supreme Self and is

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[2] Sankara in his commentary has similarly given an example of an expert priest. When in the Vedic age sacrifices were performed, one of the priests, designated as Brahma, well-versed in the four Vedas, used to supervise and witness everything of the sacrifice. Swami Abhedananda has given in this modern age an example of a person who only watches the performance of the playing of a piano, without taking part in it.

Sankara said: "स्वयमव्यापृतो यथा ऋत्विग् यजमानेषु यज्ञकर्मव्यापृतेषु तटस्थोऽन्योऽव्यापृतो यज्ञविद्याकुशलः" etc. i.e. when priests and the sacrificer are engaged in a sacrificial act, there is another, an expert, in sacrificial matters, sitting by their side, not taking part in the act, and discerning what is good and what is bad in the acts of the sacrificers and the priests.

the Supreme Purusha or Purushottama in this body."[3] Really the *Atman* who shines within all living beings, is the witness or spectator, the supporter and sustainer of the mind, ego and senses and physical form. How does He sustain? He is the source of our existence, the essence of our existence, body, mind, sense-powers, and everything Therefore. He may be linked to the canvas upon which the painting of the individual ego with the physical form is painted. Therefore, as the canvas, or the background of a scene, may be called the supporter of the whole scene or painting, so the *Atman*, the Supreme Spirit, is the supporter of the individual ego and all his mental activities. He is the enjoyer as He enjoys or experiences. Why is he called the enjoyer? Because. He is the source of intelligence. Without intelligence the ego would not be able to enjoy anything If the ego were a dead substance, or insentient and unintelligent substance, there would be no enjoyment and no feeling There must be the intelligence in order to experience or enjoy it, and that intelligence is not a part of the ego The ego contains the reflection of the intelligence, which is the same as the Supreme Spirit. He is all intelligence and all wisdom, and the reflection of Him is upon the ego. Therefore, the ego is like the reflection of the sun upon a cup filled with water. It will be bright like the sun. It is radiant and reflects also the same qualities as there are in the sun.[4]

The intelligence and consciousness of the individual ego the reflection of the supreme intelligence dwelling within us. It is sometimes called the 'Image of God'. So we are all images of God in that sense, and not images in the sense of a physical form, as ordinary people understand the passage in the Bible and that has been the source of great mis-understanding. When you take that sentence literally, you think God is like a human being, because we are in his image. Why do you not take it in a higher spiritual sense? Instead of

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उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन् पुरुषः परः ।१३।२३

[4] Similarly Sankara said that an individual ego (*jiva*) being entangled in the body, which is the product of nescience (*ajnana*), thinks himself as a *samsari*, but, in essence, he is the *Atman*, the *Parama-Purusha*.

making ourselves the standard of God, make God our standard, and that He, being the Spirit, His reflection would be spiritual intelligence in our souls, which has nothing to do with the physical form, and that is the meaning of the 'enjoyer'.

The mighty Lord is the ruler and governor of all the mental and physical conditions of the intellect, therefore, He is called the Supreme Spirit dwelling in us. We have found three things in this universe. When you analyse the whole phenomenal universe we can reduce the whole universe into these three things: first, nature, or matter and force, or rather the energy which is the mother of matter and forces; secondly, the individual ego, or the soul, and thirdly, the Supreme Spirit Emerson called it 'The Oversoul'.

'Spirit' is not spirit in the way spiritualists use it, but it is in the sense of intelligence, consciousness, and existence, nay, it is source of all happiness, love etc. When these three are properly understood, that will be the source of freedom and emancipation of the ego, which is salvation. He who realizes the soul as *Prakriti* or nature with its qualities, is never born again Whatsoever may be his mode of living, that knowledge of these three things is absolutely necessary for attaining to perfection. We must know nature or energy which is the cause of all material objects and forces. We must know how it is, where it stands, and how it stands, and how it evolves and produces these various phenomena. We must understand it fully. Then we should know the nature of the soul, the ego. How it dwells in the body, and how it identifies itself with the nature and its different conditions, and how the Supreme Spirit dwells like the witness, the supporter, the sustainer, and the experiencer of the works and activities of the ego. When we have known this, we become free from birth and death. Those who do not attain to this knowledge, remain bound by nature; that is, they remain bound by that power which makes it forget its own nature, and makes it forget that it is separate from nature, and that would be the cause of our birth and rebirth on this phenomenal plane.

What is the use of becoming free from birth and rebirth? Those who have human desires unfulfilled, would come back and remain and live under these conditions, or under better conditions on this plane, and their desires would bring them

here. But those who have gone through various conditions and are tired of those conditions and are disgusted with earthly limitations and ignorance and selfishness and all this evil which we see around us, would long for freedom, and if they do understand the laws which brings us back to this plane, would try to transcend these laws and become free from them, so that they would not be forced again to go through the same conditions And such persons will have to attain to the knowledge of nature, soul, and spirit That knowledge will make them fitted for rising above all laws and going beyond the reach of matter and material conditions.

That knowledge will be like this. I am So and so, not this matter, not physical conditions. not the qualities of nature, but I am the soul. Then you will find the relation between the soul and the Supreme Spirit dwelling in us Then you have to feel that the soul which is the intelligent portion in you, is the ego or the reflection of the Supreme Spirit. and when you have known that you are the reflection of the Supreme Spirit, then you have attained to right knowledge, and you have learned that you are an image of God, and that knowledge will help you to attain to perfection even in this life. That knowledge was sought after by all the great sages and prophets of past ages in all countries Even Christ taught his disciples the way by which that knowledge could be acquired, and he mentioned that several times in his sayings "And ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free". That knowledge of the absolute Truth is the only means by which one can attain to perfection, and the same knowledge is here referred to.

Do you realize that you are an image of God? In what way is it the image and why is it an image? That knowledge. if you have not got, then you must try to attain in this life That would be the first thing, and then other things would be taken care of by themselves. That is our first duty to devote most of our time and energy to attain to that knowledge What is the use of living in the world like one in the darkness of ignorance and gaining this thing and that thing which are not lasting? What does it amount to? It is all useless. because this body will not last forever. You will not be able to take a particle of this body with you after death. By

decorating the body you are not decorating the soul, which you are in reality. You are the soul, you are the immortal *Atmas*, the real experiencer of all the conditions of nature. What is the use of your earthly life? It has not given you the best opportunity, if you have not been able to make the best use of your life by trying to do this or that thing, on the contrary, you have been wasting your time.

Christ said: "First serve God and then obey thy parents." Even parents are not to be obeyed before God. That showed that He had that knowledge as the highest ideal of life. But we have grown so degenerated in our ideas that we do not make the best use of our life. This day we are living on the material plane In the plane of materiality, when anybody dies, we weep and wail and knock our heads against the wall and think we shall be able to help the departed spirits. This is all ignorance, this is all the result of ignorance and self-delusion. Therefore we must rise above it and try to shake it off and learn the true nature of the Spirit dwelling in us.

We should try to understand the soul and the energy which are the mother of nature and forces with their various qualities. This energy, by going through the process of evolution, takes various forms and quailties. All these qualities are manifested in nature, like heat, light etc. He who realizes this deeper Truth, is never born again, whatsoever may be his mode of living, but he cuts asunder all knots of nescience or delusion and enters into the domain of eternal peace and tranquility. Therefore first attain to this knowledge and then go and live in the world in whatever way you choose. If you have once attained to this knowledge, you will never forget it, and nothing will keep you attached to the world. You may do any physical work, or devote most of your time to business, that will not make any difference. But first learn this and attain to this knowledge that you are a soul or a spirit, nay, you are the reflection of the Supreme Spirit, then all the works that have been committed in this life and in previous lives, will cease to produce their results and you will be free from the laws of action and reaction, and that is the only way of stopping the law of *karma*, or birth and rebirth, on this or on any other plane. So Sri Krishna has said: "He who thus knows *Purusha* and *Prakriti* together with qualities, whatever

his conduct be, he is not born again (in this phenomenal world)."[5]

Now we have learned that divine knowledge is absolutely necessary for freedom and for transcending the laws of nature and attaining perfection (*mukti*) There are various methods by which that knowledge can be acquired. There are several paths for knowledge of our true Self, or divine nature According to Vedanta, each individual must have his or her own path which is best suited for himself or herself A path that suits one person, may not be the best road for another and, therefore, unlike other religions. it has given a series of methods by which the individual souls can attain to that knowledge of the Supreme Spirit. "Some through meditation behold the Soul by the soul, the *Atman* by the *Atman* others by Sankhya or Jnana Yoga or the path of discrimination, and others by leans of Karma Yoga"[6] These various Yogas mean different paths or methods.

Jnana Yoga and Raja Yoga include concentration, meditation, and self-control etc Sri Krishna has said "So through meditation some behold the Spirit" See the Spirit by the spirit, or the Soul by the soul Now it can be asked as to what is medita-

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5 य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।
सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥१३।२४

Sankara in his commentary clarified the idea of this verse in this way that he who directly perceives i.e realizes the *Purusha* as his very Self, and knows also the *Prakriti* or Nature as resolved into nothing (i e *abhava*) by *vidya* or *knowledge,* whatever life he may lead (i e whether he is engaged in the prescribed duties or forbidden acts (*vihita* and *nishiddha karmas*), he is not born again, but enters into the abode of the Brahman, the eternal wisdom and knowledge. Really *avidya,* the storehouse of *samaskaras,* is the cause of the cycles of births and rebirths, so when *avidya* is replaced by *vidya,* darkness is removed by self-effulgent eternal light of the *Atman,* the realized and enlightened man transcends the births and rebirths forever and ever and he never comes again in the *samsara* of *karma*

6 ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।
अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥१३।२५

Sankara said:

बीजान्यग्न्युपदग्धानि न रोहन्ति यथा पुनः ।
ज्ञानदग्धैस्तथा क्लेशैर्नात्मा सम्पद्यते पुनः ॥

tion? Meditation is that process by which we can concentrate our mind upon some object or some idea and hold it there for a certain length of time. At that time the mind will be withdrawn from external objects, sense-powers would be withdrawn from sense objects, the power of hearing would not be disturbed by any sound, the power of sight would not be distracted by any object of light or colour, and eyes would appear wide open but nothing would appear before them. If you have accomplished that much, then you can withdraw your sense-powers from the objects of senses, and then you have attained the power of concentration.[7] You will have to withdraw your sense-powers from the objects of senses. You will not see, or hear, or smell, or touch anything, and will not feel external sensation. It can be done by the will-power. I have seen Yogis who have done that. For instance, our Master, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, showed that will-power which he had His eyes would be wide open, but he would not see anything. The doctors experimented by putting their fingers into his eyes as he was in meditation, and did not have any sensation at all. Once he fell on a piece of burning charcoal and burned a place in his shoulder half an inch deep and he had no sensation. He was not in a cataleptic fit, but was in deep meditation. That shows that he had withdrawn his mind and other powers from the objects of senses entirely. There are persons in this country also, who can do things similarly. By concentration and meditation we do not mean those abnormal things like catalepsy or hysteria, or any kind of fit, but these methods are done by control or will-power, and if you can withdraw your mind or sense-powers from external objects and can hold it there for a certain length of time, you can develop a power within yourself which will enable you to do wonderful deeds. You will be able to separate yourself from the body. Then when the sense-powers will be withdrawn from the objects of senses, they will be absorbed in the mind. These sense-powers will be withdrawn in the mind, the center source, and the mind

[7] The methods of concentration (*dharna*) and meditation (*dhyana*) have been described by Patanjali in his *Yogadarshana* (in the *sadhana-pada*).

be withdrawn in the mind, the centre or source, and the mind will absorb them, and they will remain latent in the mind. The mind has a great connection with the perceptions If the mind is not there, you do not perceive anything. But when the mind is connected with the sense-organs, you do perceive the physical effects, like colour, light. sound, and smell etc.

The mind would also come within mental conditions and would be absorbed in the intellect All intellectual perceptions would be also withdrawn from their objects and be fixed on the soul, the ego, and then the ego will think of the Spirit, the *Atman.* If that is done, that is known as meditation The ego without being disturbed by physical or mental or intellectual conditions, will be able to think of the Spirit for a certain length of time, and that thought-current will flow unbroken like a stream of oil poured from one vessel into another (*pradipa-shikavat*), or like an unbroken current of water (*jaladharavat*), and that is meditation [8] If that can be accomplished, then the Supreme Spirit is realized. That is the path of meditation It would not lead anyone to any other condition i.e. any mediumistic condition, or any abnormal condition It would be the straight and simple path of meditation. In all religions, this meditation is observed by those who are spiritual-minded and wish to advance spiritually. At the time of devotion, we use a little meditation, and, in all churches and temples and all places of worship, the devotees use a form of meditation, but they do not know how to develop this power. Those who are studying Raja Yoga and practising the lessons of Raja Yoga, will understand what is meant by meditation, and gradually they will get this in their mind Then when they can do that and meditate upon the Spirit for a certain length of time in that way, the knowledge of the Spirit will be revealed, and the soul (ego) will understand its true nature as a reflection of the Spirit, or the image of God That knowledge is bound to come. Therefore, this path is considered to be the best for those who are of meditative

[8] (a) Regarding the state of meditation, Sankara said in the commentary:

"तैलधारावत् सन्ननोऽविच्छिन्नप्रत्ययो ध्यानम् ।"

nature. But there are some persons who cannot meditate at all, and for those there are other paths.

Those who are very intellectual and try to discriminate, but cannot meditate, they realize the Truth intellectually. For them the path of discrimination (*viveka* and *vichara*) will be all right. In that path, they will be able to discriminate matter from Spirit and Soul from nature. In this way, they go beyond energy, and beyond ego. Then intellectually they would have to discriminate the nature of the ego, the reflection or image of the Spirit, and when they have come to that point, they would find that nature and ego are dependent upon the Spirit. They would understand that the Divine is independent and, at the same time, is the source of intelligence, consciousness, and existence, and the background of the universe. When they have found that, they have found the immortal part of the universe. They have crossed the ocean of death and reached the shore of immortality. There they wish to remain, and do not wish to come back. They enjoy that state, and like to remain there forever. That would be through the path of discrimination or Sankhya Yoga.[9]

Others try to attain perfection by means of Karma Yoga. There may be many who are neither discriminative, nor meditative, but who are ready to do works, and so they will have to go through the path of work. Karma Yoga will be the best method for them who are active and cannot do but work. In Karma Yoga, they will have to learn the secret of work. They will have to understand the laws of cause and sequence —action and reaction, and will have to perform the duties

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[9] Regarding Sankhya Yoga, Sankara said:

"सांख्यं नाम—इमे सत्त्वरजस्तमांसि गुणा मया दृश्याः, अहं तेभ्योऽन्यः, तद्व्यापार-साक्षिभूतः नित्यो गुणविलक्षणः आत्मेति चिन्तन ये एष सांख्यो योगः, तेत पश्यन्ति अत्मानं आत्मनेति वर्तते।"

Anandagiri said:

"सांख्यशब्दितं साधनं किं नामेतुच्यते विचारजन्यं ज्ञानं तदेव ज्ञानं हेतुतया योगतुल्यत्वात् योगशब्दितमित्याह—सांख्यमिति।"

Therefore, the word 'Sankhya' as used in the *Gita*, is knowledge (*jnana*) got through intellectual investigation (*vichara*). As leading to Yoga, it is spoken of as Yoga itself.

of life not for results, or not for the satisfaction of selfish motives, but for work for the sake of work. As it is said in Karma Yoga 'To work thou hast the right, but not to the fruits thereof." ('कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन')

So we must work for work's sake and not for the result The results we would leave with the Lord and let Him receive all the results of our works If we can perform all the duties of life in that way, leaving the results of our works with the Supreme Spirit, then through that method we shall realize the true nature of the Supreme Spirit Therefore whenever you do any work, and the result of work comes, do not ask it, but dedicate it to the Lord and remain mentally calm Then you say 'Let the result of this work go to the Lord" That will purify your soul, and will make you free from the law of action and reaction i.e. from the law of *karma*, and you will attain to that knowledge which has been described as the ideal goal of all religions, and even in our life.

So there are three paths of which we have learned, and in the religion of Vedanta, all these paths are included Therefore you must not think that in the universal religion of Vedanta, there is only one path, but there are many paths, and each is just as good as the other The coat which may fit your body, may not fit another person's body at all, therefore, that which fits your body, is the best for you. For that reason we say that religion of Vedanta prescribes many methods and includes all the various paths that exist in the world

We have described the three paths, but there are others again who cannot realize this Self, or cannot attain to self-knowledge, by any of these three methods already described, but who worship the Spirit through faith after hearing about it from another teacher And they, being devoted to what they heard, transcend the laws of death and attain to immortality.[10] This is the fourth method for those who are not fitted for the other

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[10] अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वाऽऽभ्य उपासते ।
तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः ॥१३।२६

That is, others, who cannot meditate upon the *Atman*, cannot discriminate the real from the unreal, and cannot perform work selflessly in the spirit of worship get the idea of the *Atman* after hearing the instructions from the *Guru*, or spiritual man, and then realize the *Atman*.

three methods. They worship the Spirit with faith, they have devotional natures and are devoted to the Spirit although they do not know anything about it. Still their minds are worshipful, and they long for some kind of worship, and worship God. They do not know where God is, or who He is, where He dwells, or what is His nature, but they have heard from the wise that there is such a thing as the Supreme Spirit who hears our prayers, who has a certain form, and who should be prayed to under a certain name. They have no power of reasoning, and do not argue. So what they have heard, appeals to their mind and soul, and they accept it, and wish to worship. Of course, they repeat a certain name i.e. the name of God, and, in this way, they concentrate upon the Deity which is conveyed by the name and reach at last to the ultimate goal.

A devotee will worship certain ideals after hearing of them from his master, or worship those in whom they have faith, and, in this way, they form certain ideals of their own. For instance, you do not know anything about God or Spirit, and you come to a spiritual man and ask him: 'Are you a worshipper?' You would like to worship, but do not know whom or how to worship. Then the master tells you something, and perhaps you have faith in him, and in what he tells you, appeals to you. He tells you to go and to worship God. In this way, you go home and follow his instructions, and you get certain results, and gradually you rise above the ordinary plane, and begin to realize the Truth and the nature of God, and God will appear to you through that worship. You do not know anything about God, still you have directed your ideas and thoughts through the chosen ideal to God, and that chosen ideal will be the gate of the above of wisdom, the Spirit.

"And they, being devoted to what they have heard, transcend the realm of death and attain to immortality" says Sri Krishna. Because you have faith in what you have heard, and through that faith which is inborn in you, you choose the path, and that path will lead you to the goal. Those who have faith and are devotional in their nature and, at the same time, do not know anything about the soul or God, should also form a chosen ideal, which may be Christ, or Buddha, or anything.

They do not have to form the same ideal as their neighbours or their father or mother had, but they will reach the goal. Therefore you see that religion must be individual, and it cannot be a national religion, but when you come to the spiritual part of it to worship a chosen ideal, you will find the difference.

Christianity is a national religion, but that religion is confined by the name Christianity. So leave that name aside, and come down to individual ideas. You will find over two hundred sects, each one is different Then come to individuals, and you will find each individual has a different ideal of life.

We are talking about the spiritual part of religion i e relation between the soul and the Spirit, together with the worship of the Spirit When that side comes, we find that each individual must have a chosen ideal When you think of Christ, you will also think he lived somewhere and he had a form. Nobody knows the colour of his body, but each one imagines it. The size of his figure nobody knows exactly But if you travel in Europe, you will find so many artists, examples of pictures and statues, and they have given so many ideals. One may appeal to you, others may not To some the ideal of Christ may not appeal, they may think of something which is different Some other ideal like Buddha or Krishna may appeal to them They can hold this just as well, there is no harm, and they will attain to the highest goal.

This is one great advantage that you are not limited, but one is as good as another, and the reasons given, will appeal to you The individual soul has different ideals and tendencies, along with intellectual and mental development. The *Bhagavad Gita*, from which I am reading, was written several centuries before Christ was born, yet see how it fits to the needs of the twentieth century. Sri Krishna has said. "They, being devoted to what they have heard, transcend the realm of death, and attain to immortality". By that worship and devotion, they will reach the highest wisdom and knowledge, and will come to the goal This is the path through devotion and love The chosen ideal must be the Beloved Therefore love that chosen ideal with your whole heart and soul, and serve it at

every moment of your life, and everything will be accomplished. You will be devoted, and give your whole heart and soul to it, and worship it day and night in your dreams, and at every moment of your life do not forget it. Then the chosen ideal will reveal its nature to you, and you will attain to that knowledge which will make you immortal and perfect.

Sri Krishna further says. "Know thou that whatever being is born, whether animate or inanimate, is from the union of nature and soul."[11] Everything that is born in this universe, whether animate or inanimate and everything that is produced, is produced by the union of nature and soul. The intelligent entity is the source of consciousness. The soul is distinct from nature, and nature is that insentient something which produces the objects of perception or experience of the soul. So nothing can happen without or independent of this union Nature by itself does not produce anything if there is no union with the source of intelligence. And this idea is predominant in the Sankhya.

Ordinary people may imagine intelligence is nature, but that will not be right, because intelligent entity is the subject and nature is the object, and, therefore, one cannot be deduced from the other.. All agnostic sciences and atheistic sciences have been trying for many centuries to deduce nature from matter, but they have not succeeded, and will never succeed.

The Lord further says· "Who sees the Supreme Lord dwelling alike in all creatures, the immortal one in the midst

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[11] यावत् सञ्जायते किञ्चित् सत्त्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात् तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥१३।२७

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"अविद्यातत्कार्यात्मकं जड़मनिर्वचनीयं सदसत्त्वं दृश्यजातं क्षेत्रम् । तद्विलक्षणं तद्भासकं स्वप्रकाशपरमार्थसच्चैतन्यमसङ्गोदासीनं निर्धर्मकमद्वितीयं क्षेत्रज्ञम् । तयोः संयोगो मायावशादितरेतराविवेकनिमित्तो मिथ्यातादात्माध्यासः सत्यानृतमिथुनीकरणात्मकः । * * अतः स्वरूपाज्ञाननिबन्धनः संसारः स्वरूपज्ञानाद्विनंष्टुमर्हति स्वप्नादिवत् * * ।"

of the changeable, sees the Reality, sees rightly".[13] That Supreme Spirit which I have just described, dwells in all beings. It dwells in us and also dwells in all human beings It dwells in all animals, there is no exception. It dwells in all living creatures, there is no exception. From the minutest protoplasm up to the highest man there is no living creature, who is not inhabited by the Supreme Spirit—'ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम्'।

Therefore vegetables, minerals, and everything are pervaded by that immortal One Amidst the changeable forms and qualities of nature, He is the unchangeable and immortal Substance, and that is God, which is Divine And he who sees that unchangeable in the midst of changes, sees right. He is the seer of the Absolute Such a seer of Truth attains to the highest goal He never injures anybody, but he is above good and evil, and is perfect.

Sri Krishna says "For he who sees the Lord alike dwelling in all beings, does not kill the Self by the Self, and thus He reaches the supreme goal"[14] When he (the liberated soul) tries to injure another, he feels that the same God who is dwelling in him, is dwelling in the other, and so he cannot think of hurting or injuring another Therefore he reaches the supreme goal even in this life, and that knowledge comes to such a soul, and through that knowledge everything is attained. He becomes perfect, as the knower of the Brahman is the Brahman, pure and perfect.

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12 समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम्।
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥१३।२८
"परमेश्वरस्य सिद्धं निर्विशेषत्वमेकत्वञ्च।" —Sankara.

13 समं पश्यन् हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम्।
न हिनस्त्यात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥१३।२९

CHAPTER XLV

DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN KSHETRA AND KSHETRAJNA

According to Vedanta all the animate and inanimate objects of nature have come into existence through the union of nature and Spirit. By nature, mind, intellect and senses, sense-powers and all the physical conditions are included. By Spirit is to be understood the source of intelligence, consciousness, and existence. The source of peace, love, and happiness are also included in Spirit. This idea has been beautifully expressed in the twenty-seventh verse of the thirteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*:

"Know thou that whatever being is born, whether animate or inanimate, is from the union of nature and soul."[1] If nature alone could produce everything without the help of the Spirit or the course of intelligence, then nobody could cognize or perceive anything and there would not be any knower in this universe. The knower cannot be produced by nature or material forces. So we should remember those two things. If we analyse nature and its phenomena, we find that all the phenomena of nature can be reduced to one eternal energy which is insensate (*jada*); and then if we analyse the source of consciousness and existence and intelligence, we find that it is distinct from nature. It is the knower of nature. These two things are at the bottom or foundation of the phenomenal universe and all objects, whether embodied or disembodied. Nature furnishes us with body, sense-organs or sense-instruments with the power of sense-perceptions, and mental and intellectual powers and all these are included in nature.

This nature is called in Sanskrit *Prakriti*, the manifestation of one eternal energy, which is indestructible, beginningless, and eternal. There is eternal union between Spirit and nature,

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[1] Vide the *Gita*, XIII.27.

Here 'nature and soul' mean *Prakriti* and *Purusha*. The conception of Sankhya is this that when inert *Prakriti* comes in contact with intelligent *Purusha*, there begins the creation i.e. manifestation of the universe.

but what kind of union is this? Is this the union of two material objects? Is it putting of a rope or string around a chair or leg of a table? That would be a kind of contact. It is a kind of contact at the foundation of this union, or a kind of union. It is not like the contact of two gross material or physical objects, because the Spirit is formless and intelligent, and it is not like any material substance, so that kind of contact of two or more gross physical objects is not possible. It is neither the inseparable inherence which is related to any other as cause and effect Again the energy of nature is neither the cause of the Spirit, nor the cause of the absolute source of consciousness called the *Atman*. But what kind of creation is this? This is to be realized. It should be understood that there is no causal relation between nature and Spirit.

We have heard several times that both of Spirit and nature are eternal, yet there is no causal relation between the source of intelligence and the source of activity It consists in confusing the absolute power with the attributer of each other owing to the absence of discrimination. When two things are close together, if we try to separate or discriminate the one from another when we cannot find the difference, then we mistake one for the other. We identify the source of intelligence with the source of activity. At present we have identified ourselves with the gross physical form and the attributes connected with the body.

As I have said many times that when the body is weak we feel weak, when the body is strong we feel strong, when it is stout we feel stout, so we identify ourselves with the body. We think the soul is inseparable from the body, and when we think of ourselves as the soul, we cannot think of it without thinking of the gross physical form of the body. This identification is the result of lack of discrimination. When we have learned to discriminate the soul or the source of intelligence from nature, the subject from the object, the source of intelligence from the object, that is recognised by this discrimination, and then this cause of the union is removed. But the will-power, the power for doing any work, and the power for sense perceptions—all these powers are the powers of nature. They are in nature. They are not the powers of the

soul, but are the powers of the ego. But when we think of the Soul, the *Atman,* we go a little deeper than the individual ego, who is actor, thinker, doer, or mover. The individual ego is the result of the union between nature and the source of intelligence. So, in order to get at the source of intelligence, we must go beyond this individual ego, and then we should analyse the nature of our ego and discover the difference that exists between the absolute Spirit and eternal energy.

The individual ego is the point where the two are joined or united. So likewise the absolute Spirit and eternal energy, in the cosmic sense, when united, become the personal God. The personal God is active, and activity is in nature, and will-power, mind, and intellect—all are in the cosmic sense. But if we know that this will-power, mind, and intellect, whether individual or cosmic, are in nature, then we should know that personal God who is worshipped under different names and fulfils our desires and is the governor and ruler of the phenomenal world, is the cosmic ego The same relation the personal God bears to the universe, or the world of phenomena. The individual ego bears to the gross physical form which it covers

The individual ego does not produce the body without being subject to the laws of nature, while the personal God produces the universe, and directs the laws which govern the phenomenal universe. The one is dependent, the other is independent, the one limited, the other is unlimited in power.

The Vedanta philosophy leads us beyond the idea of personal God. It does not stop when other religions and philosophies stop. It leads us beyond the cosmic ego, and carries us beyond nature in its primordial state, and makes us realize the absolute source of intelligence, power, and love. It carries us to a state beyond which no human mind, not even the cosmic mind, can go, because the mind is dissolved at the very approach towards the infinite. So Sri Krishna has rightly said; "Who sees the Supreme Lord dwelling alike in all creatures, the immortal one dwelling in the midst of the changeable, sees rightly indeed".[2]

Now you will have to realize a really deep subject, that

[2] Vide the *Gita,* XIII.28.

this Absolute which I have just described as beyond personal God, is all-pervading It is dwelling in the individual ego, and it forms the background of the whole phenomenal universe as well as the individual ego and the cosmic ego That is our divine nature, or the immortal part The ego may be subject to changes, but the foundation upon which the ego is established, is unchangeable and immortal It is the Reality of the universe. It dwells everywhere—in atoms, in space, in all living creatures, in vegetables, in minerals, everywhere It is indivisible, indestructible, immortal, and unchangeable, but wherever there is manifestation of nature, there is change and evolution; wherever there the expression of energy, there is change and evolution When you notice anything in the universe subject to change, you must know it is the result of nature or eternal energy If you find anything unchangeable or immortal, you must know it is beyond the reach of energy

What is the relation between this energy and the Absolute? They are connected in some way just as light is connected with fire. So this energy is inseparable from the Absolute When we realize the universe, we must try to look at them (that is, energy and the Absolute) in order to understand their attributes or functions. In truth, they are inseparable Intellectually we can also separate them, and spiritually we can realize the separation.

The man of realization sees the Supreme Lord dwelling alike in all creatures. He sees the absolute Lord as the master of nature dwelling alike in all creatures. The Infinite cannot be many, it is one, and if it be not one, it will not be infinite. It is the immortal one in the midst of the unchangeable. He who sees like this, sees this rightly And whosoever has realized that immortal one, has also realized it as his divine and immortal part. Realization means that you should feel 'I am the unchangeable immortal one, the Absolute'. When you feel yourself one with the Absolute and not one with the body, then the body would remain far behind, and you would be in such a high place that this material body would vanish.[3] At the

[3] That is, when a man corrects his error of delusion or *maya*, he realizes both within himself (individually) and in everything of the universe (collectively) the Divine manifestation of the all-consciousness *Atman* (*Chaitanya*), and though his material body, which is the product of

same time you will feel that you are interpenetrating every part of the universe, and you are so great and big that every particle of the Infinite is in you. Higher mathematics will teach you that the infinite, when divided, every particle of it is infinite—पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ; otherwise it would be finite. "For he who sees the Lord dwelling alike in all, does not kill the Self by the Self",[4] and thus he reaches the supreme soul. He cannot kill, nor injure anyone, because he realizes the Self as well as the true nature of that person as the Absolute, he feels one with him, or one with his true nature, therefore, he cannot injure any one, do not hurt any one, but realizing the oneness he loves all living creatures equally, and thus attains to the supreme goal.[5] The supreme goal is the realization of the universal love and knowledge of the Infinite. You may realize the Infinite as infinite love or infinite wisdom, as they are both one and the same. Infinite wisdom and infinite love are one. Infinite existence, infinite love, and infinite wisdom—these three are also one. Whoever has realized the one, has realized the other two, and that is the nature of the Infinite. Either call it infinite wisdom, or love, or existence, they are one and the same ; and these three are the attributes or expressions of the Absolute, according to Vedanta.

Sat-chit-ananda means existence, pure intelligence, and peace. These three are one and the same. In the *Upanishad*, you will read some passages which teach that the whole phenomenal universe has come out of infinite existence. In another passage of the *Upanishad*, you will read that the whole universe has come out of the infinite ocean of love, and, in another passage, you will find that it has come out of the infinite ocean of wisdom. Practically these expressions are one and the same,

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nescience (*ajnana*) exists after realization, yet he is never deluded and attached to the material body. Because attachment to body and everything is delusion and non-attachment is freedom, which is the state of emancipation.

[4] Vide the *Gita*, XIII.2.9.

[5] When Scriptures say that after God-realization (*brahmanubhuti*), if a man kills a Brahmin, sin will not touch him. This is an eulogy or praise (*arthavada*), and that means a God-realized man neither kills a *Brahmin*, nor any animal, beacuse he sees the manifestation of Divinity in all animate and inanimate objects, and he feels oneness with all.

'and the same Absolute dwells in everything. It is not far from us, but dwells in each one of us, whether we are conscious of it or not, whether we feel it or not, whether we realize it or not, it is there. But he who is conscious of it, has reached the goal, and has attained the Absolute. His love is unbounded, his wisdom is unbounded, and his existence is universal. All the limitations of the ordinary mortals, what we call human limitations, will vanish away, then the divine light of the supreme knowledge will dawn Knowledge which is dependent upon sense-perceptions, is not the highest knowledge, but it is only the imperfect expression of the higher knowledge through the limitations of sense-powers and sense-instruments. It is the reflection of the higher and purer knowledge above and beyond the reach of our mind When it comes through the mental and sense-planes, then we see and know it, but that is a very poor way of knowing. At present we think that it is the best and highest method, because we have not got any higher method, but when this can be transcended, the higher knowledge comes to one who has attained to God-consciousness in the superconscious state (*samadhi*). That person with Godconsciousness goes beyond all limitations.

No human being can help us most by giving that knowledge of the sense-plane A human being, whether embodied or disembodied, angels or higher spirits, can only give suggestive directions, but they cannot give that highest knowledge. That highest and true knowledge must reveal itself in the soul of one who has extreme longing (*mumuksha*) for such higher knowledge. And thus he reaches the supreme goal, beyond which we cannot go, beyond which we cannot think of anything as existent.

The commentator Sankara here raises an objection. which is very proper. I will read the translation of it. The objection is thus: No living creature whatsoever destroys itself by itself. Read the objection and the answer.[6]

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[6] "ननु नैव कश्चित् प्राणी स्वयं स्वमात्मानं हिनस्ति, (=पूर्वपक्षः), कथमूच्यते अप्राप्तं नैव हिनस्ति। यथा 'न पृथिव्यामग्निश्चेतव्यो नान्तरिक्षे' इत्यादि। . (उत्तरा पक्षः=) नैष दोषः, अज्ञानामात्मरतिरस्करणोपपत्तेः। सर्वो ह्यज्ञः अत्यन्तप्रसिद्धं साक्षादपरोक्षादात्मानं तिरस्कृत्य, अनात्मानमात्मत्वेन परिगृह्य तमपि धर्माधर्मौ कृत्वा उपात्त-

To repeat the commentary, an ignorant man injures the self which is quite manifest to all, and regards the physical body as himself, and that is the killing or destroying the self. By ignoring the soul's existence a man kills himself. Having performed good and evil works he kills even the self, the physical body, which he had acquired. As long as we have identified ourselves with the gross physical form, we are performing good and evil acts and injuring the existence of the higher self, the source of intelligence, which is our true immortal nature. We are thinking constantly that we are one with the body. After performing good and evil deeds, when we die, we kill ourselves, that is, we kill our bodies and then again we take another bodies, and go through the same process and destroy these bodies consciously or unconsciously.

So, an ignorant man destroys himself as a gross physical man, several times in his incarnations, but a wise man never destroys himself, and that is the reason why he says he never kills himself by himself. "He kills this again and accepts another etc., and thus he goes on, and kills every body which he has accepted". Even the higher Self is always killed by ignorance, asmuchas there is no perceptible effect of his existence. The real Self is the master of the body, and is separate from or independent of the body; and if we cannot hold ourselves as independent of the body, we have killed it by our ignor-

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मात्मनं इत्वा अन्यमात्मानमुपादत्ते नबं तञ्चैव हत्वा अन्यमेवं तमापि हत्व अन्यमित्येवं उपात्तमुपात्तमात्मानं हन्ति इति आत्महा सर्वोऽज्ञः। —*Sankara-bhashyam.*

English Translation: "(*Objection*) No living being whatever destroys itself by itself. Where then is the necessity for the denial—'He destroys not the self by the self', any more than for the prohibition—'fire should be consecrated not on earth, not in the sky, not in heaven' (*Taittiriya—Samhita* 5.2.7).

(*Answer*). "This objection does not apply here; for, the necessity may be explained on the ground that ignorant men are guilty of ignoring the Self. An ignorant man ignores the Self who is quite manifest to all, self-manifested, and directly visible, and he regards the not-self (physical body etc.) as himself. Having performed good and evil (*dharma* and *adharma*), he kills even this self (the physical body etc.) which he had accepted and accepts another new self; he kills this again and accepts another, and so on; thus he goes on killing every new self that he has accepted. * *."

ance, and we have ignored its existence, and have not been able to produce those results which we ought to produce as a part of the absolute Spirit.

If we are truly divine, we must manifest our divine nature, but we do not do it at present, and, therefore, it is killed, and is dead to us for the time being, and that death never comes to the wise man who has known himself as the source of intelligence, existence, and peace. Therefore, the wise man never kills himself by himself. So you see to what depths this philosophy takes you, yet at the same time, at every step it is a religion.

Then Sri Krishna says. "He sees rightly who sees all actions performed by nature alone, as the *Atman* is beyond all activities. The *Atman* is beyond all attributes and activities, and all actions are performed by nature".[7] When you perceive any sense-objects, these sense-powers are the activities of nature as well as of objects perceived All these objects are produced by material forces and combinations of matter. Any mind substance is only a combination of matter in a higher state of vibration, but all these vibrations, higher or lower, are immortal and unchangeable part of the true nature of the soul, the *Atman*. We must know that one thing that no other knowledge would be considered as higher and greater. By loving that we would love God, and also would love all living creatures, because all living creatures are only

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[7] प्रकृतैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥१३।३०

Sankara said:

"प्रकृत्या—प्रकृतिर्भगवतो माया त्रिगुणात्मिका, 'मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यात्' इति मन्त्रवर्णात् * * तथा आत्मानं क्षेत्रज्ञमकर्तारं सर्वोपाधिविवर्जितं 'पश्यति स' परमार्थदर्शीत्यभिप्रायः ।"

Now from the *mantravarna*: मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यात् मायिनन्तु महेश्वरः । it appears that Mahesavara (महान्+ईश्वर), the absolute Self, is attributed with *Prakriti*, the embodiment of three qualities, but, in truth, the absolute Self or the pure Brahman transcends all qualities and adjuncts, and Prajna-Isvara or Hiranyagarbha-Isvara might be known as associated with primordial *Prakriti*.

the manifestation of so many instruments through which that Universal Being is playing His part. When a person realizes the whole variety of beings resting in the one substance, and this evolution as expressions of that alone, then he attains to the Absolute.

He will attain to the Absolute when he would see that all varieties of beings are resting in One and their evolution and expansion are from that One alone, then he has attained to the Absolute. Really the secondless Brahman itself assumes manifold forms with manifold names. Forms and names are mere appearances, but the ground or essence is one without the second. Have you found the manifold as one? If you have, you have attained to perfection. You would realize how the whole phenomenal universe with its primordial state before the beginning of evolution came. How and when the whole universe is involved and the dissolution of the universe has taken place. How it rests in the Supreme Absolute, and how it comes out and produces this variety of beings. If you have seen it and known it, you have attained to the Absolute. So Sri Krishna says: "When a man realizes the whole variety of beings as resting on the One, and their evolution is from that One alone, then he becomes the Brahman".[8] The real contention of this verse is this that when a man intuitively realizes that all that we have and perceive, is only the Self, and when he further sees that the origin or evolution (of all) is from that one Brahman, he realizes the Brahman. But the question is how to realize the Brahman. The Lord says that through meditation and by rising into that state of superconsciousness, you will realize the Brahman as well as the whole process of evolution. The Yogis try to attain to that state. This method is known only to a few, because it is not a

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[8] यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।
तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म सम्पद्यते तदा ॥१३।३१

The *Chhandogya-Upanishad says*: "आत्मा एव इदं सर्वम्' (7.25.2); आत्मनः प्राणः, आत्मनः आशा" (7.26.1)

Not only this truth is revealed from the sayings of the *Upanishads*, but also when a man gets into the Divine mystery of the Soul, he discovers the universal truth that all beings and things of this universe have their ground on the Brahman, and all have come out from that one source.

spiritualistic state of mediumship or trance-like condition, where the individual soul becomes the slave of another spirit, or comes under the control of earth-bound spirits. That is a state of ignorance which is not desirable. It is a negative state, and it is not helpful to the spiritual growth of the individual Therefore, in India, the Hindus strongly object to mediumship. They do not allow any one to become a medium. If any one goes into that state, they try to get that person out of that control, but this practice of Yoga will never make one spiritualistic.

It is not a state of hypnotism, because the higher Self will manifest its powers, and that is a great difference. People who do not understand this country, make all kinds of statements Do not be deluded, but study and practise by yourself, avoid that mediumistic condition, hold yourself positive always, do not be influenced by any individual whether living or departed, and go on straight by manifesting your own powers through consciousness and intelligence Exercise self-control, and you will become a Yogi and will attain to that state of the Absolute which is beyond the reach of the departed spirits

The departed spirits are earth-bound. If you die in ignorance, you will remain in ignorance after the dissolution of the body. If you think that after the dissolution of the material body, you will attain the perfection, you will commit mistake, because if you have not attained to perfection in this life, you cannot attain to perfection after the death of the body immediately. You should remember that unless you go to the higher regions when by good works and moral living you have reached such a state where you rise above all earth-bound conditions, so long you will not be liberated. Therefore when you have risen above them, you will have the chance of going farther and farther, but the beginning must be higher in this life. So at the time of meditation when you feel that you are going into a mediumistic condition, or going into a stupor, then wake up and stand up and get out from meditation, and begin again with positive force. So you should always avoid such a possibility, and by constant practice you will unfold yourself and the door will be opened to you, and you will never go into that mediumistic condition. You will be stronger and stronger every day, and you will gain spiritual strength which will come through the Absolute.

Vedanta says that from that absolute source of intelligence and existence everything has evolved. It is the Life of life, therefore, life has come out from it. All desires have proceeded from that one source, and all love and happiness have come from that one source. All the material forces, mental powers, and material things, gaseous, liquid, solid, and everything that we perceive with our senses, have come from that universal common source which is one. If you have realized that and when you have realized also that One in the midst of many, then you have understood the whole secret of the universe and have solved the problem of life and death.

You would also know that after psychic evolution, when the whole universe is dissolved into its primordial causal state, how it remains and comes out, through what steps it comes out before the subtle forces and how the particles of matter come into existence! All these steps you will be able to know gradually. This idea has been beautifully expressed in the *Upanishads* by various illustrations, such as 'One in many', 'Unity in variety' etc. As one force coming into this world appears in various shapes and forms, so the one absolute existence, or the one absolute Being, manifests itself in various forms through various names in this phenomenal universe. So we must know that one source.

The Supreme *Atman* is unchangeable and immutable. Sometimes it is called Self. It is the background of the individual ego, so when that word is used, it means the Absolute dwelling in the individual body. Sri Krishna says: "O Kaunteya, the Supreme Self is beginningless and is free from all qualities, and though dwelling in the body, yet it neither acts, nor is affected by the fruits of works".[9] The Self is, therefore, beginningless. Everything that has a beginning, must have an

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[9] अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात् परमात्माऽयमव्ययः ।
शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥१३।३२

Sankara said: "अविद्यामात्रं स्वभावो हि करोति लिप्यते इति व्यवहारो भवति, न तु परमार्थत एकस्मिन् परमात्मनि तदस्ति ।"

Anandagiri said "सर्वगतत्वेन च देहादौ स्थितोऽपि स्वतो देहाद्यात्मना वा न करोति कूटस्थत्वद्देहादेश्च कल्पितत्वादित्यर्थः ।

end. This body had a beginning, therefore, it must die, so if the Absolute had a beginning, it would have had an end, and, therefore, it could not be immortal. But the Absolute is beginningless and eternal. It is not the whole composed of parts, nor it has any internal or external division in it, but it is one without the second—*ekamevadvitiyam.*[10] The Absolute transcends all changes, all qualities, and all adjuncts, and if it had in it ordinary qualities, when the qualities were changed, then it would have also changed, but it is the changelessness and the unmoved. Though dwelling in the body, it makes everything active, but it itself neither acts, nor it is affected by anything else. But it is a fact that the activity of nature cannot take place without the presence of the Absolute, it is so important. The very presence of the Absolute makes nature evolve, makes the mind work, and the sense-powers do their functions etc.

But the individual ego (*jivatma*) is affected by the fruits of actions, because he is the doer. That which thinks of itself as the doer or performer of acts, reaps the results, but the divine or immortal part, the *Atman*, is not affected by any fruit. He who performs the work, must be the reaper of the fruits of the works 'What thou sowest thou must reap'. So as long as we are performers or doers of actions, so long we must reap the results, but when we will reach the level of the Absolute, we should not think that we are the performers or doers of acts, but we should know that this body and mind are nothing but the instruments through which the divine will is working. Therefore we must think that as Divinity is the source and cause of everything, so the Divinity is the doer, and the results will go to Him, and then we will become free from enjoying the good and the evil. So Sri Krishna has said "As the all-pervading ether, on account of its subtlety, is not

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[10] Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"अतएव परमार्थदर्शिनां सर्वकर्माधिकारनिवृत्तिरिति प्राग्वगाख्यातम्। एतेनात्मनो निर्धर्मकत्वकथनात् स्वगतभेदोऽपि निरस्तः। प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणीत्यत्र सजातीयभेदो निवारितः, यदा भूतपृथग्भावमित्यत्र विजातीयभेदः, अनादित्वानिर्गुणत्वादित्यत्र स्वगतो भेद इत्यद्वितीयं ब्रह्मैवात्मेति सिद्धम्॥"

related to, nor affected by, the material objects, so the *Atman* although located in evedybody, is not affected by the activities or the results of the physical form or mind or senses".[11] Space is not affected by anything. The chair exists in space. Again extension means space, and if we break it into pieces, do you think we have broken the space? No, the space is unaffected whether we break the chair or keep it intact, still the chair cannot exist as independent of space. We know that by breaking the chair we do not break the space, so, although the body exists in and through that Absolute, yet by breaking or destroying the body, we do not destroy the Absolute. In fact, space exists in the Absolute. The Absolute is like the space of the gross physical space, but when the external space is destroyed, then the spiritual space is unaffected because it is subtler than the external space.

There are three kinds of space: one is external space, perceived by our senses and is called external, the other is mental space, and another is spiritual space. The spiritual space is the foundation of mental space, and that is the foundation of external space. Sri Krishna says: "As the one sun illumines all this world, O Bharata, so He who dwells in the body, illumines the whole phenomena of nature".[12] As the one sun enlightens everything of this world, as all heat, light

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11 यदा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।
सर्वत्राबस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥१३।३३

12 यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रबिः ।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥१३।३४

Sankara said in the commentary on this verse that the *Kshetrin* or Paramatman illumines all bodies and whole material being (*Kshetra*). *Kshetrin* illumines all things from *avyakta* (the unmanifested material cause of the universe) down to the unmoving objects, from Great Elements down to firmness. The *Katha-Upanishad* (2.5.11) also says,

सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षु
र्न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः ।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा
न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः ॥

etc. come from that one sun, so all intelligence, illumination, and knowledge etc. come from that one source.

You are conscious of your body, of your surroundings, of the sun, of external objects, and of everything and that which makes you conscious of everything, is the illuminator, and that by which you are conscious, is the illumination, and if you understand the source of intelligence in you, then it will make you know that each one has the source of that intelligence. Can you differentiate the source of intelligence in you from the source of illumination in me or in any other individual? Is there any difference in these? No, there is no difference, it is the same illuminator, and it makes every individual conscious of himself. In that way, you will be able to understand what this illuminator is.

The sun may enlighten external objects, but what enlightens the sun? The source of consciousness is in you, otherwise the sun would not exist in relation to you. Therefore, as the one sun illumines all this world, so He who dwells in the body, illumines the whole phenomena of nature. You may say you do not feel the existence of that illumination or consciousness, but that would not be the fault of that *Atman*, or the Absolute. If your mind is not capable of seeing, the mind is to be found fault with, but not the Absolute. The sun rises, but if you have defects in our eyes, you do not see the rising sun, but still it illumines the world just the same As the defective sight does not affect the rising sun, so the defects of the mind and intellect of ordinary mortals do not affect the Absolute. Your mind may be covered with a veil of sorrow and suffering, and your body may be diseased, but that will not affect the Absolute The body may go to pieces. still the Absolute is there. The mind may stop all its functions, still the Absolute is there. The intellect may cease to exist. still the Absolute may remain just the same.

The Absolute is the one immortal source of happiness. Whosoever has known it, he has attained to absolute bliss, and is never sinful. To him who has seen that absolute One, how can there be any sorrow or any room for sorrow, suffering, disease, birth, or death? He is above that. So Sri Krishna says: "They who with the eye of wisdom realize the distinction between nature (*Kshetra*) and the Spirit, or (*Kshetrajna*)

and also the method of attaining to the emancipation from nature, reach the Supreme".[13] We must learn to discriminate nature from the Spirit—appearance from the Brahman. We must learn this method by which we can be free from the bondage of nature. We should not identify ourselves with the qualities of nature, and should learn the method of discrimination.

Some through meditation behold the Spirit as the Knower, others by Jnana Yoga, others by means of Karma Yoga, and others again who cannot realize the Self by any of these processes, worship the spirit after hearing about it from the spiritual teachers. Even they by being devoted to what they heard, have transcended the realm of death and have attained to immortality.

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[13] क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।
भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षञ्च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥१३।३५

The word 'ज्ञानचक्षुषा' means, said Madhusudana Sarasvati, "शास्त्राचार्योपदेशजनितात्मज्ञानरूपेण चक्षुषा * * ।" That is, 'the knowledge of the *Atman* which has been acquired from the teachings of the *Shastras* and *Acharyas*'. Vidyaranya Muni also said that *Drik* (Brahman) and *Drishya* (world) are quite different.

CHAPTER XLVI

THREE QUALITIES ARE BONDAGE

In the thirteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, we have learned the difference between nature and the individual soul and the difference between nature and Spirit, and we have also seen that the province of nature or what is called *Prakriti*, the objective part of the universe, is very extensive. It includes all the objects of senses, the sense-organs, the sense-powers, the mental and intellectual conditions—all these are included in the *Prakriti* or nature, and beyond that *Prakriti* is the Spirit, *Purusha* or *Atman*, which is the divine spark within us, and all the pleasure and pain, suffering and sorrow, and unpleasantness is included in nature But the soul, the true Self or *Atman* seems to experience all these conditions and also to identify itself with these conditions and acts, and is limited by them, but, in reality, these conditions are only in the mind, and the mind is not the same as the Spirit, but mind is under the direction of the Spirit.

In the Western psychology and philosophy, mind and spirit or soul are terms which have created a great confusion, but now the psychologists and the philosophers of the West are trying to differentiate the mind from the soul and the soul from the Spirit etc. But these differentiations have been done in India long before the Christian era, or it can be said from the time four or five thousand years before Christ, and always this has been kept up.

In the fourteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, we will learn the condition and states which *Prakriti* produces in the course of its evolution and the process as to how these conditions bind the soul according to the effects of different conditions. The first verse begins with the words of Sri Krishna, the spiritual teacher of Arjuna Sri Krishna says: "Now I shall declare the science of all sciences. or the knowledge supreme, knowing which all sages have reached highest per-

fection both here and hereafter".[1] Then the science of all sciences or the knowledge supreme has been explained by Sri Krishna.

The Lord has said that He will now declare the science of all sciences, or the knowledge supreme, knowing which all sages reached the highest perfection both here and hereafter. We have that whichever exists in the universe, is produced by the union of spirit and matter. Nature includes all the natural forces, and this spirit is the knower, or that conscious entity within us which enjoys and experiences all the phenomenal objects of nature. But how is it that the individual soul becomes identified with matter? Sankara has already clarified this matter in his 'commentary on error' i.e. *adhyasa-bhasya* We are aware that at present we cannot separate ourselves from material conditions. We are one with the body and material conditions and we say, 'I am strong or thin, weak or stout, deaf, dumb etc.' All these are in the body, but still we identify these conditions with our ownselves and are living as inseparable from matter. Why is it so? If we are, in reality, all spirit, why should we not live as spirit? To this it can be said that it happens for our false knowledge.

Discrimination between spirit and matter is considered to be the highest. All religions, philosophies, and sciences try to explain the difference between the source of consciousness

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1 श्रीभगवानुवाच—

परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।

यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥१४।१

(a) This fourteenth chapter has dealt on *gunatraya-vibhaga-yoga* i.e. the Yoga or trick or scientific method which differentiates the Soul or *Atman* from the three *gunas, sattva, rajas,* and *tamas,* which are, in reality, the categories of nescience or *avidya,* and also teaches the process of going beyond the *gunas* so as to get into the abode of eternal peace and freedom (*mukti*).

(b) Regarding 'ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम्', Sankara said that all kinds of knowledge do not refer to those which have been spoken of as knowledge in the verses XIII. 7-10, but to those kinds of knowledge which relate to sacrifices and other such things to be known. These later kinds of knowledge (of sacrifices) do not lead to salvation, whereas knowledge which is highest i.e. knowledge of the *Atman* lead to freedom from the bondage of the body or ignorance or *ajnana.*

and the object of consciousness. And 'he who knows and realizes this science of sciences, or the knowledge supreme, reaches the highest plane of perfection', says Sri Krishna, because it is only the divine wisdom that can differentiate. Human wisdom cannot discriminate, because man's ordinary power of discrimination is the result of mixture of the right and the wrong.

Everything beyond this which separates these two entities, is divine, and that cannot be superinduced by any other wisdom, therefore, it is called the highest— 'ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम्'। Then Sri Krishna further says "With the help of this science or knowledge, they, having attained unity i e identity with the Supreme, never come down in evolution any more, nor are disturbed in involution".[2] Evolution and involution do not touch those who have attained to that supreme wisdom Those who have learned to separate spirit from nature or matter, are no longer subject to the cycle of evolution and involution. How is it possible to get out of evolution which is so universal and to which we are bound hand and foot? Yes, it is possible to get out of evolution. Vedanta teaches that we are at present in evolution and at the same time it shows the way out of it, which modern science cannot do. But Vedanta accepts everything which modern science teaches and further goes beyond science by showing the way out of it. Of course, modern science, in fifty years or in a century, will know this.[3] The ancient seers have anticipated all these truths and sciences. In the superconscious state they saw these, and they explained

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[2] इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः।
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥१४।२

Sankara said "मम परमेश्वरस्य 'साधर्म्य' मत्स्वरूपतामागताः प्राप्ता इत्यर्थः। न तु समानधर्मतां साधर्म्यं, क्षेत्रज्ञेश्वरयोर्भेदानभ्युपगमाद् गीताशास्त्रे।"

This is, 'having attained to unity with Me' means 'attained identity with *Isvara*'. Identity does not mean 'equality in attributes since in the *Gita*, no distinction is made between *Isvara* and the *Kshetrajna*.

[3] Some of the modern celebrated scientists and philosophers like Max Plank, Sir James Jeans C E M Joad, Prof Hysenburg, Errol E Harris and others are of the opinions that time is coming when there will be perfect harmony between the ultimate conclusion of science and that of philosophy.

through logical, philosophical and scientific terms that all are subject to evolution. We are in the realm of evolution and of nature, but those who have gone beyond nature through the path of that wisdom and discrimination which makes us realize the true nature or the real Self and also the difference between the real self and the nature or matter, neither come down in evolution, nor are disturbed in involution.

Involution is dissolution, when the world goes back to its primordial condition. After a cycle this earth and sun will go to pieces and the whole world which we perceive with our senses, will remain inperceptible in a state of nebulous mass. At that time the state will be called a state of involution, or dissolution. And when the new cycle of evolution begins, the souls will not come down, but will remain above it, and others will have to come down and be born again, unless we have attained to that state of knowledge, or realization. Here He describes the beginning of evolution.

Sri Krishna says: "O Bharata, *Prakriti* is the creative energy, the eternal energy, the mother of all forces and all material energy, the universal energy, which is insentient, but which contains the potentiality of all forces and powers that can be manifested in the universe, or will be manifested in future".[4] This is the mother of the universe and has produced the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, and all the vegetable, animal, animate, and inanimate objects from the minutest to the largest which evolves. That energy (*Mahat*) evolves and produces everything. Sri Krishna, mentions the germs of life, particles of matter, sense organs and gross physical bodies etc. They have come step by step through the process of evolution. Even mind itself is insensate, it is not intelligence, but is

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[4] मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन् गर्भं ददाम्यहम् ।
सम्भवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥१४।३

Prakriti being the cause or source of all beings and object. is known as *Mahat*. Sankara said: "सर्वभूतानां सर्वकार्येभ्यः महत्त्वात् भरणाच्च सविविकाराणां महद्ब्रह्मेति योनिरेव विशिष्यते ।"

Anandagiri said in the glossary that this *Mahat* is neither the divine power or energy of *Isvara*, nor *Prakriti* of the Sankhya philosophy.

"ईश्वरीं चिच्छक्तिं व्यावर्त्तयति * * । सांख्यीयप्रकृतिरपि मदीयेति व्यावर्त्तिता ।"

separate from what we know as mind. In Vedanta, there is no such idea as special creation, such as we read of in other scriptures, that a creation was special made, and God sent out some words, and everything was created out of nothing, but it describes in this verse the beginning of evolution. Some of the materialists think that this eternal energy evolved by itself, but there is another theory which some of the modern evolutionists, especially some of the American evolutionists, have accepted, the chief of which is John Fiske. The idea that special influx came into it, has been accepted by some. (Reference to Haeckel and others). Fiske explains this very beautifully in the book called *Through Nature to God.* Here he comes into touch with the Vedantic idea of evolution.

We will translate this third verse literally: *"Prakriti,* or great nature, is My womb, in that I place the seed of cosmic ego, then begins the evolution of the cosmos and all animate and inanimate objects of the universe". Here 'My' and 'I' are used in the sense of the Supreme Spirit, and it has been explained before.

Sri Krishna was the Incarnation of the Divinity and whenever He gave any teaching or explained any truth he used the words 'I', 'Me', 'Mine', in the sense of the Supreme Being. He says that *Prakriti,* great nature, is his womb, as it were, in that he places the seed of the cosmic ego; then begins the evolution of the cosmos and all animate and inanimate objects of the universe. In fact, eternal energy is his womb where he places the seed of the cosmic ego, and impregnated by his spiritual influx, *Prakriti* or nature evolves, and produces all beings. Here Sri Krishna discloses the fact that God or Brahman is the cause and source of everything of the universe, and without God or Brahman the evolution of the cosmos is meaningless. Think of this idea which was evolved thousands of years ago by a Seer of Truth, and which has been proved in the nineteenth century by John Fiske from a scientific standpoint. Those who have not read my lecture on *Cosmic Evolution and Its Purpose,* ought to read it; I have quoted there the similarities between the Eastern thought and the Western thought.

Prakriti does not evolve by itself, until it receives the spiritual influx; so being impregnated by the Supreme

Spirit, *Prakriti* evolves. I have explained before that this idea you will find in the Sankhya of Kapila. You cannot capture or even think of the Supreme Spirit except through your own consciousness. If you start from the objective world, you will never come to it i.e. you can never come to the real knower of the objects. You have been deluded all the time, and that has been the condition of the materialists of today. Their minds are so absorbed in studying the material objects that they forget who is the real knower of the objects, and that is the trouble with most of the materialists. They study one half of the universe and ignore the existence of the other half.

Who will know the existence of atoms and molecules? You cannot see atoms, but you admit the existence of the atom only through the process of inductive logic. You start from seeing the effects and go on through the processes of the mind. No scientist has ever seen an atom, it exists in the mind of the scientist. You can say about an atom, because all the scientists have been studying the objective side and analysing, and subdividing each particle until they come to a point where they cannot divide any more, and that is an atom. Another comes and begins to divide that into hundreds of parts, and he finds it is a divisible something, and that is produced by a number of corpuscles or electrons, and another comes to divide these, until they come to that one universal something where there is no divisibility, but only the mass of infinite substance will remain. If you say you would be studying one half of the universe, you deny the other half, but the best of studying the universe would be to study both sides, the objective and the subjective, until you come to a certain point and then you turn to the subjective side and begin to study your spirit which cannot be objectified, and there you will realize how nature stands in relation to you, and then you will know that you have never studied the object independent of you. When I study this light, I do not study light as it is, but I study the relation of that light to my eyes, so you will do the same. If you have no eyes, you will not be able to study that light. If you have no sense-powers, you will not be able to study anything, and if your sense-powers be defective, your study will be defective, and if you study by instruments, then these will prove defective after some time. In this way, you are trying

to study nature as perfectly as possible, but at the same time you must admit that this is very imperfect, and you try to make that perfect by induction, or by hypothesis, or by theory. Now all theories and hypothesis are built upon certain facts, and these are in the minds of those who produce different theories and hypothesis. If you are a scientist, you will know that it is so.

The Supreme Spirit has said that He is the Lord possessed of two potencies: one is nature, and the other is the soul,—*Prakriti* and *Purusha* or *Atman*,[5] and He unites the soul with nescience, desire, and activity and other limitations of nature. The Lord of the universe is one in which individual souls and nature unite. That is a very peculiar thought God is not a creator of the individual souls, neither is He a creator of nature, but these are His expressions Nature and individual souls also exist in Him from eternity to eternity, and they manifest under different conditions through the process of evolution. It has already been said that one of the two things is nature, and the other is the spirit, and whatever the individual soul possesses, has come from the composite body of nature, and from the spirit You have not received anything from your father or mother or from the outside world or from your body but, directly, or indirectly, from nature. Parents or food may be instruments, but go to the direct fountain-head where do all these things come from Your consciousness comes from the spirit. You can say nature has produced consciousness, you have not proved it. Put two material things together and see if they can produce anything, they cannot do it and that is the difference, so you see that is the beginning of evolution.

When the spiritual influx goes into that eternal energy which is unchangeable and indestructible, is the source of nature and forces, then begins that energy, and then we know,

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[5] The idea of the *Atman* of Vedanta is something different from that of the *Purusha* of Sankhya The *Atman* of the *Upanishad* or Vedanta is one without the second, and is the Divine consciousness which forms the base of all consciousness or knowledge Now though the *Purusha* of the Sankhya is all-intelligence and all-consciousness and is free from all bondages, yet he is manifold—*'tahu purushatvat'* Kapila said that there are many *Prakritihin Purushas* i e the liberated great souls in the domain of nature or *Prakriti.*

it gradually produces atoms, molecules etc. Evolution goes on simultaneously on the subjective and the objective plane, both come together through the cosmic ego. Cosmic self-consciousness comes through cosmic sense-powers and so objectively through ether and gas, light, heat, liquid and solid etc. They come at the same time from the common source but there is difference in elements and vibration. The same vibration will produce light under one condition, under different conditions will produce motion and heat. If it is transformed it will produce one state and with a difference will produce another state. Sound may be of high tone or low tone Colour can be violet or red, high or low. If it be still higher we shall not see the colour, if it be still lower we will not see any colour. That portion of the vibration which is perceptible to our sense organs, is one, and that beyond, is another, and that below it is another.

If we say a perceptible colour is A, that which is below it on account of lower perception will be B, that which is still lower will be C. We can call them A or B or C, or by some other names. Call it *sattva, rajas, tamas.* One would be high or superconscious, the other is the conscious plane, the other below consciousness, or on the unconscious plane. Every part you can divide into these three and we shall gradually come to these three divisions. Sri Krishna says: *"Prakriti* is the universal womb of the mother of all forms born of wombs whatsoever, and I am the seed-giving father".[6]

The Lord of the universe, the Supreme Spirit, is the father of the universe, and eternal energy is the mother. The Supreme Spirit is called the father, because He is the giver of the seed

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[6] सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः सम्भवन्ति याः ।
तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥१४.४

The Mahat-Brahma is the *Prakriti*, the embodiment of three *gunas, sattva, rajas*, and *tamas* and she is the womb, and the *Purusha* (of the Sankhya) or the *Atman* (of the *Upanishad*) is the seed-giving Principle. The Sankhya philosophy says that evolution of the universe with all its objects happens when the *Purusha* or Soul contaminates or conjoints with the insentient *Prakriti,* and non-dualistic Vedanta says that when Brahman (as if) comes in contact with causal nescience (*maya*), evolution of the cosmos begins.

You have prayed from your childhood "our Father which art in heaven", but, perhaps, you have never asked in what scientific sense He could be called father and not mother. Here you will find the meaning. The seed-giving father of the universe produces the cosmic intelligence or cosmic ego in the *Prakriti*, which is the mother of the universe; therefore, He is called the father. But, in Vedanta, you will find that this father and mother are inter-changeable terms. When you emphasize the fatherly aspect, you call it mother. Father and mother are inseparable and He is both the father and the mother of the universe. Some worship the Supreme Being as the father of the universe, others worship Him as the mother, the difference is only in the aspect. We are dividing and analysing, we are separating the spiritual side from the natural side, and now we are going to see the difference, because we are going to explain clearly the difference between energy and spirit. The energy is changeable, but the spirit is not changeable One produces all these various forms of phenomena, the other remains in constant equanimity, the father remains in constant equanimity, the mother changes, therefore, we separate them when we are going to separate the things.

What are the *gunas*? The *gunas* are the attributes of this energy, and different states it produces in the course of evolution. *Sattva, rajas,* and *tamas*, are the states or grades of evolution. These states of evolution rising from nature, or *Prakriti*, bind the embodied immortal soul within the limitations of the material body.[7] You have this body at present,

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[7] सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः ।
निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥१४।५

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"तदेवं निरीश्वरसाङ्ख्यनिराकरणेन क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगस्य ईश्वरस्य अधीनत्वं उक्तम्, इदानीं कस्मिन् गुणे कथं सङ्गः, के वा गुणाः, कथं वा ते बध्नन्तीत्युच्यते सत्त्वमित्यादिनः ..... ।"

Thus refuting the Sankhya doctrine that ignores the existence of God, the Creator, the *Gita* has established the doctrine that God conjoints *Kshetra* with *Kshetrajna*. Then the works or capacities of the *gunas* are described These *gunas* originate from *Prakriti*, or it can be said that *Prakriti* is the embodiment of three *gunas, sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. But

and this soul in it is something conscious of this body, but you do not know anything about it. You will have to analyse yourself, and start from just where you are.

You are sitting here, and have different mental and physical conditions. Try to divide and classify them scientifically. Take all the conditions that belong to one class and the other belonging to other classes and divide them. You will find sometimes that you are subject to one condition, and sometimes are subject to other conditions; sometimes you are stupid and do not understand anything, and sometimes you are very active; sometimes you are very calm and peaceful and not want to do any work, and at other times you are perfectly happy, then comes misery, pain, sorrow, disease etc. Now classify them, and take happiness, knowledge, peacefulness, and good. Then take activity, passion, hatred, jealousy etc. There are again dullness, laziness, exhaustion, stupidity and put these under another head.

These three classes of experience you can subdivide and put under different names. All these conditions bind you, and make you feel that you are one and identified with them. When you are angry, you are one with anger, and then you would like to break the neck or kill some one. Then you are personified anger. You may have some other passion and you are one with it. Sometimes you have peace and happiness, and are absolutely one with happiness. These are different conditions of yourself. You are the same person, but the conditions differ. Now you are angry, now you are peaceful, now you are happy, or are stupid. These are the limitations which change, but you are the constant equanimity amidst all these changes. In this way, you will find how these conditions or limitations bind you and enslave you. And when you realize it, you have power to overcome them, and then you are not one with them. Otherwise you are weak or diseased, because you cannot have the power to exercise con-

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how do these *gunas* originate from the primodial Energy? To this; Madhusudhana Sarasvti said "उच्यते ; त्रयाणां साम्यावस्था प्रकृतिर्माया भगवतः तस्याः सकाशात् परस्पराङ्गाङ्गिभावेन प्रति सर्वेषां अचेतनानां चेतनार्थत्वात्, न तु वैशेषिकाणां रूपादिवतद्द्रव्याश्रिताः।"

trol over these conditions. So remember that these conditions change your nature, but you are above this nature, you are the constant quantity, and you are not changing with these conditions. One who experiences these conditions, must be above them, otherwise he will be subject to them and will be entangled.

Of these the *sattva* quality being pure and transparent, is the one which brings all happiness, existence, intelligence, knowledge, source of perception, calmness, purity, and everything that is good.[8] So the *sattva* quality may be said to bring good. Therefore everything that is good, is classified under this heading of this *sattva* quality, and on account of its stainlessness, it reflects light of intelligence. It is free from personal or unpleasant feelings. But naturally it produces a bondage to the soul by bringing about the sensation of pleasure and intellection or knowledge When you perceive anything, it is knowledge, but, at the same time, the soul becomes the perceiver, and takes upon itself the qualities good and bad which comes through perception. Sometimes we say, 'I am happy', because the conditions are all comfortable Take for instance this first When you are trying to fulfil some of your duties and you do not find any obstacle, you are perfectly happy, and there is nothing that prevents you from doing it, and you can carry out your desires successfully. If you find any obstacle, try to overcome it, and you are disagreeable and, perhaps, being to swear, and if you cannot overcome it, you are filled with a stupid feeling as though you had a blow on your head

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तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात् प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।
सुखसंगेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसंगेन चानघ ॥१४:६

Sri Krishna says "Anagha o sinless one, of these (qualities), *sattva* being stainless, is lucid and healthy, but binds by attachment to happiness and to knowledge"

Knowledge means here an attribute of the *antahkarana* (or mind)—of the *Kshetra* (matter), of the object, and not of the Self or subject

Regarding the word निर्मलत्वात्, Madhusudana Sarasvati said, "स्वच्छत्वात् चिद्बिम्वग्रहणयोग्यत्वात्" । The word 'ज्ञान' (ज्ञानसंगेन) means, says the Swami (Abhedananda) 'सुखज्ञानम्' which is the modification or outcome of the internal organ, mind.

At what time are you happy? You are happy when everything goes comfortably for you. So if the material conditions are comfortable, we call it a happy or good condition. But these may seem favourable conditions. They may not last long, or may last for half a second, and then other conditions will come up In that way, we identify ourselves with these conditions which bind the soul, but when these conditions are in nature, how can they belong to the spirit? That which belongs to the objective world, cannot belong to the subjective world.

What is the other state of evolution? The *rajas* is another state or condition of evolution. "Know thou" says Sri Krishna, "that your nature is passion which produces thirst and attachment, it binds the soul in sensations with activities, mental, intellectual, sensuous and physical".[9] All passions are of different conditions, they cannot be the same as that which causes a happy state of mind and passionate nature, is turbulent and restless.

Too much desire, ambition, egoism, and pasionate love are classified under the head of *rajas*. We seek too much of this of that, we run here and there, and are tremendously active, and have no peace for the quality of *rajas*, and that is the condition under which the majority of people live. They would rather do anything else than sitting still. If you tell them to sit in silence for half an hour, they cannot. Give them a worse punishment, because they think that the mind is in a natural condition when it is restless, but those who are brought up differently, would consider the opposite condition to be the natural one. These people are active constantly, and constant activity is the ideal of their lives. Thirst is a tremendous longing and hankering or hunger for a certain thing which we do not possess, and when we do possess that thing, we do not want to leave it Then we become attached to it,

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9 रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसंगेन देहिनम् ॥१४।७

That is, "*rajas* to be of the nature of passion, the source of thirst and attachment; it finds first, O son of Kunti, the embodied one by attachment of desire."

and desire to keep it and hold to it. When there is thirst, there is attachment, and these two are produced by that quality of nature which is called passion. Where there is a passion, there is a thirst, and where passion is satisfied, there is attachment. Examine your own life, and you will find that whenever you had a strong longing and when that was fulfilled, you wanted to keep it and enjoy it longer. The attachment is the natural result of thirst, and these two bind the soul. Whenever you have thirst, you feel that you are thirsty, and these two are bondage. Whenever you have thirst, you feel that you are thirsty and you have attachment, and then you are bound by this. This is the kind of attachment that is binding to the soul.

Now what is *tamas*? Sri Krishna says. "O Bharata, know it to be born of unwisdom, which deludes all embodied souls, it binds through sloth, heedlessness, and sleep".[10] These are the conditions produced by the *tamas* quality, which is born of unwisdom. Sometimes when you are tired and exhausted, if somebody is reading to you, the words are entering your ears, but you do not know what is going on. You are listening to words, but they do not mean anything to you, and this is another quality. After a long rest a calm state of mind comes very receptive. You must make your mind restful and peaceful, and knowledge comes in that state only. Try to understand anything when you are suffering from passion, or some worry, you cannot do it This position is like a whirl of storm in your brain-cells and vibrates with a tremendous activity. That is a restlessness, and that makes you feel like doing something violent. Then comes the opposite feeling of dullness and inertia. Then you want to go to sleep. Perhaps at that time you will not dream anything, because a dreamy state requires a higher blood circulation. Gradually when the brain is well-supplied with blood, you will wake up, and try to do some work. Animals have that state generally, they do not understand anything.

All sense activities, physical or mental, are produced by *rajas* *Sattva* attaches one to happiness It is a state of happi-

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10 तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम्।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥१४।८

ness, because it is so calm, restful, peaceful, and pure. *Rajas*, the activity, under *tamas*, attaches one to restfulness, the non-performance of certain duties. If you are attached to that *tamas* quality, you cannot fulfil your duties properly. You may go to bed and sleep and get refreshed and go to work again. Sometimes *sattva* predominates under passion and dullness, *rajas* is under *sattva* qualities, and *tamas* is under *sattva* and *rajas* When the *sattva* qualities, or the state of restfulness, predominates, then the other two qualities, passion and stupidity, are in abeyance. When the *sattva* qualities predominate over passion, one becomes peaceful, and the other two qualities are absent. So when the one predominates, the other two are in abeyance.

When there is illumination or right perception running thorugh all the gates of the body, or the organs of sense-perception, then it should be known that *sattva*, the illuminator of the good qualities, is predominant. Then you understand things properly. Then right understanding, good intellect, and all sense-powers are very keen to perceive everything perfectly. When you understand things properly, you know that you are in *sattvic* quality. That is the state when you receive knowledge Knowledge comes from within and not from outside. When the mind is transparent and clear, the brain is also clear. When the mind and intellect are clear, that state is *sattvic*.

When the brain is dull, you do not understand anything, that is *tamas*. And when you say, 'I am very restless', that is *rajas*. From *rajas* goes the tendency to constant activity and extreme desire. This remains when *rajas* or the passionate state is predominant. So Sri Krishna says to Arjuna: "O Bharata, *sattva* attaches to happiness, *rajas* to action, while *tamas*, enshrouding wisdom, attaches, on the contrary, to heedlessness. Again, *sattva* arises, O Bharata, predominating over *rajas* and *tamas*, and *rajas*, over *sattva* and *tamas*; so *tamas*, over *sattva* and *rajas*".[11] These have already been explained before.

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[11] सत्त्वं सुखे सञ्जयति रजः कर्मणि भारत ।
ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे सञ्जयत्युत ॥
रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥१४।९-१०

When we classify these amongst human beings, we gradually classify the whole world, and after that we find that these three things or categories exist in the universe and all over. From *tamas* comes darkness. Light is a vibration, and that vibration which produces light, is *sattva* on the physical plane. The vibration which produces darkness is *tamas*, and that which produces motion or heat, is *rajas*. Darkness, restfulness, inertia, and dullness, all these proceed from *tamas*.

When one dies, one may pass away in this condition of *tamas*, or one will die in a state of passion, or in a peaceful state. If an embodied creature passes away in a peaceful state i.e. in a state of great illumination, knowledge, worship, devotion, and pure love, he attains to the region of the knowers of light. You may call these heavens, but we do not call them heavens. We call them realms. They are the regions of the bright ones. There are different realms. As we are here on this realm, so we can go to the higher realms, and can assume different forms suitable to those environments. These form will melt away, but still we will have a consciousness of finer things which we cannot perceive with these gross material forms.

Again, those who die in a state of tremendous activity, are reborn into restless active life. Dying in the state of dullness, or ignorance, or state of stupidity, one is born in the low and ignorant classes. What we sow we reap. If we go to the grave in stupidity, we cannot expect illumination and perfect happiness. In fact, we carry the state which belongs to us. When we go to sleep, we cannot come out a different being. Death is not a different sleep, it is only a more permanent sleep. If we die in passion with tremendous desires, we will have to come back on this plane where we shall fulfil our desires. We cannot expect to go to heaven then. Those who try to create a heaven which is similar to this earth, go to that region. I should prefer to come down here and finish my work and go to something better, that would be my heaven, and so it would satisfy others who have a little common sense.

The fruit of a righteous deed, or a good and unselfish work, is good and pure, while the fruit of a passionate deed with ambition, desire, and selfish motives is pain, and that of *tamas* is ignorance. On the animal plane we cannot get any

enlightenment, but if we do unselfish and righteous work and have pure thoughts, we go higher and higher. If we go to the passionate plane, we may enjoy for few moments, but may suffer for a century.

From *sattva* rises wisdom, from *rajas*, greed, and from *tamas*, heedlessness or error. Those whose ideas are pure and unselfish, proceed from knowledge of the right so upward to the spiritual plane. Those who are passionate, remain on the human plane Human plan is the middle world. They dwell in the middle or human plane, and those who follow the lowest *guna* of *tamas*, go on the animal plane. The animals are on the lowest plane, and the human beings are on the middle, but those who are spiritually pure and perfect, go to the higher plane.

So if we have ambitions and desires, we will have to come back, and will be born again, but, if we are worse, we will be born like stupid, dumb, and unintelligent idiotic creatures with a human form. "But when the seer beholds an agent other than of these qualities and realizes Him who is above these qualities, he attains to a higher being, or spiritual perfection, he goes even beyond the other bright ones, or angels, or *Devas* dwelling in the higher heavens; he may go far beyond these; they are no longer subject to birth and death or other conditions". Those are those who realize that spirit which is the divine spark, and is above all nature.

"Having gone beyond these three qualities of nature which are the causes of body", they do not become embodied like human beings. These three qualities produce the body. Some physical forms are very stupid forms, others are very active and ready to do tremendous work, and others are ready to do pure work with fine senses, and they are bright and intellectual, and are made for spiritual work. So those conditions produce different forms, according to the mental states. "And having gone through those qualities which are the causes of the body, the embodied soul is free from suffering, decay and death.

If you can understand that your Spirit is above all these qualities which belong to nature and bind the soul and make the soul identify itself with these qualities, and if you have the perception of yourself above all these qualities, you are

above them. If you do not identify yourself with these qualities and can discriminate between Spirit and nature, gradually you will attain to that knowledge which will make you one with the Supreme, and you will be able to say, 'I and my father are one', and you will be, in reality, a child of the Divinity. You are that now, but you are not conscious of it, but when you are conscious of it, you feel the effect of it, and become divine, and live like a living God on this earth, and after death you continue in that state forever, and that should be your ideal.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE SELF IS ABOVE ALL QUALITIES

We have already learned that all our mental functions and desires and activities can be divided into three classes: one is good, another is passionate, and the third is stupid and dull, and these mental functions are manifested according to the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, as I have already explained. In fact, the goal and all the forces of nature i.e. the whole phenomenal universe and all activities have been divided under these three heads. These three classes cover the whole universe as it were, because nature is the mother of the whole universe, and nature possesses these three qualities, or it can be said nature is constituted by these three qualities.

Among these three qualities, one is illumination, that which is good, and is helpful for getting knowledge, wisdom, and enlightenment. That which is bright, comes under the first class and that is *sattvic*, and wherever there is tremendous activity, work, passion, ambition, and different functions of the organs, they come under the second class; and that is *rajasic*, which means activity. And there is another class which is of stupidity, dullness, sleep, and darkness, and that is *tamasic*.

But beyond nature, as you have already learned, is the Supreme Spirit, the Absolute, which is the source of intelligence, consciousness, and bliss, and which is also the source of eternal immortal soul. In order to know our true Self most perfectly, we must have to separate ourselves from the functions of nature, or from those three qualities of nature. Those three qualities come up, and we identify ourselves with these qualities. If anger comes, we say we are angry, we cannot separate ourselves from that state of consciousness or mental condition known as anger. So our self is identified with passion, exhaustion, laziness, and dullness. If we can separate ourselves from these functions and conditions and qualities of nature, then we realize our true Being, or the true Self. The

prime object of life is to realize our true Being, and when that realization comes, we reflect perfection. It is an undeniable fact that each one of us is trying to be perfect and each one of us knows that he or she is not perfect at present, consciously or unconsciously, and it is also a fact that the tendency of the soul is to attain to perfection or perfect freedom. The innermost desire of each heart is to gain perfection. But the question is as to how is that perfection to be gained? Some of the religionists tell us that no one can attain to perfection, but hereafter perfection will come through the grace of the Lord, and, therefore, let us go through some kind of devotion, and leave things in the hands of the Lord. Thus we find that this desire grows stronger and stronger. The more we see the conditions of life, the more we wish for something better. We may satisfy our minds by saying we are very happy and everything is going on smoothly, and we ought not demand anything higher or greater. But still such persons, when they sit in silence and examine their own nature and their minds, will find that the innermost desire which rises in the bottom of their souls, is to reach perfection as soon as possible. Whenever we find any blow coming from outside and whenever our ambition is not fulfilled, we try to get rid of all these things for attaining to perfection, or to become free from all imperfections of all kinds, and as long as that tendency comes up at unexpected moments, we must know that the germ of that tendency lies burried in each soul. It may not manifest itself at certain moments, but it is bound to come out at some time. The Vedantic philosophers knowing this secret declare that perfection is the goal, and that perfection can be attained in this life. We need not worry about after-death and the grave, but we must try to attain to that perfection even now when we are full of energy and while we can direct and manage our own will It is time for us to long for that perfection and find some method by which that can be attained in this life.

I have already explained the mutual action of the *gunas* or qualities in the tenth verse, and now I shall discuss about how to know when a particular *guna* or attribute is predominant. Sri Krishna says: "When at every gate in this body there shoots up wisdom-light, it may be known that *sattva* is

predominant".[1] All the senses (*indriyas*) such as hearing and others are for the soul's gateway of perception or knowledge. When at all these gates of the body, there arises what is called light or illumination (*prakasha*), and this illumination happens due to the presence of *antahkarana* or *buddhi,* says Sankara in his commentary. For the light of *antahkarana* or *buddhi* we get knowledge, and that means the *sattva* quality is predominant in us.

Now the characteristic marks of predominant *rajas* qualities are: "Greed, activity, the undertaking of works, unrest and desire, and these arise when *rajas* is predominant, O lord of the Bharatas", says Sri Krishna.[2]

In this way, it can be said, says Sri Krishna, "darkness, heedlessness, inertness, and error,—those arise when *tamas* is predominant, O descendant of Kuru".[3] And "if the embodied one meets death when *sattava* quality is predominant, then he attains to the spotless region, the *Brahma-loka* and the like of the knowers of the Highest".[4] Then "meeting death in *rajas*, he is born among those attached to action, and dying in *tamas*, he is born in the womb of the irrational cattle and the like".[5] But you all know that according to the Darwinian theory, when through the upward progress the souls enter into the human bodies, they never retrograde in the lower animals, though there are some passages of the *Upanishads* which support the view of retrogation into lower animals, and I have already

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1 सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन् प्रकाश उपजायते ।
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥१४।११

2 लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥१४।१२

3 अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥१४।१३

4 यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान् प्रतिपद्यते ॥१४।१४

5 रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते ।
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढ़योनिषु जायते ॥१४।१५

explained the reason in my books, *Reincarnation* and *Life Beyond Death.*

Sri Krishna further says: "The fruit of good action, they say, is *sattvic* and pure, being devoid of impurities, while the fruit of *rajas* is pain, and ignorance is the fruit of *tamas*".[6] "From *sattva* arises wisdom, and greed from *rajas;* heedlessness and error arise from *tamas,* and also ignorance".[7] And "those who follow *sattva,* go upwards, the *rajasic* ones remain in the middle, and the *tamasic,* who follow in the course of the lowest *guna,* go downwards".[8] But realization of the Self or *Atman* beyond *gunas* leads to immortality. So Sri Krishna further says. "When the soul beholds not an agent other than these *gunas* or qualities and forces, and realizes Him who is above these conditions, he attains to the Supreme Being of the absolute freedom or perfection".[9] We must understand that when a man is enlightened and realizes that there is no agent other than the *gunas* or qualities which transform themselves into the bodies, senses, and sense-objects, when he sees that it is the *gunas* that in all their modifications constitute the agent in all actions, and the Self is beyond the *gunas,* then he attains to perfection.

When we see ourselves as independant of conditions of nature, we rise above phenomena and relativity, and attain to perfection. And having gone beyond these three qualities which are the cause of suffering, attain to immortality. This birth may be very pleasant, so may be the worldly life and all the things which give us pleasure, but they are not

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6 कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् ।
रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥१४।१६

7 सत्त्वात् सञ्जायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च ।
प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥१४।१७

8 ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।
जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥१४।१८

9 नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टाऽनुपश्यति ।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥१४।१९

going to last forever. It is true that when in our own lifetime we notice that our dearest friends, relatives, and relations are passing away and leaving everything behind, we know that we will have to do the same. We are claiming many things through knowing that all these things are contingent and transitory, as they last for the time being and we cannot keep them forever. Relatives, husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, and near and dear ones will be left here and we will have to go away. We will go alone as we came, and when we were born, we were born alone, and when one dies, he dies alone. All the wordly possessions we have, will be left here in this world, as being material and gross, they have no entry into the subtle dream or mental world. Under these conditions how can we expect to possess all these worldly things? It is a fact no one can deny, and when these facts are right under our eyes, how can we hold these gross things which we have taken care of, and which are surrounded with beautiful things and delicate food, and which we have clothed with beautiful garments? Even this body which we nourish carefully, we cannot take with us. Even when we are disembodied, we continue to exist, and that continuity will never be broken So we say our birth may be pleasant, and our earthly life may satisfy us, but that satisfaction in momentary and, in order to obtain that pleasure, we have to go through many difficulties, overcome many obstacles, and go through a great deal of anxiety and suffering.

A wise man knowing these things, tries to become unattached to these things, and tries to get happiness which will last and will not be bought at such a tremendous price. With that purpose he thinks of celestial pleasures. Now what is the difference between celestial pleasures and earthly pleasures? We think of a place where our pleasures will continue forever and where there will not be any sin or pain or suffering, and that is heaven, that is the ideal. That idea and ideal exist in our mind, because we realize this truth after proper analysis. Because of this pain of existence we cannot have pleasure unmixed with pain, sorrow, disease and death.

There we long for some condition where we can continue these pleasures without having any pain or fear of being deprived of them. If we analyse the descriptions of places in

the heavens where there is perfect happiness, we will find that this is so.

A Mohammedan in Arabia imagines heavens where there will be plenty of water and showers, because they live in a desert. In their heavens, there will be fruits on the trees, rivers of milk, and rivers of purest water, and those who drink, will think of heaven where there will be rivers of wine. Imagine a heaven where all the sense-pleasures are continued intensified, and which last for a longer period, and that is the difference Knowing that the Vedanta philosophers have rejected the idea of heaven, because continued pleasures in heaven are not possible. And you will see that the line of the *Gita*. क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्तलोकं विशन्ति suggests or proves the unreality of the heavens and heavenly pleasures. Further we cannot have pleasure without going through some kind of pain, as long as we are on the plane of relativity, as long as we are living in the world of nescience. The highest pleasure, either on this plane or on any other plane, may last for thousands of years, when compared to eternity, will be but transitory and ephemeral as a flash of lightening. So we cannot attain to perfection as long as we are in the realm of relativity on any world within the realm of phenomenal nature. But our true Self is the source of all happiness. If we examine the conditions of happiness, we will find that happiness never comes from outside, but it always comes from within. The outside conditions will favour the development of that light which comes from our soul.

The abode of happiness is inside and not outside, and he who has attained the knowledge of communion with the infinite Self, will have attained to that happiness which does not change. That happiness is unconditional one. Can you imagine that happiness which is not created by any circumstances or any causes, whether external or internal, is unconditioned happiness? You are happy even when everything else is disturbing, when you are alone, or when you are in the midst of friends and relatives Can you imagine a state which does not change in pain or sorrow or suffering or enjoyments? You cannot imagine it, because you have never thought in that line, but there is such a thing. You may doubt it at present, but the more you try to get that state, your doubts will be

removed. There is really such a state of unconditioned happiness, and it does not depend upon external things. You may possess many things and may be healthy and strong still, you may be unhappy. Even when you are in bed, lying down with your body in pain, when you have suffering in some part of the body, or in mental activity, even then there is a state of happiness which does not change. It is the innermost existence, or the divine feeling in the soul, which never changes. That state is considered to be the state which will continue to exist even when all the forces of nature have ceased to manifest themselves, because that state is uncreated and independent of nature. If we can find that state in this life, we are happy here in this world of cries and suffering. We have reached perfection here. How does the perfect man live? Does he mind the little things or not? That question arose in the mind of Arjuna.

A man who has attained perfection in this life, how does he look, what does he do, and does he change? Sri Krishna has already said. "Having crossed beyond these three *gunas*, which are the source of the material body, the embodied one is freed from birth, death, decay, and pain, and attains the immortal".[10] Now Arjuna further asks these questions to his Master. "By what signs is he known who has transcended the *gunas* or qualities of nature, or all the conditions of nature; what is his conduct and how does he transcend these conditions of nature?"[11] Arjuna asks three questions: first, what

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गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन् देही देहसमुद्भवान्।
जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥१४।२०

11 अर्जुन उवाच—
कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन् गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो।
किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन् गुणानतिवर्तते ॥१४२१

Anandagiri said

"सम्यग्धीफलं गुणातिक्रमणपूर्वकममृतत्वमुक्तं श्रुत्वा मुक्तस्य लक्षणं वक्तव्यमिति प्रकृतं विवक्षित्वा प्रश्नमुत्थापयति—जीवन्नेवेति। ये व्याख्याताः सत्त्वादयो गुणाः तत्परिणामभूतान् अध्यासान् अतिक्रान्तः सन् कैर्लिङ्गैर्ज्ञातो भवति इति तानि वक्तव्यानि सिद्धार्थं पूर्वमनुष्ठेयानि पश्चादयत्नलभ्यानि लिंगानि, कानि तानीति पृच्छति—कैरिति।

are the signs and marks by which we can distinguish the man who has reached perfection from other men, and what is his conduct toward himself and others. The second question is how does he live? And what is the method by which one can transcend these qualities and reach perfection? The third one is by what method can one go beyond nature and relativity and the phenomenal universe, and how is he? These are the three questions. Of course, these three questions included all other questions which are of more importance, but these are the principle ones. Sri Krishna, the spiritual teacher, answers these questions in four verses: Light and activity and delusion present, O Pandava, he hates not, nor longs for them absent.[12] He who, seated as a neutral, is not moved by *gunas*, who, thinking that *gunas* act, is firm and does not move.[13] He to whom pain and pleasure are alike, who dwells in the Self, to whom a clod of earth and stone and gold are alike, to whom the dear and the undear are alike, who is a man of wisdom, of whom censure and praise are same.[14] The same in honour and disgrace, the same towards friends and foes, abandoning all undertakings,—he is said to have crossed beyond the *gunas* or qualities.[15] Light is the effect of *sattva* quality, activity, of *rajas*, and delusion, of *tamas*. It is only in the absence of right knowledge that a man hates other men, and that is a *tamasic* idea by which he is deluded. But the realized or liberated ones are not deluded, because they have transcended

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यथेष्टचेष्टाव्यावृत्त्यार्थं प्रश्नान्तरं—किमाचार इति। ज्ञानस्य गुणात्ययोपायस्योक्तत्वात् उपायप्रकारजिज्ञासाया प्रश्नान्तरं—कथामिति।"

12 श्रीभगवानुवाच—
प्रकाशञ्च प्रवृत्तिञ्च मोहमेव च पाण्डव।
न द्वेष्टि सम्प्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥१४।२२

13 उदासीनवदासनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते।
गुणा बर्तन्त इत्येवं योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥१४।२३

14 समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुति ॥१४।२४

15 मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥१वे।२५

the nature. Really when any passion, or activity, or delusion, or dullness, or laziness, prevails what does a man do? He does not hate, nor does he desire its absence. He does not say that this makes him unhappy. He does not enjoy it, or like it, in the sense of wishing to have it all the time. When he is happy, or enjoying, he does not covet that happiness forever. He knows that his mental condition is happiness, and that is classified under that quality or condition which is called *sattva.* He sees the *sattvic* state prevailing, and knows that he is happy. He is in that state, and has attained to that true knowledge. The Self-realized Sannyasin, like a neutral man who inclines to neither party, treads firmly the path by which he seeks to rise above the *gunas* and becomes *gunatita.*

In the rajasic state, or in the state of desire, or in the state of laziness, he knows that this is only a condition, and he never identifies himself with this condition. He never says he is happy, but he knows that this state is conditionary, and will change He does not let these conditions prevail, nor drive them out. This is one of the signs which no one can perceive. It is a sign unto himself, i.e. to the feelings of some one, but it is known to the person who knows the feelings of some one, but it is known to the person himself who has realized. The realized man analyses his own mind, and finds that when the condition comes, he knows that it is a condition outside of his true Self. It is a condition in nature, and if it is a mental condition, he calls it mental If it is physical, he calls it physical. but he is beyond all these, and it is an object of consciousness

You will have to understand that every feeling whether of pleasure or pain is an object of consciousness, but the subject is one who feels it is different from that feeling. One who feels pleasure or pain, is the higher, is the subject, and is different from that feeling itself. That feeling is simply the object of consciousness. It rises in the mind, and it is a mental condition. Imagine that here is a soul which is conscious, and is like a light that illumines everything

Imagine that nature is playing on its own activity, and it has taken the shape of anger in the course of its evolution. Then the light which emanates from the Soul, is the light of consciousness which becomes both the subject and object of consciousness. We can know the Self only by light of con-

sciousness, and if that light of consciousness does not exist, nobody will perceive it. So anger is also an object of consciousness, and gradually this light of consciousness becomes coloured with the colour of anger, and it affects the subject which is illuminating the state, and then the subject and the object become mixed up. When I say, I am angry, I and that anger become one. It is like the mixture of colours, white and red, and it becomes all one. When one is angry and manifesting that by some violent act, one's whole heart and soul, and sense-organs and physical body, are coloured with that vibration of anger, which is like an object of consciousness. If somebody says something rude to you, you begin to get excited, and the more you think of it, the more excited you feel. When you think it is a thing you ought not to stand, and will be injurious to your interest, then you think more of it and become more angry and gradually when you reach the climax you forget yourself and try to take revenge. First, it was an object of consciousness i.e. a kind of feeling that it was not right, and gradually it got stronger and stronger like a bubble that rises. At that time we know that it is an object of consciousness. It spreads, and becomes larger and larger, and then it takes the form of an impulse. Then it breaks, and fills the whole surface of the mind. It covers the whole mind, and fills the whole being with its particular condition, and then it is inseparable from our own being.

If you analyse things in that way, you will find that these passions, desires, and feelings first come out as objects of consciousness, and gradually they spread their power, and become one with us. When you try to analyse your mind and try to separate yourself from such feelings, you will become that object of consciousness. When the anger is getting very strong, if you remember that it is an object of consciousness, that you have nothing to do with it, that it is a mental condition and repeat this, then it will pass away So it is with every feeling. When you are extremely happy and when you feel that this is an object of consciousness and is conditional, you will not relish that any more. If a person enjoys gaiety and frivolity and knows it is a state of consciousness, the pleasure is gone. It was not real enjoyment, and it might have produced some effect upon his being or touched some part of him, but the

moment he is serious, everything is changed. Similarly, if you find that something is disturbing you very much, you remember that it is an object of consciousness, and you know it by your power of consciousness that it is in nature and it is one of your qualities, and then the feeling of disturbance will pass away. So with pain and sorrow and suffering, you are the same person. Would you be unhappy and restless, if you remembered this? No. In your daily life, you go through many changes, practise this method, analyse for a few days, and you will see the difference. Take in everything that comes and perform all your duties and do them well, but at the same time you try to know that these are the conditions of nature and not your true being. The true being is like a witness (*saksi*). Suppose a number of boys are fighting on the street and you are looking from the window. Now it is true that these boys are fighting, but you do not take part in the fight. So one might break the head of another, but you do not take any part in the fight.

Similarly, your true self is standing like a witness, and those mental conditions are fighting against each other. As all those boys are the objects of your vision, so these mental conditions which are fighting against each other, are also the objects of consciousness, and not your true Self, just as these fighting boys cannot be one with your Self. Try this in your daily life, and do all your duties, and perform everything. When you feel disturbed remember that these are in your mind, and are the objects of consciousness, and you are the subject, then you will be perfect. If you can do that in every walk and condition of your life and never fail, you will know that you are divine, and will reach the Divinity in this life, and be perfect. You will not have to do anything else. Just hold yourself free from nature and its conditions all the time. "He who is seated as one unconcerned, is not moved by the qualities; and he who knows that these are the *gunas* (conditions) and knows that these *gunas* perform their functions, remains undisturbed, and he remains the same in pain and pleasure".[16] Can you imagine a person the same in pain and pleasure? No, you cannot, but if you can think in the same

[16] Vide the *Gita*, XIV. 23.

way that pain and pleasure are objects of consciousness, you will be able to remain the same. You will remain the same, but you will express your feelings differently, if you remember that it is an object of consciousness.

The Self is abiding. The Self is not used in the sense of lower self, but in the sense of being. There is no word that will express the meaning as well as the word *Atman*. Self-abiding means abiding in one's true or real self, the divine Self. That man "to whom a clod of earth, stone, and gold appear as the same",[17] is a realized man. Now you can understand how a clod of earth, a piece of gold, and a stone are the same, because it is the same object of consciousness. Hold the earth as the object of perception, it is in nature, a stone is also in nature, it may be a different state of nature, but an object which you are perceiving with your senses is the same. Gold has no value from that standpoint more than a clod of earth. We are not putting it on a commercial basis. When the government puts a commercial value on gold, it is most expensive, but to a saint, or to one who has attained to spiritual perfection, gold has no more value than a clod of earth. It is produced by nature. The whole nature itself is an objective nature and not subjective. From the standpoint of the soul the soul alone is the subject, and the rest is the object, so where does the value lie? It is not in gold or diamonds or jewellery. Where is the value then? You perceive with your senses and you try to hold to your property, that is the old idea. It is the same feeling we find in the dog when he tries to hold fast to a bone, and it is the animal nature expressed in the same way. That is what we call possession We try to have this property, but to whom does it belong? It is nothing but what is produced by nature. We hold it as our own just as we claim this body as our own. So if you look at it from that standpoint, you will understand the working out of nature and the relation which nature bears to ourselves.

So Sri Krishna has said in the verses 24th and 25th: "Who is the same in pain and pleasure i.e. self-abiding? To whom a clod of earth, stone, and gold appear to be the same, to whom the pleasant and the unpleasant are alike, who is equani-

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[17] समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।—गीता १४।२४

mous in praise and censure, and who is wise, is the same in honour and insult?" Can you imagine a person who is the same in honour and insult? To Jesus the Christ, Buddha, Krishna, and Ramakrishna—all these great ones honour and insult were the same. If any one honours you, think of this. So it has with the teachings of Christ He taught the same things. These are nothing new. The same ideas have been given by the greatest teachers of the world. No one can monopolize them. No one can say that Christ has taught these for the first time. But it is true that he (Christ) never felt excited when he was praised by his disciples, nor did he feel insulted when his enemies insulted him. Did he have any enemies? No, he was equal to friends and to foes. He blessed those who were crusifying Him. Did he hold any property? No, the son of man had no place to lay his head, his garments were torn and taken away from him and were sold. Even his body was crucified, and he did not care for that.

You will say that was an exception, but it is the ideal, and everyone will have to attain to that state and become Christ-like in the daily performance of duties etc. And how that is to be attained is what Vedanta teaches to make one Christ-like. Vedanta teaches not to worship Christ, but to be Christ-like. There are many instances in India where sages are actually worshipped. They have been insulted by people, even by their own disciples, but still they did not lose their ideal.

Sri Krishna refers to one 'who is the same in honour and insult, who appears to be the same to friends and to foes'. Here you understand how to treat friends and foes equally. No one who is living on the human plane, can do that, because a man living under social conditions, cannot do it, but a man who has reached perfection, his standpoint is divine. He looks from a platform where he has neither a friend nor a foe, but he is the child of God. The world may think that he is crazy; yes, he is crazy from the standpoint of the changing world. Which craziness is best craziness, standing on the platform of God, or of the world? I would rather be crazy standing on the platform of the Divinity than to be crazy standing on the platform of the delusion of senses. That is better, because it is eternal.

Christ was crazy and mad and insane. He was insane for

Divinity and perfection. He was insane for his Father, and no worldly conditions could make him give up his Father. Satan tempted him and offered him all these conditions, but he did not care. Buddha was tempted by Mara, but he did not care. They offered him all the celestial pleasures of this earth.

In the Upanishadic period, there was a boy named Nachiketa, who was tempted by Yama, the King of Death, but Nachiketa did not care for anything other than the immortal *Atman*. Read in this age the life of Sri Ramakrishna and you will find the living example of it. People came and offered him all the best things, but he said: "Take them away, I do not care for them". There was neither a friend, nor a foe before him, but all were children of God, and he treated them in the same way. He said Naras (men) are Narayana (God) and all objects of the world are His divine manifestation.

Who appears to be the same to friends and foes? It is he who has relinquished everything. Such a person is said to have transcended nature and attained to perfection. These are the most beautiful verses in this chapter, and we ought to read them over and find it is so easy to do it, if we know the secret. It is just the secret of the object of perception, and we are the subject, and all feelings are mental conditions. When we have worry or anxiety, we should regard them as a passing phase, and we will see that they will pass away, and no worry will disturb us at all. It is an object of consciousness and we should think that we are above all these things, and then we will be perfect.

Now we have understood the answer to the first two sections of the questions: "By what means he is known who has transcended these *gunas*, and what is his conduct" (XIV. 21). It is like the conduct of Christ who is the same in pleasure and pain. You talk of Christian Science, but the teachings of the *Gita* is far better than Christian Science teachings. So why should you attach your mind to one condition? If there be health, there will also be ill-health. This is a relative world, and you cannot help imperfection. No one can cure disease, though you may claim it Within the limit of relativity you can do wonders, and we must not cease to do so. We have the power to do it, and must exercise these powers. But we

must know that it is a relative world. If there were no disease, there would be no health, and if there were no health, there would be no disease. How can you say matter can exist without mind, and mind can exist without matter? They are related. If you deny evil, you will also deny good. Rising above this relativity is far better and higher than any teaching you get through Christian Science, because it tries to reject one side and take the best side, which they cannot take.

So we have learned the answer to the first two sections of the qustion. Now the question is how one can transcend these qualities, and rise above them. Sri Krishna says: "He who serves Me with unswerving devotion, transcends these qualities, and is fitted to become perfect and is one with the Absolute".[18] Unswerving devotion to the Supreme is necessary, and that is the method by which one can attain to perfection more easily. Where will we find the Supreme? Not anywhere else outside of us. That which is the subject of our true Self, is a portion of the Supreme Being and how can it be assimilated from the Supreme? By concentration i.e. by concentrating our mind on that part which is the knower of our souls. Here the subject and the object are combined. The soul of the ego is the knower or real subject. Who is the subject of all feelings, mind, and mental conditions? It is the Soul of our souls, the Infinite within us. By worshipping Him in spirit and by thinking of Him constantly, we transcend nature, because it is above nature. The subject is always beyond nature. The subject

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[18] माञ्च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते।
स गुणान् समतीतैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥१४।२६

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"मामेवेश्वरं नारायणं सर्वभूतान्तर्यामिणं मायया क्षेत्रज्ञतामागतं परमानन्दघनं भगवन्तं वासुदेवमव्यभिचारेण परमप्रेमलक्षणेन भक्तियोगेन द्वादशाध्ययोक्तेन यः सेवते सदा चिन्तयति स मद्भक्त एतान् प्रागुक्तान् गुणान् समतीत्य सम्यगतिक्रम्याद्वैतदर्शनेन बाधित्वा ब्रह्मभूयाय ब्रह्मभावनाय मोक्षाय कल्पते समर्थो भवति। भगवच्चिन्तनमेव गुणातीतत्वोपाय इत्यर्थः।"

Sankara said that crossing beyond the three *gunas* means going beyond *Prakriti* or *Maya* (i e. nescience), and whenever a man attains the state of *gunatita*, he becomes the Brahman.

in me and in you and in everyone is beyond nature, and by worshipping that Supreme Being within ourselves, we can transcend nature and its conditions and realize the highest happiness unconditionally.

What is devotion or love? If you love the Highest, you are on the highest plane. If you love anything physical, you are on the physical plane. If you love the world, you are worldly. By knowing what things you love, you will understand where you are, and that is the thing you will have to do first. Find out if you love the highest. If you do, then you are ready for the Highest. It is Bhakti Yoga,[19] devotion in the path of love. It is that supreme love which leads to communion with the Supreme. The path of love is easier than any other path. First try to love the Highest. Of course, you love yourself, but love your true Self, that is all, and let your ego love your true Self, the Divine in you which is above all nature and is perfect, and when that love is established, nothing is beyond your reach. Self-love is in each individual, but that is mis-directed love. Self-love ought to be a love of the true Self. It is not a love for a lower self, but for a part of the Divinity. Let it go a little deeper as the soul of your true Self, then it becomes divine love; otherwise it is selfish. To serve God in the path of devotion means to constantly contemplate Him by completely withdrawing the mind from all external objects. Thus he becomes Brahman while still alive. He reaches perfection, and that is the ideal of all religions. In Christian land, when you regard Christ as the ideal, you mean the Christ-like state as the idea and ideal, so it is in other religions. In Vedanta, you will find that God is brought nearest of all, nearer to us than in any other religion. In other religions, He is an extra-cosmic something sitting outside of the universe, but, in Vedanta, God is the nearest of all things that we possess. He is the Soul of our souls, and this individual self, or individual soul, is like that which will enter into the abode of immortality. This abode of immortality is the

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[19] Regarding the real significance or meaning of Bhakti Yoga, Anandagiri said. "भजनं परमप्रेम स एव युज्यतेऽनेनेति योगः। सेवते पराक्चित्ततां विना सदानुसन्दधातीत्यर्थः स भगवदनुग्रहकृतसम्यगधीसम्पन्नो बिद्वान् जीवन्नेवेत्यर्थः।"

back-ground of the individual self or ego, and, therefore, Sri Krishna says, "For I am the abode of Brahman or immortality which is everlasting, or eternal, or absolute happiness".[28] All these things are within you. Immortality is within you, absolute happiness is within you, the abode of eternal virtue is within you, and the abode of the infinite Being is also within you i.e. within the infinite soul.

We begin to realize this by constant communion with the Supreme in us. We thus reach perfection, and live like Christ on this earth being undisturbed by the conditions and changes of phenomenal nature. In pleasure and pain, we are the same if our mind is devoted to our innermost nature. In pleasure and pain, we are the same if our mind is devoted to our innermost Self, the Supreme, the divine spark within us. That is possible through contemplation, or devotion, or constant remembrance, of the Supreme as the Soul of our souls. It is not by offering flowers, or by doing this or that you will show devotion, but even when you are constantly engaged in your work, even then you can remember the Divine within you as the soul of your subject, and when conditions change and you can remember you are not the objects of consciousness, but you are the Soul, that you are immortal, that immortality is within you, you are the eternal Being, then you will realize that eternal and everlasting happiness is also within your reach by that contemplation and through your unswerving devotion. That is devotion and worship in spirit; that is thinking of Him in your soul, and that is all. But it is very difficult to do. Do not let your mind be disturbed by other things of the world. Try to train your mind by sitting in silence in meditation, you will be able to worship the Supreme in spirit in the soul. It requires practice, and this practice will lead you to the realization of the Supreme within as the Soul of your souls. And even if you are doing other works of the body and mind, and if you can feel the presence of the Divinity in and above all actions at the same time, you have become fitted for perfection. Then you will be able to appear to be the same to friends and foes, and the whole world will be at your feet,

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[28] ब्राह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठऽममृतस्याव्ययस्य च।
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥१४।१७

you are then above this world, you are a child of the Divinity then.

Sankara, the commentator of this verse, explains many things and says that the meaning of the passage may be explained as follows. It is through *Ishvara,* through the power etc., man can realize the Brahman.[21]

In Vedanta there is a personal God, and there is also the supreme absolute Spirit. The personal God is the first expression of the absolute Spirit. Those who are devoted to the personal God, will continue to be devoted to Him, and will obtain His grace, and through His grace the highest knowledge will come, and the perfection will be rached. So that meaning comes also under this verse. Christians are devoted to the Father in Heaven, or to the Christ. Vedanta includes that idea in the temporal God and by defining what personal God is. The personal God of all religions is the same as *Isvara,* or the personal God of Vedanta. He is infinite, and has all the blessed qualities. He is viewed both as our father and mother. He is the Ruler of the universe, the Creator or Projector of the phenomenal universe, the One who gives start to evolution, and by worshipping Him we can attain to perfection. The other meaning is that when we think of the impersonal side, that the Supreme Spirit is all-pervading, and if any one is here who does not understand any thing about the

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[21] Sankara said यया चेश्वरशक्त्या भुक्तानुग्रहादिप्रयोजनाय ब्रह्म प्रतिष्ठते प्रवर्तते, सा शक्तिर्ब्रह्मैवाहं शक्तिशक्तिमतोरनन्यत्वादित्याभिप्रायः। अथवा "ब्रह्मशब्दवाच्यत्वात् सविकल्पकं ब्रह्म, तस्य ब्रह्मणो निर्विकल्पकोऽहम् एव नान्यः प्रतिष्ठा आश्रयः।"

Here Sankara meant that Sakti or power or potentiality or energy of the Brahman cannot be distinct from the one in whom it inheres. And so Anandagiri said in his glossary "सा शक्तिः ब्रह्मैवेति। कथं सामानाधिकरण्यं तत्राह—शक्तीति।"

In this verse, Sri Krishna says that He as a Divine Incarnation (Avatara) is non-different from the indeterminate Brahman, and by this it is meant that *saguna* Brahman is no other than *nirguna* Brahman, and, in view of this Madhusudana Sarasvati stressed· "ब्रह्मणः परमात्मनः प्रतिष्ठा पर्य्याप्तिरहमेव, न तु मद्भिन्नं ब्रह्मेत्यर्थः। * * मोक्ष पर्यवसितो मत्प्राप्तिरेव मोक्ष इत्यर्थः।"

personal God and is devoted to the supreme impersonal Being, he can think that the individual soul is the spirit of the Infinite Being, and by being devoted to the Infinite Being, it means that the individual soul will remember that the Infinite Being is the abode of happiness, the source of consciousness, existence and bliss, and by constantly thinking of that Supreme Being as the Soul of our souls, we worship Him, become devoted to Him, and become fitted for perfection. The relation between the personal God and the impersonal God is the same as the relation between the individual soul and the infinite absolute Being. Only the personal God is the Lord of the universe, or it is cosmic, while the individual soul is only microcosmic.

The individual soul is the lord of this little body, but the personal God is the Lord of the phenomenal universe of the cosmic, or of all individuality, but the relation is just the same. Personal God is the first manifestation i.e. the cosmic manifestation of the Impersonal, where as the individual souls are eternal as the personal God, and the individual souls are like sparks emanating from the Divinity. The souls are in the spiritual body of the personal God. We are like so many little souls in His spiritual being. As our gross physical body possesses finite souls and each one is living, so, if you can imagine this little self in the spiritual body of the cosmic God, then you will understand that relation. So all these dualistic meanings and monistic meanings analysed are included in this chapter. This is the most beautiful verse in this chapter.

CHAPTER XLVIII

TREE OF SAMSARA AND THE HIGHEST GOAL

The fifteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* begins with a description of this phenomenal universe. This phenomenal universe according to Vedanta is the result of the evolution of the one eternal energy which is called by various names. In Sanskrit it is called *Prakriti,* or *maya,* which is unmanifested, or which is the undifferentiated consciousness (*Avyakta*). This energy dwells in the body of the infinite Spirit. The infinite Spirit is the substance of the eternal Being from which all forces, all powers, all individual souls, intelligence, consciousness, have come out; and they have come out through the process of evolution. So that infinite Being is called in Sanskrit the *Brahman* and by other names also. In fact, it is nameless. This Being is the root, the origin, the reason of the phenomenal world

Regarding the Tree of *samsara* (Asvattha), Sankara said in the commentary that the mundane existence of the world-appearance is figuratively represented as a tree, because it can be cut off like a tree. This example of tree has been given in order to produce *vairagya* or absence of all attachments, for he alone who is free from attachments, is fit for attaining the knowledge of the real nature of the Self or Brahman. The indestructible tree has its root above and branches below, and its leaves are the metres. In fact, the tree represents the delusive *samsara* rooted above. The *mahat ahamkara* (egoism), *tanmatras* (elemental essences), etc. are its branches as it were and these extend downward. It is known as Asvattha, because it will not abide the same even till tomorrow, because it undergoes destruction every moment. Similarly the delusive world having existed in time without beginning, they say that this tree of *samsara* is eternal, because it rests on a continuous series of births which is without beginning or end, and is thus eternal. So we shall have to go beyond the cycles of birth and deaths that happen in *samsara* so as to attain the immortal

result of emancipation from bondage of delusion or ignorance.

Therefore in describing the phenomenal world the Lord here gives an illustration of a tree, and this illustration is as old as the Vedic period. A few years ago we read a book, *The Evolution* by an English well-known scientist, J. H. Thompson. In his book, we found an illustration given in the form of a tree; and that is a very perfect illustration, but at the same time it is the most ancient illustration. In the Vedas, we read a verse, and the same verse has been translated and used in various other writings which are of later periods. In the *Bhagavad Gita*, we find the same illustration in the same chapter.

This mundane world is considered as a fig tree. They say that this eternal tree has its root above and branches below as I have said before. The root of this tree of the phenomenal world, which we perceive with our senses, is extended upward. If you can think of a fig tree, and imagine that upside down, the roots upward and the branches down below, it would be almost like the illustration of this phenomenal universe, which is compared to a fig tree.

They say that this is an eternal tree. I have already explained that it is eternal, because no one has ever found the beginning, nor the end of this tree. The tree has its root above and branches below. Its leaves are the Scriptures of the world which contain the revelations and wisdom. He who has known it, has known the truth of all the Scriptures, and of all the Vedas. He who understands this tree, understands the whole universe, and also understands the Truth contained in all the Scriptures of the world. All the Scriptures of the world describe the root of the tree of this phenomenal world, and the Scriptures are considered to be the leaves.

Of course, many questions naturally arise in our minds while reading this verse. Why is this tree called eternal, and how is it that the Scriptures can be called the leaves of the tree? It is called eternal because, as I have already said, no one has ever found the beginning or the origin in time, of the phenomenal world.

Those who are brought up with the idea of the beginning of the creation, will find it very difficult to separate their minds

from the idea or thought of a beginning. Many people have often asked me questions like this: "How can you think of a thing which had no beginning?" The very same question can be reversed and asked: "How can you think of a thing which had a beginning?" You cannot. Have you found the beginning of this world? No. This has been the question which has risen again and again in all our minds.

What is the tendency of modern science? The tendency is to answer this question, and they are all attempts of the human mind to find the origin. But we come to a conclusion that it had no definite origin. All evolutionists say that millions and millions of years ago this world began to evolve. Nobody knows at what time there was no phenomenal universe or manifestation of any kind; therefore, it is called eternal. But the word 'eternal' also includes the meaning of boundlessness. Some people think that this phenomenal universe will come to an end. Of course it may come to an end, but the cause will remain This eternal energy of the universe will never be destroyed, or go out of its existence. The whole universe may go to pieces, but the energy, or the sum total of the forces and matter i.e. the material of the forces and atoms and the finer centres, the sum total, will always remain the same, therefore, it is eternal. It may remain in a potential state, or it may remain in an evolutionary state i e. in the state of manifestation, or in an undifferentiated state, and that is also the conclusion of the modern science. Therefore, they say it is eternal. And this idea was expressed about fourteen hundred years before Christ, when Krishna lived, and taught his disciples in this way. So he called this the eternal tree, and, in the *Upanishads*, we read the same thing.

Sri Krishna has said: "That indestructible fig tree has its root upward, its branches below, whose leaves are the metres, but it is eternal. He who knows it, knows the Vedas."[1]

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[1] श्रीभगवानुवाच—

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम्।

छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदावित्॥१५।१

The word अश्वत्थं means 'न श्वोऽपि स्थाता इति अश्वत्थः, तां क्षणप्रध्वंसिनमश्वत्थम्'।

So, as far back as we can go in our imagination regarding the best achievements of civilization in the field of philosophy and Scriptures we find the Vedas as the oldest Scriptures in the world, and even there we find "that which is truth, is always truth", whether it was discovered hundreds or thousands of years ago or today, it is the same truth. And if evolution has any truth behind it, that truth was known by the ancient seers who lived centuries before Christ.

Then comes the question. "Why is it that the leaves of this fig tree are called the Scriptures?" Just as the leaves of a tree serve to protect the tree, so do the Scriptures serve to protect the phenomenal world (consult the commentary of Sankara).

If the Scriptures did not describe this, all people would have gone in different directions without having any standard or moral law to guide them. Whenever you are doubtful about good or evil, you refer to these Scriptures. These Scriptures mean revelations and inspirations. They mean wisdom of the past, the laws which govern our lives, the knowledge,

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Sankara quoted similar verses from the *Purana*.

अव्यक्तमूलप्रभवस्तस्यैवानुग्रहोत्थितः :
बुद्धिस्कन्धमयश्चैव इन्द्रियान्तरकोटरः ॥
महाभूतविशाखश्च विषयैः पत्रवांस्तथा ।
धर्माधर्मसुपुष्पश्च सुखदुःखफलोदयः ।
आजीव्यः सर्वभूतानां ब्रह्मवृक्षः सनातनः ।
एतद्ब्रह्मकथनं चैव ब्रह्माचरति नित्यशः ॥
एतच्छित्वा भित्वा च ज्ञानेन परमासिना ।'
ततश्चात्मरतिं प्राप्य यस्मान्नावर्तते पुनः ॥

That is, the root from which eternal tree of Brahman, has sprung is the Avyakta, the Unmanifested It has developed by the strength of the same (Avyakta) Its trunk is *buddhi*, the sense-organs its hollows, the great elements its boughs, the sense-objects its leaves and branches, *dharma* and *a-dharma* its fair blossoms, pleasure and pain its fruits affording livelihood to all creatures And this is the resort of the Brahman (the highest Self), and that highest Self (the essence) of tree of the Brahman. Having cut asunder and split the tree with the mighty sword of knowledge and then attained to the Bliss of the Self, none comes back from there again.

moral and physical, which govern our beings, and that knowledge is meant by the Vedas. The word Veda means knowledge or wisdom, therefore, it is not any particular book. The knowledge or laws condensed together is called a Scripture, but that knowledge is always protected. It protects the world and, as the tree is protected by the leaves, so the Scriptures, or the knowledge, or the wisdom of the laws, protect the phenomenal world, showing the causes and effects of our acts, of our mode of living etc., and gradually they lift us above this mundane world, and open our eyes to the highest Truth, the eternal life and immortality.

The infinite Being, as I have just said, is the root, and from this root the whole universe has evolved. This eternal energy forms the body of the infinite Being, as it were. This eternal energy remains in that infinite Being, or in that infinite substance, which is the source of intelligence, consciousness, and bliss. From this all mental, intellectual, sensual, and physical conditions have come into existence.

The real title of that tree is called the Buddha,[2] or the cosmic intelligence. The source or undifferentiated energy, with that infinite Being at the basis is the root and the trunk of that tree is the cosmic mind which contains cosmic intelligence, or cosmic ego. The sense-apertures are the hollows in that trunk, and the great elements of nature are the ego. Sense-objects are like buds in the branches, and the good and evil, all virtues and vices, are like the flowers of that tree, and the fruits are like pleasure and pain, happiness and misery Sankara explained these elaborately in his commentary.

Now this is the illustration of the phenomenal universe. It has gradually come through this process of evolution. First, it produced the cosmic mind, then sense-powers became manifested, then the great elements came forth and produced the suns, moons, and planetary systems from gaseous, and all liquid and solid substances. Then came the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, and these are the different stages of evolution recognized in very ancient times. The sense-objects become the buds of the tree, and the flowers are virtue and vice,

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[2] But the socalled name of the tree is Asvattha that lasts only for a day or moment.

righteousness and unrighteousness, merit and demerit, pleasure and pain, happiness, suffering, and misery, health, disease, birth, and death, and these are the fruits which we are reaping and enjoying, sitting on the boughs of the big tree. We are enjoying and suffering, working out our *karma*, and eating the fruits thereof.

Read the translation of Sankara's commentary: "The root from which the eternal tree of the Brahman has sprung" etc.[3] So this phenomenal world, we are in, is compared to a fig tree, and we know that all the different stages of evolution beginning with the first manifestation in the form of cosmic intelligence, or the cosmic mind, and ending with birth and death, or the suffering and misery, or virtue and vice, which produces results of the phenomenal world, are like a tree. Again it is also described: "The branches of this tree are spread below and above, being nourished by the *gunas* described in the last chapter as *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Nourished by these different states and sense-objects being their buds, and below the tree is the world of man and the smaller roots ending in action."[4] First protect that tree with its main root

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[3] Sankara said: "ऊर्द्धमूलं कालतः सूक्ष्मत्वात् कारणत्वान्नित्यत्वात् महत्त्वाच्च ऊर्द्धमूच्यते ब्रह्म अव्यक्तमायाशक्तिमत्तन्मूलमस्येति, सोऽहं संसारवृक्षः ऊर्द्धमूलः। श्रुतश्च— ऊर्द्धमूलोऽवाक्शाखः' इति।"

That is, as Brahman with *maya* or the unmanifested potentiality is subtle in point of time, as He is the cause, as He is eternal, as He is great, and is spoken of as the One above. The One above is the root of this tree of *samsara*, which is, therefore, said to have its roots above. The *Katha Upanishad* (3.1) also said: 'With root above and branches below, the Asvattha is eternal'.

Anandagiri also said: "तस्य वृक्षस्य संसाराख्यस्य तदेव ब्रह्म सारभूतं, अथवास्य ब्रह्म वृक्षस्यानवच्छिन्नस्य संसारमण्डलस्य तदेतद् ब्रह्म बनमिव बनं बननीयं सम्भजनीयं न हि ब्रह्मातिरिक्तं संसास्यास्पदमस्ति, ब्रह्मैवबिद्यया संसारतीत्यभ्युपगमादित्यर्थः।"

[4] अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा
गुणप्रवृद्धा बिषयप्रबालाः
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसन्ततानि
कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥१५।१

upward and then its secondary roots covering all sizes above and below the human plane.

As we are human beings, we should start from our human plane. If we look downward, we find the animals, vegetables and minerals, and all solid substance, and upward from the human plane would be the spiritual planes, the disembodied spirits, the angelic beings, archangels, devas, bright spirits, metaphorical gods, and beyond that the one cosmic ego and those who are dwelling in heavens,—all these are upward and all below the human plane are downward. So the branches of this tree are spread below and above the human plane. Being nourished by the *gunas* or the conditions of energy, and the time and sense-objects being the buds and below, in the world of man are stretched the secondary roots ending in action. These secondary roots produce action which are deeper than the physical. They cover the mental plane. The desires, ambitions, and tendencies, which manifest themselves in the form of activities and work. Through good works and good thoughts we can rise higher, but the animal plane does not rise higher consciously. They rise higher unconsciously. It is left to human beings to rise higher consciously. By our thoughts and deeds we can all rise from this human plane, go to heavens, and become angels, or rise still higher, and

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(a) Madhusudana Sarasvati said: * * सर्वसंसारभ्रमाधिष्ठानं ब्रह्म, तदेव मायया मूलमस्येतूर्द्धमूलम्।"[1]

(b) Regarding Asvattha, the *Katha Upanishad* (3.1) said,

ऊर्ध्वमूलोऽवाक्शाख एषोऽश्वत्थः सनातनः।

(c) The *Mahabharata* (ashvamedha-parva) said,

आजीव्यः सर्वभूतानां ब्रह्मवृक्षः सनातनः।
एतद्ब्रह्मवनं चैव ब्रह्म चरति नित्यशः॥

(d) शाखा means the *lokas* (worlds), which are the results of thoughts and deeds, and three *gunas* are the materials of the branches

(e) अधश्च मूलान् etc mean the subtle body (*linga-deha*) which is the base or ground of all desires.

(f) मनुष्यलोके means the Vedic functions are done only by men of the world, and not by the *Devas*. The ritualistic sections of the Veda treat of the path of ascent and descent of the soul, they protect *samsara* by concealing its defects.

go to the highest heaven, and become one with the Supreme. We can do that, but the lower animals cannot, because they cannot think and work consciously as the human beings can, they are subject to death and evolution unconsciously.

So unconsciously those who are in a human body, are not developed, but, on the contrary, are idiotic and child-like. Take for instance, a child that does not develop consciously, but when after evolving, an intelligence begins to show, they choose their own path. Until that time there is a subconscious growth and that kind of growth you will find in lower animals, in vegetables and minerals ; and then we are on a plane where conscious growth begins ; then we can choose whether we want to go to heaven, or go to lower and remain on the sense-plane ; and that power is given to human beings alone, and not to lower animals

And when we rise to a plane still higher than the human, we have still higher perception and that which we cannot understand now, we will be able to understand them afterwards. Then the centre of consciousness will become larger, and there will be onward progress until we arrive at the state where illumination becomes the property and natural quality of the soul.

Here is another idea: that the other planes, heavens and other realms like the realms of the ancestors, are not the planes where one is born to work, *but the human plane is the only plane where all kinds of work are possible,*[5] because our conditions are the most favourable in the human plane, and through righteous work and righteous thoughts we can transcend all heavens. We can transcend angels and arch-angels, and bright spirits and reach the ultimate goal of all these beings, even of higher realms from here (from this human plane). That is possible. It may not appear to some who are not familiar with this idea, but those who have given a great deal of their thought in this line, are actually convinced of this truth, *that the human plane is, after all, the best plane, and better than the plane of heavens or angels and arch-angels*

[5] The *Upanishad* also says that even the gods shall have to take their birth in the human world for their final emancipation.

etc., because these are the planes where we can reap the results of what we do in the human plane.

We stay there in these realms for a certain length of time. In all the Scriptures of the world, you will find that good thoughts and deeds were very good doors to heaven and a strong power. They do not say how long they will stay. They stay eternally or everlastingly perhaps (what is meant by eternity, or forever, or for an indefinite period). The question is not discussed by the theologians, but, in Vedanta, this question is very fully discussed. The Vedantists analyse everything, even the celestial conditions. They analyse the personal God, and they do not stop anywhere. They do not accept anything, because it has been said in inspirations or revelations they want to know why and how it is so. After analysing these celestial conditions, they come to the conclusions that these are the results of good thoughts and deeds. It lasted for a time. Have you seen a good thought or deed that was eternal? No, if the cause be not eternal, how can it produce a result which is eternal? And that is logically correct. A finite cause producing a result which would last forever, is impossible.

A finite cause must produce finite results. If a sinner thinks sinful thoughts during his lifetime, his lifetime may be one hundred years, but that is finite. In one hundred years, even if he thought every second of his life, he could not produce infinite thoughts, but it must be finite and limited. Now the question rises as to how long and how limited are time and space, how can they produce results unlimited in time and space? To this it can be said that pleasures and enjoyments of heavens cannot be eternal in its absolute sense, and that naturally appeals to all logical minds, and, in that way, they realize that and say that these realms are not eternal, but these are the realms where we go to reap the results of our thoughts and deeds for a certain length of time, and then we come back and perform other deeds and go to other realms, higher perhaps, and so we are going on from time immemorial.

In evolutions, this human plane is considered to be a better plane than the angelic plane, or the plane of the bright spirits, because there are more possibilities on this plane than

on any other. Even some of the bright spirits are longing to have a human birth where all the environmental conditions are favourable, and it is very good for those who have found better conditions here and now, because they have gone so far beyond angels and arch-angels. They can go beyond the region of the *Devas* and other heavens even in this life, and that is one great consolation we get from Vedanta. Vedanta tells us that we can make our whole life rise above all sorrows and sufferings in this life. We can attain to absolute perfection here and afterward, and after the death of the gross physical body we will go to the plane for which the bright spirits and disembodied spirits have been longing for millions of years.

After having described this tree of the phenomenal world, Sri Krishna says about its form which is not perceived. We do not see it like a tree. In fact, this phenomenal world, with its roots upward and its branches downward, is all imaginary. It is only an illustration to make it appear before our minds like a concrete substance, so that we can visualize the whole phenomenal world with our mental eye. Its form is neither perceived here, nor its origin or its resting-plane. A tree must rest somewhere. It must have beginning and end, but we must see the resting place of it That is very wonderful. It is not perceived here, and we perceive only some parts. But we may perceive the tree as a whole. But it may be asked again can this tree continue forever? Can any one go beyond this phenomenal world?

This phenomenal world includes all heavens and all planes of existence, which are within the realm of evolution. Can we go beyond it? Yes, we can We can cut the tree with the sword of right knowledge. and can rise above it. With the strong sword of dispassion, having cut asunder the tree of the phenomenal world, that goal is to be searched after, which, having attained, none returns. There is a place or a realm beyond this phenomenal world which, having attained, one never returns. Where is that? How is that possible? By the sword we can cut off this tree. But what kind of sword is that? It is the sword of knowledge or wisdom, or the sword of non-attachment. When that sword of non-attachment (*vairagya*) is exercised, this whole tree vanishes, and we rise above the

physical material, intellectual, and above all phenomenal manifestation. So we can go beyond the unmanifested or the energy. So Sri Krishna says: "Its (tree's) form is not perceived as such here, neither its end nor its origin nor its existence. Having cut asunder this firm-rooted Asvattha with the strong sword of dispassion (15.3), then that goal should be sought for, whether having gone none return again. 'I seek refuge in that primeval *Purusha* whence streamed forth the Ancient Current" (15.4).[6]

That is very peculiar. Why should it be like that this sword of dispassion can cut the whole tree? If you can imagine your own mind, you will find that you are attached to a certain thing. Take for instance, a young girl who is imagining castles in the air with a friend and lover, and she is thinking of many things and, suddenly, a blow comes and all these things vanish away. That young girl is extremely attached to these desires and thoughts, and when a blow comes, she becomes unattached to these conditions and the castle in the air falls to pieces, and she never thinks of them again. Your whole worldly life with all its pleasures is like

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न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते
नान्तो न चादिर्न च सम्प्रतिष्ठा ।
अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल-
मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ॥
ततः पदं तत् परिमार्गितव्यं
यस्मिन् गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।
तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये
यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥१५।३-४

Madhusudana Sarasvati said.

(a) "असङ्गशस्त्रेण—सङ्गं स्पृहा, असङ्गः अङ्गविरोधि वैराग्यं पुत्रवित्तलोकैषणात्यागरूपम् ।"

(b) "शस्त्रं—रागद्वेषमयसंसारविरोधित्वात् * * पुनर्विवेकाभ्यासनिश्चितेन छित्त्वा समूलङ्कृत्य वैराग्यशमदमादिसम्पत्त्या सर्वकर्मसन्यासं कृत्वेतत् ।"

(c) "तत्पदम्—यस्मि पदे गताः प्रविष्टाः ज्ञानेन न निवर्तन्ति नावर्तन्ते भूयः पुनः संसाराय ।"

that so long as you think it is your own, but the moment you turn your back from it, it vanishes and does not exist any more. I am sure each and every one of us has gone through such experiences, which passes away like a dream. You have seen Indian jugglers, and a rope is thrown in the air and a boy climbs up and vanishes. Photographers have tried to photograph that and have not obtained a picture, because it is like a dream and so it passes away. Now think where it comes from, and where it goes, nobody knows. Sometimes in your looking at the clouds you imagine figures like an elephant, or like a camel, or like a castle, but those figures are no other than your imaginations. In trying to please your children you play games, and if you have a vivid imagination, you see things as real and tell them these things, and they also vanish in the air. So the worldly life passes away in the same manner. The whole phenomenal world with its pleasures and sufferings will vanish in half a second if you know how to do it.

The example of a method is given. Close your eyes and ears and sense-perceptions and stop the activities of your mind, and you will see the whole world vanishes. Whether anybody exists outside of you, you cannot think nor see. At that moment what becomes of the external world in relation to you? It vanishes. When your sense-powers and mind-powers are active, it will come out. But you can rise above attachment or the ties that bind, and then you will have no desires for earthly things and all these will vanish. So remember that the whole world binds us with chains of desires. We shall have to break up the chains of desires, and then we shall be free and happy.

If you do not want to see anything you will not have any eyes. Desires have produced these things of enjoyment and, so long as you have these desires, this whole phenomenal world appears to you as it does now. The moment your desires are fulfilled you rise above the phenomenal world, and, therefore, it is said, that with the strong sword of dispassion, having cut asunder the tree of the phenomenal world, the goal is to be searched after, and you will reach the goal, the eternal peace and happiness.

CHAPTER XLIX

EYE OF WISDOM CAN REALIZE THE ATMAN

We have already learned that the highest goal is the supreme abode, entering which none returns. The goal of the individual soul is the abode which is not illumined by the sun, nor by the moon, nor by fire, and after entering which none returns. In our ordinary life, we see that wherever we may go, we can return from that place. Everything has its corresponding opposite; pleasure and pain, going and returning, etc. So, when we try to understand the meaning of that verse, that question naturally rises in our mind. How is it possible for a soul to go to a place and not return from that place? How is it possible for the souls to attain to that supreme abode, and to stay there forever? So Sri Krishna says. "Free from pride and delusion, with the evil of attachment conquered, ever dwelling in the Self, their desires having completely turned away, liberated from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach that goal (15.5). That, the sun illumines not, nor the moon, nor fire; that is My supreme abode, to which having reached none returns (15.6)."[1]

Those who are constantly engaged in contemplation of the nature of the supreme Self, are known as the *Sannyasins*, because all their desires are controlled and transformed without leaving any taint behind. The sun, the moon, and fire are

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1 निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा
अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञै-
र्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥
न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशांको न पावकः ।
यद् गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥१५।५-६

Vide also *Kath Up.*, 2 2.15, *Shvetashvatara Up.*, 2 14 and *Mundaka Up.*, 2.2 10.

the luminous bodies of this transitory phenomenal world, so they have no power to reign over the eternal abode.

In answering that question the supreme Teacher, Sri Krishna, again says. "A portion of myself has become the living soul in this world of life from beginningless time and attracts to itself the five *Gunas,* the organs of senses, with the mind for the sixth, which abide in *Prakriti,* or nature"[2] That is, the individual soul is a portion of the supreme Soul, or Spirit. It has become the living soul in this world of life, that is, the living soul of a living human being is a portion of the supreme Spirit. It is not separate, not different from the supreme Spirit in its real entity, in its real being, and from beginningless time it has been as such, that is, a part of that supreme Spirit or infinite Being. This living soul as we have seen, attracts to itself the five senses with the mind for the sixth. Mind is the sixth sense, the internal organ which governs the other senses of perception; and this individual soul has these sense powers and mind from nature where they exist.

In nature or *Prakriti* dwell these five sense powers and also the mental faculties. The mind is not a part of the living soul, but it is more only mental and more natural. When I say it is mental, or natural, I mean it is not a sentient something, but it is insentient, and the soul is that which is the source of sentiency, or consciousness, or intelligence. And this soul has not been created at the time of birth, as we generally believe, but it has existed from the beginningless

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[2] ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥१५।७

While commenting on the Badarayana-Sutra 'आभास एव च' (२।३।५०) Sankara said. "आभास एव चैष जीवः परस्यात्मनो जलसूर्यकादिवत् प्रतिपत्तव्यः, न स एव साक्षात्, नापि वस्त्वन्तरम् । * * आभासस्य चाविद्याकृतत्वात् तदाश्रयस्य संसारस्याविद्याकृतत्वोपपत्तिरिति तद्व्युदासेन च पारमर्थिकस्य ब्रह्मात्मभावस्योपदेशोपपत्तिः ।"

That is, as the sun reflected in water (reflected sun) is removed when water is removed and the real sun shines as before, so when the adjunct (*upadhi*) of *jiva* for nescience is removed, the *jiva* goes to its real form, the Brahman.

past as a portion of the infinite Being. It is like a portion of the *Atman,* or the *Brahman.*[3] There is no difference in its absolute nature, between the spirit within us and the spirit of the universe.

Here a question may arise: if the absolute Spirit of the universe be one, then how can that absolute Spirit be divided into portions? Is it possible to have a portion of that absolute substance? Can it be divided into parts? If it has parts, then when these parts be taken out of the thing, or of the absolute Spirit, then the absolute Spirit will be divided portionally. Take, for instance, a portion from a chair or a table. Now if you cut off a portion, that portion, when taken out, means that so much of it is lost or separated. And if the absolute Spirit be a substance, and if it be divided into innumerable parts, and if any one of us possesses one of those parts, then so many parts have been taken out of that infinite substance, and, consequently, so many parts are lacking, or destroyed.

Another question also arises that a substance which has neither form nor shape, cannot be divided into parts If we use that expression that the individual souls are the parts of the Supreme Spirit, then the Supreme Spirit must have a certain form, otherwise, it must be indivisible into parts. These questions do not describe the idea which is covered by this verse or passage, though, in Vedanta, they call these different souls as parts of the infinite Being, or Supreme Spirit Still they are not like the parts of a material substance, but they are a little different. They are like the reflections or images of the Supreme Spirit and, as every image may be called a part of the thing which reflects it, so the individual souls are

[3] Now regarding Atman-Brahman Principle it can be said that when, in Vedanta, we recognize the absolute Reality as external or transcendent, it is known as the Brahman, and when we recognize the Reality as internal or immanent, it is called the Atman. But since the absolute Reality is both external and internal, these names or definition imply absolutely no difference in essence, as the Brahman around us can be known and felt as the Atman within us, and so Atman-Brahman Principle is described in the *Upanishad* as being *sat-chit-ananda* or absolute existence-consciousness-bliss, and it should be remembered that existence, consciousness, and bliss should be thought of as attributes of Atman-Brahman, but they are non-different from Atman-Brahman.

called parts, because all the reflections or images are of the one Supreme Spirit. If you take a cup of water and hold it in the rays of the sun light, the rays of the sun will produce a reflection or image of the sun in that water. That reflection or image may be called a part of the sun, because that image is very closely related to the sun. In fact, it is inseparable from reality or existence of the sun. The rays of the sun have produced that image or reflection and, if these rays are separated from the sun, there would be no image or reflection. So when they use that word portion, referring to the individual souls, whether human or animal, they mean the image or reflection of the Supreme Spirit as individual souls.

We all know that God created man after His own image. We very seldom try to realize the true meaning of the word 'image'. Then word image does not mean form or shape, but it means qualities, the light of intelligence, consciousness, and essence of our being in the image of the Supreme Spirit. In fact, it is made up of the same luminous and self-conscious substance of the universal Being, and the substance is the same.

How can we know the existence of the self-conscious universal Being, if the self-consciousness and existence will not manifest through our own selves? Who can know the existence of God, and can think of a being as the ruler and governor of the universe, if we do not possess these powers or qualities in a limited sense. What we do possess in ourselves in expressing in the infinite Being, only in a more universal and infinite sense. Another illustration is also given by Sankara, the commentator, to explain this passage, how the infinite Being can be divided into parts, or can manifest itself into innumerable parts without losing its infinite nature. There is given the illustrations of the space. The space is infinite, here in a jar, or vase or a cup or some other vessel. The space confined within the walls of a jar is a limited space. Now we can see that that space of the jar is a part of the infinite space. If we have two thousand or two millions of vases, each one has a small space confined within its form.[4]

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[4] Sankara said in the commentary:

"यथा जलसूर्यकः सूर्यांशो, जलनिमित्तापाये सूर्यमेव गत्वा न निवर्तते तथाप्यम्यंशः

One space may be round, another may be square or of other shape, and we can see that each of these spaces is only a portion of the infinite space which pervades everything. Is the infinite space divided into parts by these forms? No, the space is indivisible, yet it may appear in so many different forms. Take, for instance, the space of the room which is divided into walls and roof and floor. It is a limited space, and we may say it is a portion of the infinite space. If this room had been circular, then the space would have been circular in form, and that circular form would have been also a portion of the infinite space, yet we know that space is indivisible. These walls do not divide the space, but the space pervades these walls on the inside and also on the outside It is only in a relative sense that we can say that these different spaces confine different walls and different shapes, and then mean that only parts and portions of one indivisible space.

We now know that space is indivisible. In the same sense, we can use the word motion. Individual souls are only the limited forms of the limited manifestations of the one infinite Being, and the space contained in a room or a jug or a jar or in many other vessels is in reality, one with the space of the universe. So the true nature of the individual soul is the same as the Soul of the universe. It would be very difficult for us to realize this, because we have been brought up with a different idea from our childhood. With the idea that we have been born and did not exist before, we have come into existence and will continue to live forever, and this idea is very strong in us, especially in the minds of the people of the Western country. Although they might not have learned this in a school or through different books, still they have gathered

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तेनैवात्मना संगच्छत्येवमेव, यथा वा घटादुपाधिपरिच्छन्नः घटाद्याकाशः आकाशांशः सन् घटादिनिमित्तापाये आकाशं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते इत्येवमत उपपन्नमुक्तं—'यद गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते' इति। ननु निरवयवस्य परमात्मनः कुतोऽवयव एकदेशोऽंशः इति सावयवत्वे च विनाशप्रसङ्गः अवयविभागात्। नैष दोषः, अविद्याकृतोपाधिपरिच्छिन्न एकदेशोऽंश इव कल्पितो यतः।"

That is, Sankara said that part of the whole is imagined for the adjunct (*upadhi*) caused by *avidya* or nescience, otherwise the whole, or the Paramatman-Brahman is partless being raised above all divisions.

these ideas from the atmosphere, because these ideas are in existence in all Christian countries.

All Christian countries teach this idea that individual souls do not exist before the birth of the body, and the idea is that a soul is created for the first time by the infinite power of the Supreme Being, and will continue to exist forever in future. But, in Vedanta, you will find that this idea is not considered to be very scientific and logical, because Vedanta says that which has birth, must have an end. You cannot show anything that can be eternal in the end and finite. If it be infinite at one end, it must have been infinite at the other. You cannot produce anything infinite at one end and finite at the other. You cannot show any illustration in nature that will prove this. That which has beginning in time, must have end in time. This is a law of nature, and when we believe in any phenomena against the law of nature that is superstition. That idea is not upheld by any facts of nature. Therefore, Vedanta rejects that idea, and says that, if the soul is going to be forever eternal, it was eternal in the past. So says Sri Krishna: "A portion of myself has become a living soul in this world of life from beginningless time." So you see it from beginningless time. When did you come into existence? From the beginningless past you have come into existence and so you always existed before. How long before? As long as you can think of. Before the creation of the world, you existed. Before Abraham was born, you had existed. Before Moses was born, you had existed. You cannot immediately find out in what form, you existed, still your existence was there. You might have existed in some lower sphere, or some other world. This is not the only world of existence. There are millions and millions of planets and stars and other worlds, where living beings might have existed from before the creation of this earth. So we cannot definitely say in what form and place we existed, but we did exist. There is no doubt about it, and Christ himself meant that when he said, 'before Abraham was, I was', he did not mean that he only was an exception. Now if we understand it correctly, if we study Vedanta and try to understand the real spirit of Christ's teachings, we get a new light and can understand it better. Then we understand that as an individual soul, Christ

said that he had been before Abraham was born. And so we can see it in the same way, if we realize our past existence.

If we are absolutely certain that we existed, we can easily say that 'before Moses was, I had existed.' If we are once convinced of the fact and truth of this idea, then we would be able to say the same thing. The range of our consciousness will be extended to the beginningless past, and then we will be able to say, 'I existed before, so I shall exist forever, because I am the eternal Spirit; I am a portion of the Supreme Spirit, I am immortal, unchangeable, and eternal.' So there will be no question about my existence. And every statement of Vedanta has that consciousness.

In India, if you go and ask a common man on the street, whether he existed before, he will say, 'of course, I did', because he takes it for granted. Although he may not give any particular explanation, but he believes it, because it is the most rational thing, and anything rational, should appeal to your mind, and if you were brought up in this rational way from your childhood, you would have the same conviction. There would not have been any difficulty in realizing that you are an eternal substance, or a portion of the Infinite, and you should remember that Vedanta says that every part of the Infinity is Infinity— 'पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते'।

Now it can be asked as to how an individual soul (*jiva*) dwells in the body and departs from it. The Lord, Sri Krishna, says. "When the soul acquires a body, and when he leaves it, he takes these and goes, as the wind takes scents from their seats."[5] When an individual soul goes out of the material body after death, he takes i.e. attracts or draws to himself the five organs of senses, includes all the sense-organs, powers of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and power of touching, and these powers produce their different organs. These organs do not create the powers, but the powers create the organs. Materialists may say we get the organs first of all, the functions come afterward. But we say it is different. The

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5 शरीरं यदवाप्नोति याच्चाप्युत्क्रमतीश्वरः :
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥१५।८

force of the power that produces these functions, also produces the instrument for such functions. It is the soul that produces all these things by attracting these powers from nature, and nature has these powers.

The five organs for all physical activities are called categories or *gunas*. The power of touching is included in them. The power of seizing, moving and jumping etc. are also included. These powers exist in nature or *Prakriti*. A portion of the soul which appears as an individual soul, has the power to draw from nature before it becomes an embodied soul. The embodied soul is one which has these sense-powers, and the mind is that which has the power of thinking, willing, regulating, and perceiving these sense-objects. When does the soul draw them? When the soul goes out of the physical body, it draws within it all the power of senses.

If the individual soul be a portion of the infinite Being and draws and attracts to itself all the sense-powers from nature, when does it draw them? When the master (soul) of the body requires another body, then it manifests a new body and lives in it. Then it takes these organs with it and goes forth as the mind takes scents or odours from the flowers. When the wind blows it can carry away with it the fragrance, or the scent of the flower. So when the individual soul, or the master of the body, manifests a body, it brings everything with it. When it appears as a human body on this plane, it brings with it these powers. There is the power of *prana*, or life-force, or vital energy, or nervous force. It brings it from nature, and when it leaves the old body, it takes these powers with it. Therefore, a dead body cannot see or hear, although the instruments are there. The dead body possesses no power of hearing though the ear may be there. The eyes of the dead body may be left wide open, the retina may be perfect, the optic nerve may be perfect, the brain-centres may be perfect, but the power to see is gone. Where is it gone? Is it gone to nature? No, it is gone with the master of the body, which is the soul. The soul has carried it with it, and wherever it goes he takes it. It clings to the soul by the desire. By the tie of desire it is attached to the soul, and that soul is called the embodied soul. It may be a disembodied spirit, yet this spirit is embodied in a finer sense, because it

has a finer body (*sukshma-deha*), and that contains the life-force and sense-powers and mind.

Sense-powers include all the powers of sense-perception. They possess also the power of loving etc. So when the soul enters into a human form, it manifests a physical form, and draws from the nature those powers, and when it leaves it, it takes those organs or powers with it, and also the impressions of all the sense-objects which it has perceived, it takes with it, just as the wind takes scents from their seats, the flowers.

When it is a disembodied soul possessing only the organs of hearing, sight, touch, taste, and smell, and also the mind, it comes in contact with the objects of senses, and enjoys them through mind.[6] That is, Sri Krishna says that the ear, the eye, the touch, the taste, and the smell, using these and the mind, the soul enjoys the sense-objects. The soul takes these powers with it in order to come in contact with the objects of senses, and to enjoy them on this plane. Thus at the seances that immortal master comes in close contact and connection with such material objects and objects of senses The subject will have to wear a garment of gross matter in order to come in contact with gross matter. Just as a diver cannot wear light garments and go to the bottom of the ocean, he must put on very heavy weights which should weigh forty or fifty pounds with weights of heavy metal to keep him down under the pressure of the water. Perhaps he himself may not be able to lift the garment, still he wears it in order to go down under the water, and stay there So where the soul goes under the water of the material universe, it must have to wear a heavy garment, just as we wear physical bodies. The diver is under the heavy and gross garment, the diver himself being much lighter. In a like manner, the soul is much lighter and finer than our gross physical bodies. These bodies are only the garments. The soul comes in contact with the objects of senses, and enjoys these perceptions.

"These do not deceive him who is separate from the body

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[6] श्रौत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनञ्च वसनं घ्रानमेव च ।
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायः विषयानुपसेवते ॥१५।९

which has the experiences of the sense-objects, but they alone perceive it who have the true wisdom. The deluded ones do not perceive him."[7] The ordinary people whose minds are scattered on the gross material plane, do not perceive him. Their eyes of wisdom are closed, and so they cannot see what is going on in the higher sphere, or in finer realms. They cannot perceive Him, even when the soul resides in the body as the master of the sense-powers, is not perceived by ordinary people whose senses are on the gross material plane. Or when the soul experiences these different objects of pleasure and pain, they do not realize Truth, and they say that this gross physical body with a peculiar force in it is life, which produces a kind of vibration in the brain-centres called intelligence, and does all these wonderful things, and when the body dies, it comes to an end.

These persons are deluded by the charm of sense-objects. Their sense-perceptions entangle them, and keep them away from Truth. Their eyes of wisdom are not open. But those who have succeeded in opening the eye of wisdom, alone can realize the nature of the soul, can perceive it when it departs, resides in the body, and experiences the different objects of senses, and is invested with the different attributes of nature.

What are the attributes of nature? They are those that we feel pleasure, pain and stupidity etc. These are the three classes, as we have learned in the fourteenth chapter of the

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[7] उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं व गुणान्वितम् ।
विमूढ़ा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुचक्षुषः ॥
यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥१५।१०-११

Here Sri Krishna says that the Self, or the *Atman*, is visible only to the eye of knowledge or wisdom. He says: "Him who departs, stays and enjoys, who is conjoined with *gunas*, the deluded perceive not; they see, who possess the eye of knowledge" (15 10). Further "those who strive, endued with Yoga, perceive Him dwelling in the self; though striving, those of unrefined self, devoid of wisdom, perceive Him not" (15. 1). Really those are well-balanced in their mind and do effort, realize the *Atman* dwelling in their own *buddhi* So *tapas* or austerity and subjugation of the senses are necessary for realizing the *Atman* or Brahman.

Bhagavad Gita. These are the qualities of nature, and these are pleasure, happiness, joy, life, understanding, intellection, and all these come under the head of *sattva.* Then comes the desires, pain, sorrow, suffering, activity, and work, physical and mental, and all these come under the second heading of *rajas* Again dullness, laziness, stupidity, indifference, inactivity, sickness, and ignorance, and all these come under the heading of *tamas.*

These are the different attributes that exist in nature They do not exist in the soul, and only the individual comes under the influence of these conditions. When the physical conditions are harmonious, then you feel happy. When the conditions are different, you feel different. When the environmental conditions force you to do certain work, you do it. When the conditions change, your activity also changes. Sometimes the soul is invested with the attribute of pleasure, sometimes that of pain or sorrow, sometimes with good fortune. sometimes with misfortune, and sometimes with stupidity. dullness, laziness, ignorance etc, and the brain does not work any more Then the brain is stupid and idiotic. But you must not consider that the soul is idiotic or stupid. It is only the mind, or the garment of the soul and a certain attribute under certain conditions is affected, but the soul is always unattached to these conditions. Ignorant people cannot separate these conditions from the attributes of nature. You feel you are nervous, but the soul cannot be nervous How could it (soul) be nervous when it has no nerve So you are nervous, but not the soul But one who has all these attributes of nature and has the nerves, the mind, and the body, is affected with attributes and conditions.

If the soul has no nerves, who is nervous? That is a question that never occurs to nervous people Christian Scientists have mental healers who have got hold of that secret, and they teach that you have no disease Of course, you have no disease, because you have neither body, nor mind Then the Christian Scientists tried upon that fact to put it upon a financial basis and have made money. That is what we call American practicality And this truth has existed in the universe from eternity. In India, they do not know how to make money in this way, by putting it on a financial basis.

The Indians do not have the necessities or the comforts. Here we want to make money out of everything, but the fact is, Truth cannot be sold or bought. So when you are nervous, think you have no nerves. You are the soul, a portion of the Supreme. You do not have to go to Christian Scientists to learn that. By studying Vedanta you will be a Christian Scientist or much better. Then you do not delude others, and do not try to get hold of their property, but you tell the Truth, and try to practise it immediately. With a clear conscience, you will go to the abode of the Supreme, and enjoy perfect happiness.

What is the use of this? A preacher is more responsible for the faults of his people, because, if he deludes the students who are innocent, the preacher is to be punished. The preacher who keeps his congregation in ignorance, is to be punished. When a preacher stands upon the platform in India, we may warn him saying that, if a sinner receives a whipping twenty times, then a preacher who deludes other sinners and has kept them in ignorance, will receive twenty thousand whippings a piece. He would be more responsible. So all these popular preachers who keep their people in ignorance and do not open their eyes, are to be blamed. They are the ones to be held responsible.

If you come and sit here quietly to learn these things, then I tell you that I am responsible. If I delude you and lead you to ignorance or any false ideas, I would be responsible. So you see those whose eye of wisdom, is not opened cannot see the soul which departs from the body. He who resides in it, experiences all the pleasure and pain, that is invested with all the attributes. If you once realize it, you will rise above all desires and misfortunes, because you are a portion of the Supreme, and you are even above your mind

The Christian Scientists divide the mind into a mortal mind and an immortal mind. Mind itself is immaterial. Mind is a vibration of mere matter. The immortal mind is the soul, and it is a portion of what we call the Divine Self, the Supreme Spirit. What a great misfortune is it for those who do not realize their own selves, as well as who do not understand themselves. What can be more painful than this, that

hundreds and thousands and millions of people in this world are willing to do anything, even the best and the worst things. And they are doing all these through ignorance They are mad after certain things, but they do not know whether they are the Souls, or the bodies. What can be more pitiful than this? Vedanta tells us; "Do not waste this valuable opportunity, but find out what you are, and know it", and then you will be able to perceive that which dwells in the body and that which separates itself from the body, is the Soul.

All our questions are merely worldly ones. So we must learn to open the eye of wisdom, and we shall be able to see that wonderful Being who is part and parcel of the Infinite. Those who diligently practise Yoga, perceived Him dwelling within themselves. Those whose minds are not purified through striving, perceive Him not. Those who diligently practise self-control and strive to perceive Him who is dwelling within themselves, can realize the Truth, but the thoughtless whose minds are scattered about the thousand and one things of the world, and are not purified through striving, they cannot realize Truth. Those whose souls have not been re-adjusted by austerity, and self-control, and who have not abandoned the evil habits, and whose pride has not been subdued, cannot perceive that divine particle which is our real nature. If we want to open our eye of wisdom, first of all we should subdue our pride and vanity, then we will know everything, and will learn everything.

We have but learned some of the things of the lowest grades of life, so we must not be proud and think we know everything. Therefore we must subdue pride and abandon evil habits. Mind your own business and do not criticise any one, and with these thoughts, try to purify your heart and soul through devotion. Parctise self-control and austerity, and when your soul is re-adjusted, you will be able to see that true Self which is immortal and is a part of the Divine. All those who have subdued their lower selves, are called the Yogis. So if you practise Yoga diligently, in the course of time you will be able to open the eye of wisdom, and eventually you will be able to know your own Self which is itself the Divinity and Immortality.

CHAPTER L

OVER-SOUL IS AN OBJECT TO BE ACHIEVED

Religion of Vedanta teaches that God is immanent and resident in nature. Really God is not simply outside of nature but He is in nature. He is in us and everywhere, and is all-pervading, and this idea is expressed beautifully in the *Bhagavad Gita* in different chapters. Some are just beginning here to come to this idea that the divine Being is all-pervading. Lately Dr. Lymon Abbott has given a lecture before the Appleton Chapel at Harvard, and in that lecture he has created a great sensation. He does not believe in transcendent God, but his God is immanent and resident in nature. He does not believe that the Bible is the only book through which we can obtain a knowledge of God, but all the Scriptures of the world describe most beautifully the Supreme Being, I agree with it, but I do not agree that God is only immanent, and not transcendent.

The object of referring to this is simply to show that even the orthodox believers are coming to this one great truth that God is immanent and resident in nature. The general belief with the orthodox Christians is that God dwells outside of the universe and from there He comes to us. But you must realize that God is not so far, and Jesus, as described by orthodox Christianity, is near to us. But God is with us, and is manifesting His energy through all the various phenomena around us. If we know it, we come to the realization of the highest Truth. We gradually come to a point from where we can see the Divinity face to face and have direct communion with Him in this life. In short, we can become Christ-like and divine and godly, and that is the ideal of all religions. Religion of Vedanta upholds the idea that God is in the sun, in the moon, in fire, in earth, in water, and in all living creatures. It brings God nearer to us that we can imagine that God is the Soul of our souls, the Life of our lives. Although we have heard these terms and expressions innumerable times, yet we have never spent a moment in realizing the spirit of such things,

and here Vedanta comes to tell us that it is true, and we should realize it, and the moment we do realize it, we become like Christ, and the ideal is to make us live as divine beings and not as ordinary mortals whom we hear are born in iniquity etc But we must realize God within us, and how we can do that is the principal point. That point has been explained in various ways by the Vedanta philosophy.

Here Sri Krishna is considered to be an Incarnation of God. The Hindus regard Sri Krishna as the Christians regard Christ. Sri Krishna is the Christ of India Though he lived in India 1400 years before Christ, still his teachings are considered identical with the teachings of Jesus the Christ Here Sri Krishna, the Incarnation of the Divinity, has said. "The light which resides in the sun and illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in fire, do thou know to be Mine; do thou know to be divine light"[1] When we consider the light of the sun, we do not look at it from a material standpoint, but try to see that light which is behind this material light, and then we understand the divine energy working through the sun. Ordinary materialistic conception of the world is very poor and crude. All these different phenomenal objects like the sun, the moon, and other things are like combinations of molecules which is true, but what energy is there behind it? We never think of that. We say it is merely the power of gravitation etc., but behind that power of attraction is something still higher, and it is the manifestation of divine energy. In fact, all the forces that are manifested in the universe, are but the expressions of a primordial energy, and

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1 यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम्।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौतत्ते विद्धि मामकम् ॥१५।१२

Sankara said that the Supreme Self, the Paramatman, is the illuminator of all including the sun, moon and fire Having reached that Divine Illuminator, the seekers of *moksha* never return to *samsara* (phenomenal world), of which the individual souls or *jivas* are only parts manifesting themselves in conformity to the adjuncts (*upadis*), as *akasha* or space in a jar (*ghata*) is but a portion of the all-pervading *akasha* (space) So the Supreme Self is the essence of all and the real basis (or object) of all experiences, and without the Supreme Self everything is baseless and meaningless.

that does not belong to any one individual, and does not belong to the material world alone. The material world is the result, or is produced by that energy, and, therefore, that energy is prior to the material world, but we never think of that. Where do we come from? Is that energy insentient? Where does this sentiency come from? Do we ever ask that question? What is intelligence? Has intelligence come from some other energy? If we consider the materialistic idea to be true, that this energy is insentient. But can that insentient energy be the producer of intelligence, sentiency, and knowledge? We know a tree is known by its fruit. If the fruit of a tree be intelligence, knowledge, and consciousness, the tree itself cannot be unintelligent. No one has ever succeeded in producing intelligence from unintelligent matter. And that is an undeniable fact, therefore, if sentiency and intelligence be the result of a tree, or the product of an energy, then that energy cannot be unintelligent. So there is intelligence in that light which resides in the sun and illumines the whole world, and which is in the moon and in fire. These are only a few illustrations, and by these few illustrations Sri Krishna means that the whole phenomenal universe is produced by that light which is divine, and behind this phenomenal universe is the divine light of intelligence.

Then again Sri Krishna describes how this world is held together. The power of attraction and gravitation is also the expression of that divine energy. He says: "Pervading the earth by my energy I nourish all herbs, having begot the watery moon"[2] The earth is held together, the molecules and atoms of the earth are held together by that one power and energy which is called attraction and gravitation; in fact, our physical bodies are held together by the same forces. Do you ever think of that? Why do not the molecules flow off and go to pieces? The same force of attraction and gravitation is

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[2] गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥१५।१३

Energy (*ojas*) pertains to *Isvara* who is devoid of all desires and passions. The divine energy of God permeats the earth for supporting the world. Held on that energy, the centre of attraction, the earth does not become shattered to pieces. Vide the *Taittiriya Samhita* IV. 1.8.

there. Where does that force come from? It comes from that one common source, the eternal energy. So pervading the earth, that energy includes all inhabitants, minerals, vegetables, and animals, "By my energy I support all these", the Lord said. That energy is the support of our bodies. That keeps us upon this earth. That energy is support of this earth and makes the earth rotate round the sun on its own axis. "I nourish all the beautiful things all the flesh, the herbs, the vegetables that come under phenomena", he said. All these tastes come from that divine energy which is devoid of desires and passions. It is an energy where there is neither desire, nor passion of any kind, because it is divine; or it can be said that is divine energy, there is neither passion, nor any desire, which troubles us. That is the difference. Some people do not understand that. They picture the Divinity according to their material standard, but if they are full of desires and ambitions, their God will be like that. If there are revenge and hatred, that would be the anthropomorphic conception of God, but the one who is full of love, sees God full of love, and he says that God has no hatred and no revenge.

There are number of sects amongst the Christians and Mohammedans and Hindus, who believe that God never takes revenge, but He is all-loving Christ himself preached that So if we have desires in ourselves, we create a God of our own kind Then we project our own idea and magnify that to an infinite degree, and we begin to worship that God, but the real divine Being is free from all desires and passions He pervades all the earth and, not only that, but He also pervades the sun, all planetary systems and stars and the whole universe If that power were not there, the earth and planetary systems would have been shattered to pieces That power which holds them together, is the manifestation of divine energy. So Sri Krishna first gives the illustrations of the gross material objects of senses like light, sun, moon, stars, earth, vegetables etc. which are the gross objects below the surface, and then illustrates the internal functions of our bodies abiding in the bodies of all living creatures He illustrates internal fire, as being associated with the inspirations and expiration of breath to digest the four-fold food We know that all the chemical changes are produced by certain forces The

heat, circulation etc., are all but the manifestations of the same energy. The four-fold food are that which we masticate, swallow like water or liquid, and lick like honey or jelley. All these various forms of foods and drinks are digested by fire. All foods are digested by some power within us, which may be called the power of oxygen or any other chemical power, but still all these powers, chemical or oxygen, are but the expressions of the manifestation of that one eternal energy.

Then Sri Krishna goes still deeper to the mental plane, and there we find the expression of divine energy First, there is the external function, then there are internal organic functions and mental functions. Now what are the mental functions? To this Sri Krishna says. "Abiding in the body of living beings as Vaishvanara, associated with (or kindled by) Prana and Apana, I digest the four-fold food (15. 14). And I am seated or I dwell in the hearts of all; from Me are memory, knowledge, as well as their lack; it is I who am to be known by all the Vedas, I am indeed the author of Vedanta as well as the knower of the Vedas" (15. 15).[3] Here you see by this memory and knowledge are included all the mental functions, like perceptions, sensations, and intellectual functions. Memory is that power of reproducing what we have already perceived or sensed either in this birth or before this existence. What we have already experienced in our life, if that is reproduced on the conscious plane, that is memory. So memory includes all perceptions and feelings. Memory or feeling could not come if there were no feeling. Memory of some sensation could not be there, if there were no sensation; so memory presupposes an experience which covers everything. Knowledge includes that which we derive from sense-perceptions, and it

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[3] अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम्॥
सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो
मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनञ्च।
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो
वेदान्तकृद् वेदविदेव चाहम्॥१५।१४-१५

"चतुर्विधं चतुष्प्रकारं अन्नमशनं भोज्यं भक्ष्यं चाष्यं लेह्यं च।"—Sankara

is internal or inductive knowledge. So these two, memory and knowledge cover all mental functions in general.

And there are two kinds of memory of this life: all that we have experienced in this life and the reproduction of all that we experienced in previous lives. These two are projected on the mental plane. These are remembered by those who have the power to bring them out from the subconscious plane.

Memory is the store-house of all the sensations and experiences, which are reproduced by that power of the mind, called memory. When the sense-powers come in contact with the objects of senses, which produces knowledge, we are conscious of it. That covers all kinds of knowledge gathered from sense-perceptions i.e. knowledge of the whole of our own body, of the external world, of sound or taste or smell, and of touch, and all these things are included in that one word, knowledge.

Ordinary mortals have this knowledge which is dependent on sense-perceptions, but there are other kinds of knowledge independent of sense-perceptions. Those who are psychic, or are on the spiritual plane, and are clairvoyant or clairaudient, whose mental eye is open, their range of knowledge is wider than the range of knowledge of an ordinary individual dependent on sense-perceptions.

A scientist's range of knowledge is wider, because he depends upon the finer instruments. A Yogi's knowledge is still wider than that of a scientist, because he does not depend upon instruments, his mind is more profound, his spiritual eye is open and he has a finer vision by which he can see things which ordinary mortals cannot. Things of the past and future appear to the eye of his soul as the objects of senses, and those appear before the sense-power of an ordinary mortal, so his range of knowledge is widest. Therefore knowledge i.e. knowledge of an ordinary mortal or a psychic or a Yogi includes all these.

Sometimes we find persons with loss of memory, who have very poor knowledge. A person extremely intelligent at one time may lose his intelligence and become idiotic or insane or stupid. A person who has very good memory, may lose it. But where does that loss come from? That also comes from that same source. Those whose minds are disturbed and

soul is disturbed by passion, desire, worry, anxiety, nervousness, lose those mental functions and all on account of an organic disorder. There may be some disorder in the brain, which would prevent manifestation of certain mental functions. The instrument goes wrong just as some wheel in a clock may go wrong and the clock will not move. So the organs and nervous centres of the brain are like instruments. There may be some defect, but that defect is produced by the same energy. All diseases are produced by the same energy. When some obstacles appear, there is the manifestation of power which may be some disease, physical or mental or spiritual. So those who live good, virtuous, pure and chaste lives, will never lose their powers, but those who are wasting their energy and living immoral and vicious lives, injuring others, will suffer from a great many losses which will be the results of their own acts. They bring them upon their own selves, no one else is responsible for this. The same force reacts, and brings such results, and they suffer from them. In fact, good memory and perfect knowledge are the results of reactions of certain forces, or they are the results of the reflected actions. Having described all these different forces as the manifestations of expressions of the one divine energy, Sri Krishna says: "All the Scriptures have certain or different ideals of one Supreme Being; I am to be known by all Scriptures. All the Scriptures try to know something; they describe a certain ideal first and then show the method by which that ideal can be reached; this is what we mean by Scriptures". If we analyse the Bible, we see that it has a certain ideal, and there are methods by which that ideal can be reached. These are the ideals of the heaven, or divine communion, or perfect freedom, or the attainment of perfection or celestial pleasures. These ideals are described first and held to be the highest ideals, and then there are methods through which these ideals can be reached, and this is the function of the Scriptures.

There are many Scriptures in the world, and, in all Scriptures, we find the way to salvation from sorrow, suffering, disease, and death. The attainment of perfection, felicity etc. are considered to be the certain ideals for which the authors have devised different methods. Each Prophet comes and forms certain methods, and these are written down by the disciples.

Their writings become the Scriptures and that is all. The experiences of different spiritual giants help us to attain the highest ideals of life. These highest ideals are in harmony with that universal Ideal, the Supreme. And as I have told you repeatedly when such a spiritual teacher speaks and uses the pronouns 'I', 'me' and 'mine', he never uses them in the ordinary mortal sense, but in the sense of the eternal Supreme Spirit. So when Sri Krishna said: "I am to be known by all the Scriptures"—'वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो, वेदान्तकृद् वेदविदेव चाहम्', i.e. means that supreme universal Being with whom He is one and the same.

"I am the Author of Vedanta" (वेदान्तकृद्). Here you will notice that Vedanta is the oldest spiritual Scripture, yet it is the newest, because every time we read it, it is new, every time we study and understand it, it is new. Truth can never grow old, although it is the oldest thing in the world. And when the phenomenal universe did not exist, the sun and the moon did not exist, even then the eternal Truth existed. It is the oldest of all, yet it will be new to you when you analyse it.

Gravitation is older than Newton, but when Newton discovered it, it was a new thing. Yet it is the oldest of all. How could there be any author of Vedanta? Vedanta means that eternal Truth, and the writings and teachings of Vedanta explain that eternal Truth. How can there be any author? Sri Krishna was one of the teachers. Vedanta has no author, because it is eternal. Before Sri Krishna there were many teachers. Even in the *Upanishads*, which are the oldest writings, you will find that they refer back to some other teachers from whom they were handed down. "I am the author of Vedanta as well as the source of the Scriptures", Sri Krishna might say like this.

'Vedanta' means knowledge or wisdom, though Vedanta means secondly the Scriptures of the Hindus. So the knower of all Vedas is one who has attained to perfection, knowledge, and divine wisdom. Vedanta includes all the Scriptures, because it is not confined to any particular book. It means eternal knowledge and wisdom confined in all the Scriptures of the world. The word 'Vedanta' comes from the Sanskrit root word *vid*, to know, and from the same word is taken *vid*, to know or realize.

So you see, after describing first the gross physical objects of the senses and then the internal functions of the bodies, both mental and intellectual, Sri Krishna goes on up to the supreme ideal of all the Scriptures. So the ideals of all the Scriptures have come from the same common source. Wisdom is only the revelations and discoveries of the illumined and inspired souls. Inspirations are never from the outside they are but the disclosure of higher knowledge within us. The moment you are ready and you open the door which shuts off the communication with the eternal Being, the eternal wisdom will flow into your heart or soul. That comes in silence. That quiets down your mind. Therefore do not let it be disturbed by ordinary things like worries. God never speaks except in silence, and He never speaks with a voice. Some people think He speaks with peculiar voices, and all these voices we hear are only on the lower sense-plane, and are hallucinations and imaginations. God never speaks through a voice, He speaks only in silence, and the soul understands it. Have you made your soul ready to hear that voice? If you have, you are inspired.

The Lord is beyond the perishable and the imperishable universe—this world and that. That Scriptures lead to the ideal of the Supreme, and that Supreme Being is described as beyond the perishable and the imperishable. Sri Krishna says: "In this world, there are two beings, the one perishable and the other imperishable. The perishable are all phenomena, and the eternal energy which produces them is the imperishable".[4] First of all, there is the phenomenal universe, the

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[4] द्वाबिमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च।
क्षर सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥१५।१६

Sankara said: "क्षरश्च क्षरति इति क्षरः विनाशी एको राशिरपरः पुरुषोऽक्षरस्तद् बिपरीतः भगबतो मायाशक्तिः क्षराख्यस्य पुरुषस्य उत्पत्तिबीजं अनेकसंसारिजन्तुकाम-कर्मादिसंस्कार श्रयः अक्षरः पुरुष उच्यते। * * कूटस्थः कूटः राशिः राशिरिब स्थितः, अथबा कूटः माया बञ्चना जिह्मता कुटिलता इति पर्य्यायाः, अनेकमायादिप्रकारेण स्थितः कूटस्थः संसारबीजानन्यगात् न क्षरति इति अक्षर उच्यते।"

Regarding central idea and ideal of this verse, Madhusudana Sarasvati said: "एबं सोपाधिकमात्मानमुक्त्वा क्षराक्षरशब्दबाच्यकार्य्यकारणोपाधिद्वया-

result, or the manifestation. The sun, the moon, planets, stars, earth, heat, light, vegetables, minerals, and animals—all these are phenomenal. The word 'phenomena' includes everything that has birth, or that is subject to evolution, growth, decay and death. Eeverything that has birth, must die sooner or later. A vegetable or a tree which grows from a seed, may last for thousands and thousands of years, still it will die. You have seen the big trees of California. Some say that these trees are older than Moses, or older than the creation described in Genesis, and they are old over six thousands years, and grow from small seeds. You have seen the seeds, and they are very small, but these trees are huge or gigantic. One of these, which is called the Mariposa, is a big tree known as the Grissly Giant, 360 feet high and 150 feet in circumference, and these trees, although they last for thousands of years, still will die. You can see some of these dead trees.

The earth had its birth and will die, the sun had its birth, and will die, and the planetary system had its birth and will die also. We will not live to see the death of all these things, still we know that they are perishable, and this word 'perishable' includes everything that is phenomenal. Everything phenomenal is perishable, and everything perishable is phenomenal. Where do these phenomena come from? As I have already said, they come from one eternal energy, as modern science tells us, and that one eternal energy which produces all these objects known as phenomenal objects, is imperishable. That energy is never destroyed, although the whole of the phenomena is destroyed. That energy, the mother of these phenomena, is indestructible. They come out from that common source, and go back.

There is an infinite mass of nebulous matter. And you may suppose the nebular hypothesis to be true. When the

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वियोगेन निरुपाधिकं शुद्धमात्मानं प्रतिपादयति कृपया भगवानर्जुनाय त्रिभिः श्लोकैः—द्वाविमौ * * ।"

Regarding the word कूटस्थः, Sridhara-swami said. "कूटस्थः कूटः राशि शिलाराशिः पर्वते इव, देहेषु नश्यत्स्वपि निर्विकारतया तिष्ठततीति कूटस्थः चेतनो भोक्ता सतु * * ।"

huge mass of nebulous matter is dissolved, it goes back to that eternal energy without any form. All these beautiful forms of planets with their inhabitants will in course of time become extinct, but the energy, the source of them, will never be lost, and will never be increased or diminished. The whole universe will remain latent in the form of force, and the force in the potential latent state is called energy. Imagine this universe as one involved in the finite ocean of ether or energy of imperceptible things, which is the substance, or the seed of all forces. The whole phenomenal universe will go back to that state of energy, and then nothing will be perceived by any one, yet the whole universe will remain as energy. This energy is never going to perish, because it is eternal. This energy of this phenomenal universe is like two beings (the word 'beings' is used in a figurative sense), but when you take its literal meaning, it has two meanings, one being is perishable, and the other is imperishable. The perishable is all that is phenomenal etc., and the imperishable transcends all phenomena.

The divine energy, from which all perishable beings originate and which is the seed of latent impressions, desires, and actions pertaining to all mortal beings, is imperishable. When the mind ceases to perform any function, all the impressions and desires remain latent, just as when you go into a deep sleep. Go to bed, and you are in a deep sleep, and then your mental and intellectual functions are all latent. Then your memory is not active, and your feelings and actions, natural desires, ambitions, jealousy, and love are all latent. Where do these functions go? You have not lost them. They are latent i.e. your mind is inactive in a potential state. Suppose that state lasts for a longer period, and after that time you wake up. Then you do not know how time has vanished.

Time exists on the conscious plane. So if you go to sleep and wake up after a thousand years, you think you went to bed just then. Then you compare that state with your conscious state, and see everything is changed, as was the case with Rip Van Winkle You say, 'what a wonderful change! I have been asleep so long ; perhaps the earth has gone through another cycle. Still nothing is lost, all your desires and ambitions wake up, and your worries and anxieties produce their

results. You see the seeds in the fields buried for months here and going still farther north they will be several months longer than here, perhaps for a whole year, still the energy is not lost. The impressions of growth are not lost or destroyed, as they wake up, and produce their results as soon as they find favourable environments. So it is with our mental states, so it is with the universe. So all these desires remain latent when the mind ceases to produce any functions. So is the eternal energy, the seed of latent desires, activities, and organic functions of all mortal beings or the lowest animals, or the angels. Angels go to sleep just as we do, but they do not sleep so often.

So all these changeable beings are perishable, but the energy is called imperishable. The imperishable is called divine, because the energy which belongs to the universe, is divine, and belongs to that one Being whose body is eternal energy. When we realize the Truth in this way, we have realized the whole phenomenal universe which we perceived with the senses, and which we can think of. Our own being which is intellectual and psychical, mental and physical, is included in that energy.

Another explanation is given, that the individual souls or egos do not exist when the mind is latent. This is not time. The ego is there in a latent state. If all the mental functions are latent in your deep sleep state, the ego is asleep too. The ego sleeps, and wakes up. So with the changes of these different manifestations or phenomena, the ego is subject to a similar change. If our bodies are diseased, the ego feels that it is diseased; if we lose an eye, the ego is said to be blind; if the power of hearing is defective in the body, the ego is said to be deaf etc. So that explanation is included in the other explanations which I have just given. These are the different glories of the Supreme Being, or of the energy with all its manifestations. These are the glories, but beyond these is the Lord.

"But there is another, the highest Spirit, designated as the Over-soul, the unchangeable Lord, who pervades and sustains the three worlds".[5] This highest Lord or Spirit is denied by

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[5] उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्यः विभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वर ॥१५।१७

the materialists, but is understood by those who are not absolute materialistic, and is understood by those who have gone deeper and further than the planes reached by the materialists. This Spirit is designated as the Over-soul.

The unchangeable Lord, or the infinite Being, pervades and sustains the three worlds and the noumenon, the background, is the substance upon which the energy resides. That substance is not material substance, but it is the source of intelligence, consciousness, knowledge, and life. In fact, energy is only the energy of that Supreme Being. It is distinct from ordinary energy, and is also distinct from the phenomenal universe. It is untouched by the impertections of the perishable. It is eternal, pure, intelligent, and free by its nature. It is not dependent upon anything, and, therefore, it is free. It appears as individual egos by coming in contact with the intellectual and psychic emotional planes. By its inner consciousness it appears as individual souls, and it pervades the whole universe by its consciousness and vital energy. 'By His mere existence He supports the whole universe'.

The three worlds are the gross physical, mental, and spiritual worlds. As this infinite Being is the Lord of the universe or the Lord of the energy, or the Lord of all, so when we analyse the whole universe, first starting from the gross material objects like the sun, moon, earth, planets etc., we come to the conclusion that all these changeable phenomena are produced by that one imperishable or indestructible energy, but this is only one side, or the objective world. We have analysed the objective side of the universe, but there is a subjective side, and in this subjective side we find this energy, and beyond that is the one source of consciousness and intelligence. That source is something which is pure, independent, and free from all dependency. And we have already known that the individual soul is only a portion of that supreme Over-soul. The infinite Over-soul is manifesting through so many individual egos. They are like so many channels through which the infinite Over-soul is expressing its consciousness, vitality, intelligence, and everything.

In the next verse (XV. 18), this *Purusha*, who transcends both the perishable and the imperishable. is known as Purushottama.

"Since I transcend the perishable and am beyond the imperishable, I am known in the world and in the Vedas as the highest Spirit or the Supreme Spirit".[6] We also learn that this phenomenal world is described as a fig tree (Asvattha). In the first verse of this chapter, there is the tree, and the energy as the source of this tree is the phenomenal nergy. You see Purusottama transcends the phenomenal world, and the tree is the phenomenal energy. You see He transcends the phenomenal world, the tree itself with its root, yet, at the same time, He produces the tree, because the tree cannot live without being supported internally and externally by that infinite Being which is known in all the Scriptures, in the Vedas, and in the world, as the highest Spirit or infinite Being.

"He who being freed from delusion, realizes Me, the Supreme Spirit, knows all, and worships Me with his whole heart and soul".[7] If you have once realized the Supreme Spirit, if you have also realized the glory, the sublimity, the beauty, and the grandeur of that Being, you cannot help it but worshiping that Being with your whole heart and soul. So the knowing of the grandeur leads to the worship and devotion of that Being,[8] and then your mind is not divided any more. Then the mind instantly rises above this material plane, because it is changeable and transitory It is only phenomenal The

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यस्मात् क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।

अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥१५।१८

Sankara said in his Commentary "Because I transcend the perishable, the tree of delusive *samsara*, called Asvattha, because I am higher than even the imperishable which constitutes the seed of that tree of *samsara*, because I am superior to the perishable and the imperishable, I am known in the world and in the Veda as the highest Spirit, devotees know Me as such, and the poets too incorporate this name in their poems and other words".

Madhusudana Sarasvati said "सच्चित्सुखैकवपुषः पुरुषोत्तमस्य नरायणस्य महिमा न हि मानमेति ।"

[7] यो मामेवमसंमूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।

स सर्वविद् भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥१५।१५

[8] "सर्ववित् मां सर्वात्मानं वेत्तीति स एव सर्वज्ञः सर्वभावेन प्रेमलक्षणेन भक्तियोगेन * * ।—Madhusudana Sarasvati

mind rises above the energy, because it is insentient, and it rests where it ought to rest, and that is in the Supreme Spirit, and that resting of the whole heart and soul upon the infinite Being is the highest form of worship. If your whole being rests upon the Supreme, you do not know anything else. No more divine communion is necessary. You are on the highest plane of existence. There is no more sorrow, no suffering. Nothing can drag you down from that plane, as you are backed by the infinite Being. The lover has fallen into that infinite ocean, and there is the end. The true lover, or individual soul, has found the ocean toward which it has been running so long. This is the secret of all the Scriptures, and this is the truth realized by the great sages of the past.

"O sinless one, this, the most secret science, has been explained by me. Comprehending this a man becomes wise and his duties are all fulfilled".[9] The fulfilment of all duties is in the realization of the Supreme Being, and this is the first and the highest duty. All the duties performed during our daily life are only the duties of a lower nature included in that highest duty, which is the knowledge of the infinite Being, or the knowledge of the Over-soul. And, knowing that, all other duties are fulfilled, because the duties of life end in that divine knowledge. The object of life is fulfilled, because you have realized what is to be realized. You have understood the ideals of all Scriptures, and reached the goal of all religions.

And if a man or woman without performing any duties of ordinary life tries to attain to it in the first place, and accomplishes that fulfilment in this life, that man or woman is perfect, and he or she is the ideal of all nations.

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघ ।
एतद् बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान स्यात् कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥१५।२०

CHAPTER LI

SPIRITUALITY AND MATERIALISM

Now we will begin with the sixteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita.* This chapter mainly describes the discourse on spirituality and materialism (i.e. heaven and earth). In this chapter, we will find the description of the spiritual and the divine properties and the demoniacal properties, which make us divine in this life and which make us worldly, living like animals. So there are practically two kinds of nature which we find amongst human beings. The first is the divine or spiritual nature, and in describing this spiritual disposition (*daivi Prakriti*) Sri Krishna, the Blessed Lord, says: "Fearlessness, purity of heart and soul, steadfastness in knowledge and Yoga; alms-giving, self-restraint and worship, study of one's own (scriptures), austerity and uprightness (16.1), harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, absence of calumny, compassion to all creatures, uncovetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness (16.2), energy, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride; these (*quality*) belong to one born of a divine lot, O Bharata (16.3)".[1] Again the Lord describes the material disposition which is of the demonic (*asuric*) nature, and those are: "Ostentation, arrogance and self-conceit, anger as also insolence, and ignorance, belong to one who is born, O Partha, the son of Prithu,

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1 श्रीभगवानुवाच—

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥
अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥
तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमाद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥१६।१-३

for a demonic lot".[2] "The divine nature", the Lord says, "is deemed for liberation, the demonic nature for bondage. Grieve not, O Pandava, thou art born of a divine lot".[3]

Now, the first qualification, He says, is fearlessness. The man who is spiritual, becomes fearless in every way. He has no fear when he is alone; he has no fear when he has no means of supporting his own livelihood. He is absolutely free from all thoughts and ideas. He never thinks for a moment, 'I am alone, I have no relatives, what can I do?' He has just the same spirit as Christ spoke of, 'Do not fear for tomorrow, let tomorrow take care of itself'. Ordinarily we are afraid in respect of ourselves, when we find that there is no means for protecting ourselves in future. We have not faith enough in the will of the Lord who created everything, and had created our food before we came into existence. So that feeling of the future is a kind of fear, and the man who is absolutely fearless, has overcome that state of mind. He is also fearless in other ways. He does not fear anything of this earth, or of anything connected with the changes of circumstances. He is ready to face anything and everything, because he is directly related to the Supreme whose child he is, and he has no other thought. Therefore, he gains enormous power to free himself from attachment. That fear proceeds from ourselves, and when we have overcome that attachment, we are strong. Purity of heart is all-powerful, and it means really the abandonment of deception, dissimulation, and falsehood in business transactions and in all other transactions, and when that is accomplished, purity of heart comes. We must be truthful. We must not try to deceive anybody, or try to cheat or rob others, or take advantage of anybody. We must transact all our business with honesty, and these are the conditions of the pure in heart. One who is pure in heart does not try to make his living by unfair means of methods, but he is straightforward and honest. Such a man will have a very hard time in this age of

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दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च।
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम् ॥१६।४

दैवी सम्पद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता।
मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमाभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥१६।५

commercialism and materialism, because those who can rob and cheat others, will become rich, and be a great power in the community, but that idea is not carried into practice by those who wish to live a pure spiritual life. It is very difficult for those persons to live in a community guided by commercial feelings.

Steadfastness in the pursuit of knowledge, and in the practice of Yoga that is another qualification. We must be steadfast in the pursuit of knowledge, by which we can understand ourselves and the relation which we bear to the universal Spirit. Devotion to that knowledge and practice are necessary.

The another condition is very spiritual, and that being charitable, is the practice of charity in our daily life. Self-control includes the control of passions, senses, and desires. Direct these passions and desires toward the Ideal. Self-sacrifice is another qualification which adorns the character of one spiritually-minded. Self-sacrifice, austerity, uprightness, and devotion to the Ideal—are the qualifications which we find in the character of the great ones like Christ, Buddha, Ramakrishna and other Saviours They showed these divine qualities in their daily life.

We should practise non-killing i.e. we should not kill or injure others mentally and physically. We must be truthful and be absent from anger. We must not be angry with anybody, and when a person chastises or smites us on the right cheek, we should turn to him the left. That means absence of anger, and then anger comes under the lead of self-control. But it is mentioned separately to specify that particular qualification.

There should be renunciation of attachment to earthly things, conditions, and pleasures for the attainment of peace and tranquility of mind. The mind should be peaceful and restful and free from the habit of casting aspiration and indulging in calumny. Calumny is that phase of character by which one person discusses the failings and faults of another before others. If a person has some fault of character, we must not describe it before others, because that is a very injurious thing We must not criticise the character of others, but try to improve him instead of finding fault with him. Fault-finding is a very bad habit. We should make every possible effort not

to discuss the character of others. When two ladies are talking together, they sometimes begin to whisper about others. This tendency is common in persons who lack self-control.

There should be compassion of all kinds. We must be kind and compassionate. Non-covetuousness is a sterling quality. We must not covet another person's property which does not belong to us and which we have not acquired by proper exertion and labour. This covetuousness we will find amongst the majority of people in the social life. People who are full of covetuousness, covet other persons' property etc., and jealousy proceeds from that kind of covetuousness.

Gentleness is another essential quality. We should be gentle. If we examine the matter, we find each of these qualifications adorned the character of Jesus the Christ. Jesus did not covet anything, and did not covet a kingdom which was offered to him. Modesty is a good thing to have. Whenever there is a tendency to do anything which is not right, but which is evil. We must have the feeling of modesty.

We should not be so fickle. Fickleness is a thing which shows a restless state of mind. The majority of young people are so fickle, because they do not make the right use of life, and are guided by their whims and desires. A desire springs up, and they try to fulfil that desire, and in the midst of that fulfilment another desire comes up and they give up the former and try to follow the other force. This is the cause of all kinds of trouble. They have no steadiness or firmness of character. Learn to be first in your ideal. Choose that which is the highest, and be firm and determined, and do not shake it off after a few days or months to try something else. Those people are never happy who go from one door to another, knocking from here to there. They are always restless and unhappy. That is the condition of the minds of many men and women in the Western country, because their minds are not trained, and they are like children. Children love toys, and they are attracted by one thing after another. This is the condition of those untrained minds, but one who is advanced in spiritual life, never does such things. He thinks deeply before he takes up anything, and then he holds on to it until the last moment of his life. Such a character becomes the ideal of a nation. We must follow the path of such beings. We must have

spiritual energy and that strength of character which energy.

Forgiveness is a great quality. We must forgive others, because 'to err is human, to forgive is divine'. We should practise that. Christ said: "Forgive and ye shall be forgiven". If any one does any harm, or injury, or says anything against us, we try to take revenge, and that is a very common rule, especially for those living on the animal plane, but those who are trying to attain to self-realization or godliness in this life, always forgive other and let them find out their mistakes. We must learn by mistakes and should remember that, if we were in the position of others, we would commit the same mistakes. If our weakness were as great as of others, we should do the same and, putting ourselves in their place, we should try to forgive and sympathise with them.

Fortitude is a good quality which we should cultivate. If a little thing happens, or a change of circumstances takes place, many people become morose and do not know what to do. Such persons need fortitude. That strength brings life and vitality, by which we can remove great problems of life, which is the result of that power which spiritually-minded people possess, and that is called fortitude.

Laziness should not be allowed. People are not to be lazy. Ordinary people think that laziness is the same as spirituality, but laziness is not spirituality. Lazy people sit around and think they are becoming spiritual. They are so foolish. If we tell them to go to work, they think we are their enemies. So laziness should not be allowed, as it is not at all a sign of spirituality, but is a sign of disease, and, therefore it should be overcome.

Purity is a supreme virtue. Purity is of two kinds, external purity and internal purity. External purity is cleanliness. We should always observe clearliness in our body, and should take a daily bath, and use soap and such things as will cleanse our bodies. If the cloathes are not properly washed, we should not wear them, because it is unhealthy. That is one of the signs of godliness, and that is the aim of humanity and civilization itself. People have slowly learned to realize that cleanliness is a necessary thing. Fifty or one hundred years ago people in London did not bathe, and they are now

just beginning to be civilized. Of course, climatic conditions had something to do with it, but still we should keep our clothes clean. Internal purity is to remove all such tendencies and desires which are injurious to ourselves and to others.

Absence of hatred is a great harmonizing quality. We must not hate any living creatures. Some people rejoice in hating others. However low or unpleasant a creature may be, we must not hate him or her. We should never cultivate a feeling of hatred. If we hate something and encourage that feeling, it would become so strong that we will begin to hate other things also.

Absence of pride is an indispensable condition of good life What should we be proud of? Let us be proud of the Divine Being, who possesses all the wonderful qualities and divine powers. We should be proud of the divine powers and not of the little things which we possess. That latter kind of pride, instead of helping us onward and upward, keeps us down on a low plane of ordinary animals. These great qualities mentioned above, belong to one who is born with divine properties. If you study the character of one who is the ideal of a nation, you will find that he has become worthy by these qualities. Such characters are worthy of divine powers, and for such characters there is happiness in store. They are happy in this life. Who can be like that? He who has no ill feeling toward anybody, has no desire for possessing anything, but who is perfectly contented and is ready to do good to others, who is firm and steadfast in the pursuit of spiritual knowledge, and is charitable, and has self-control, and is ready to sacrifice everything for the sake of others, who devotes his time in studying the sacred and divine things, and does not waste his time in reading novels, and who is austere and free from anger, is a person or an ideal man. We all should try to live up to it to become spiritual. But these qualities you will find in some persons naturally, and in others they are not natural. Why is this? Why are some persons born with these quailties and others not? One who has practised these qualities, has developed a tendency, and that tendency will never leave him. But those who are materialistic, vicious in their spirits and not spiritual, possess qualities which are different, and we must know them. Viciousness, self-conceit, anger, and insolence

are the characteristics of those born of demoniacal tendencies. Hypocrisy is pretending to be righteous while, in reality, one is not.

Insolence is that kind of speech which is ordinarily known as insult. If a person describes a blind man saying how bright his sight is or how good he sees or looks, or if a person is ugly and they describe him or her as most beautiful, or if a person of low birth is described as one of noble family, ridiculing a person or insulting, etc.—these are all examples of hypocrisy. That kind of thing happens if a person has no respect for others. This is the result of self-conceit or disregard for the feelings of others.

Of course, these are not the only characteristics of one who is worldly and not spiritual. Later on Sri Krishna is going to describe more fully the character of that class. The divine property is for freedom, and the demoniacal property is for bondage. It is not merely for political freedom, but also for emancipation of the soul from the bondage of the world. That emancipation is the ideal, and comes when in attaining perfection the soul becomes free from all imperfections and all selfishness. He is then free from all attachments and lower passions and desires, and tendencies and ambitions At present we are living like slaves, but when we are absolutely free from earthly tendencies and ambitions, we have freedom, indeed. We must not forget that God is above all earthly conditions, and divinity will be manifested in us when we have succeeded in attaining that state avoiding those earthly tendencies and desires.

Sri Krishna speaks to Arjuna, his disciple "Grieve not, thou art born of divine properties". In the second chapter, Arjuna was grieving, and did not know what to do, or what course to take, so Sri Krishna is comforting him saying, "Thou art born of divine qualities and properties, so thou should not be discouraged or disheartened in any way". Then He goes on to explain: "There are two kinds of creatures in this world, the divine and the demoniacal. The divine has been described at length, now, O Partha, listen to the demoniacal"[4] Even in

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द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन् दैव आसुर एव च।
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥१६।६

the Vedas, the most ancient Scriptures of the world, we read that these two characteristics come out. The one is the embodiment of everything good, and the other is the embodiment of everything that is worldly and selfish, and that is ordinarily known as evil. These two govern the minds or souls of different individuals. In some, we find that the divine nature is predominent, and in others, the opposite nature is predominent. In the same individual, we find that the one side shows at one time and the other side at other times. When the animal side is predominent, they act like devils, and when divine side is predominent, they act like *devas*.

The demoniacal persons know not what is right and what is wrong. They have no sense of right and wrong, they have no idea that they do anything, and so they commit a crime without thinking of the result, and think that they are doing only what is right. They disregard all the ideals of life, all the injunctions of Scriptures, and also all spiritual ideas. They do not follow anybody but follow their own impulses and tendencies, and these impulses and tendencies are so strong that they cannot overcome them. They have neither purity, nor truthfulness, nor spiritual knowledge. They are absolutely ignorant. If you talk to them about pure souls, or purity, they do not understand, and they would think that you are talking of some things they could not grasp. It would take ages to train their minds, and also to educate them and to bring them

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Madhusudana Sarasvati quoted some verses from the *Upanishads*, which describe two natures of man, *daivi* and *asurik*:

"(a) 'त्रया प्रजापत्याः प्रजापतौ पितरि ब्रह्मचर्य्यमूषुर्देवा मनुष्या असुरा' इति श्रुतेः' (—बृहदारण्यक उः ५।२।१) ;

(b) 'द्वया ह प्रजापत्या देवाश्चासुराश्च ततः कानीयसा एव देवा ज्यायसा असुरा' इति (—बृहदारण्यक उः १३।१) ;

(c) 'तदेतदेवैषा दैवी वागनुवदति स्तनयित्नुर्द्द इति दाम्यत दत्त दयाध्वमिति तदेतत् त्रयं शिक्ष्देमं दानं दयामिति' (—बृहदारण्यक उः ५।२।३)।"

The *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* says that there are three 'D'-s which are *damyata, datta* and *dayadhvam* which mean 'be self-controlled', 'be charitable', and 'be compassionate' and that mean also *dama, dana* and *daya*. Now these three qualities make a man divine (*daivi*), and when a man is devoid of these qualities, they are caught by the demonic nature.

up from that condition to the highest ideal. They will have to be born again and again before they come to the realization of the value of these higher qualities.

Those who are materialists, who do not know the existence of the Supreem Spirit, and who think that matter is the cause of this universe, are deluded, and they do not understand the truth. They say that this universe is not founded upon truth, and there is nothing which is permanent and beyond matter. Without a soul basis they deny the soul or foundation of the universe. They are blind to the truth realm which governs our souls and our higher life. To them the universe is without a soul or truth basis, or without a Supreme Ruler. They do not think that there could be a higher power which governs all the material forces as well as all the ordinary forces known as mechanical forces. This world has arisen, they say, as the result of cause and effect, and has originated from lust. They think we have come into this world as the outcome of lust, we did not exist before, nor shall we exist in future, therefore let us get the best out of this life, and when we die, everything will come to an end.

Such persons existed even before the time of Sri Krishna, and we find the description of these even in prehistoric times. These persons will exist as long as the world exists. These ideas are as old as the human civilization, or as the oldest religions of the world. So, when we see persons holding such ideas, we must know that they existed before, and they are not new. So when a materialist says, 'show me your spirit, show me', we must take it as a natural condition of that state of mind, as it was in ancient times.

Holding on to such a view what do they do? Holding to such a view these degenerated and undegenerated souls with a small intellect injuring others with fierce deeds, remain as the enemies of the world as well as the enemies of peace and happiness in this world. They steal, create quarrels, stone and rob, and do all kinds of injurious things that exist in this world. These are happening as the result of the influence of such persons. They say they believe in something that is higher and that has a soul basis, but if you examine, you find that they have learned this talk just like parrots. The higher truth does not produce any impression on their souls,

for, if you have these higher ideals, you will be friendly even toward your enemies, but such persons are very rare.

"Filled with ignoble desires, full of hypocritical pride and arrogance, holding evil ideas, and through illusion, they work with unrighteous results. They have desires which can never be satiated. They have hypocritical pride of their own condition and their views, and all those ideas which proceed from extreme selfishness and injuring others, are consequently, evil and self-deluding. They do not know, and cannot see, why other persons should exist, and, apparently, they think no one should live but themselves, and others should die as quickly as possible. Full of base and ignoble cares and anxities which will end only with death, regarding sense enjoyments as their highest aim, and fully convinced that there is no other happiness in this world than this sensual enjoyment, tied with hundreds of fetters of hope, indulging in thoughts of anger, they try to hoard wealth by unfair means, by falsehood, by lying, cheating, robbery and all kinds of unfair means, and indulge in their passions full of hatred. They love themselves first, and they think that brings comfort to their bodies they love. They have various hopes, and these are like fetters by which their hearts and souls are bound and tied down. They have cares and anxieties for their wives, husbands, children, social position etc., and they think that the whole burden of the world is upon their heads, and the world will not continue to move and go on, if they were not anxious about it".

They again, think: "Now I have got this, and this desire I shall fulfil, this is mine to possess now, and this also will be mine in future, and so they go on thinking".[5]

प्रवृत्तिञ्च निवृत्तिञ्च जना न विदुरासुराः ।
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥
असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरणीश्वरम् ।
अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यं कामहेतुकम् ॥
एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥
काममाश्रित्यः दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।
मोहाद् गृहीत्वाऽसद्ग्राहान् प्रवर्पन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥

"That enemy has been slain by me, others I shall slay. I am a Lord, I must enjoy. I am successful, powerful and happy. I am rich and of noble birth, who else is equal to me? I am the biggest, I will sacrifice, I will rejoice, do this and that, and thus constantly thinking of nothing else but 'I', being deluded by ignorance they constantly think of themselves as the greatest ones".

"Bewildered by many a fancy, entangled in the meshes of delusion, attracted by sense pleasures they fall into the foul regions of darkness; they cannot get out of it, from one state of darkness they go into another, and again into another, and thus continue until they pass that state and higher qualities begin to manifest themselves".

"Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with the pride and self-intoxication of wealth they perform sacrifices. If they perform religious work, they perform in name only with hypocrisy without obeying the sacred injunctions. They think they are doing things with the right spirit but they are not".

"Possessed by egoism, power, haughtiness, lust and anger, these malicious people hate me in their own as well as in other bodies", says the Lord.[6] God dwells in them also, in their

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चिन्तामपरिमेयाञ्च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।
कामोपभोपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥
आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमिन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥
इदमद्य मया लब्धमिदं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुणर्धनम् ॥१६।७-१३
असो मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।
ईश्वरोऽहमहं भीगी सिद्धोऽहं वलवान् सुखी ॥
आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽनोऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।
यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ॥
अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः
प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥
आत्मसम्भाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥

souls. Such demoniacal individuals have their godliness latent in them, that is one peculiarity. God says that such persons, possessed by egoism, haughtiness, lust and anger, hate the Supreme Spirit and work against their divine selves unknowingly, as well as work against the Supreme Spirit dwelling in other individuals. God dwells in a sinner just as well as He dwells in a saint. The soul of a sinner is the same as the soul of a saint; only the sinner does not know it, and when he does know it he is a saint.

If we know that God dwells in us and He is the Soul of our souls, all our darkness of ignorance will vanish, and if we are possessed of the qualities of a demon, the divine nature in us will instantly be suppressed. The darkness which has gathered in a thousand years in a cave, will disperse at the very moment when a match is struck, and the light comes. The light will disperse the darkness which has gathered in a thousand years. So all these evil tendencies and qualifications which are the results of the darkness of ignorance, will be dispersed when the knowledge of the Divine Spirit is revealed. When that knowledge comes the, individual soul will be transfigurd into a Divine Being, and each individual soul is bound to go through that transformation sooner or later. So we shall have to wait and work our own salvation, and gradually after going through different steps of evolution, we shall at last reach the ultimate goal of life.

Sri Krishna further says: "These evil and sinful people, the most degraded of men are born again and again after death into demoniacal realms; they get such parents as will help them in finding out the proper manifestation of their own tendencies. So, if we find demoniacal people have lots of children, their children are of the same kind, because they deserve such children. So they come again and again, until they have risen above that plane of existence".

"Entering into demonic realms and deluded birth after birth they do not attain to the Divine Being; they go through

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अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधञ्च संश्रिताः।
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः ॥१६।१४-१८।१

conditions still lower than that".[7] You know, we mould our future and create our destiny by our own thoughts and deeds, and when we have not moulded our character according to the highest ideal, our condition becomes very miserable. Therefore, we must be prepared to create our destiny and mould our character according to the highest, right from this very moment, otherwise our future will be the result of our present, and we shall have to go through all these troubles, and shall have to come back and be born again and again, and have these tendencies and desires fulfilled. Therefore, we should strive hard in this life to attain to perfection, and build up to such ideas, and try to live up to them. If we do hold to such ideas, we shall be born into higher conditions, and our future will be much better than what we have today.

The Lord says. "Three are the gates and each is degrading to the soul. Lust, Wrath and Greed, these are the gates of hell, therefore, these should be abandoned by one who strives for spiritual perfection. When we have abandoned these three, we have gone beyond the reach of what is called hell".[8] Hell is nothing but darkness, ignorance, and suffering.

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7 तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान् संसारेषु नराधमान्।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वे योनिषु ॥
असुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढ़ा जन्मनि जन्मनि।
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥१६।१९-२०

Really deluded creatures, said Sankara in his Commentary, are born again and again, without attaining to ultimate goal of life So we shall have to march towards realization of the *Atman* leaving behind all the *tamasik* nature and bindings.

8 त्रिविधं नरकास्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः।
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥
एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः।
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥१६।२१-२२

Sri Krishna says: "He who is released from lust, wrath, and greed, will act for the good of the self, because of the absence of that by which obstructed he has not heitherto so acted. By so doing he even attains *moksha*".

All suffering comes in that state of ignorance, and wherever there is that extreme lust, wrath, jealousy, and greed, earthly tendencies, passions, and lack of self-control, there is the worst state of humanity. That is hell, and the Lord, when reincarnate, points out the hellish condition, and rouses the soul, lifts the soul, and shows the devotee the path of righteousness, and that is all He does.

When a person is released from these three gates which lead to darkness suffering and unhappiness, he perceives what is good for his soul, and then comes the spiritual awakening; and that must come when one can rise above undesirable and hellish conditions. It is a kind of awakening, and that is the first step; and when that step comes, he begins to see things differently and to examine his character, and tries to find out his own faults, and corrects them. But before the awakening came, he could not appreciate these ideals. They would have meant nothing to him. But now he gets glimpses of the higher life and what the spiritual life must be like. So long he had no idea of this. If any one spoke of spiritual happiness or peace, he would have it, and now he begins to get glimpses of it, and then he tries to live up to these ideals and, gradually he rises, step by step, higher and higher, until the goal of perfection is reached.

So, first of all, we should try to conquer the lust, wrath, and greed, which are the gates leading to destruction, unhappiness, misery, and suffering. Then we would examine our own characters, and find out why we suffer, and try to hold the ideal before our minds being free from lust, wrath, and greed. Then the highest goal will be reached.

Thus Sri Krishna explains first the divine qualities and properties, then the demoniacal properties and shows the difference, and then tells how the highest goal can be reached by those alone who have developed and practised the divine qualifications, or have been awakened, or have risen above demoniacal tendencies. Sri Krishna further says: "He who, neglecting the injunctions of spiritual science, acts under the impulse of his desires, does not attain to success, or to happiness, or to the highest. Therefore the Scriptures is thy authority in deciding as to what ought to be done and what ought not to be done.

Now, thou oughtest to know and perform thy duty laid down in the Scripture-law".[9]

Therefore we must not follow our desires, but try to mould our nature according to the injunctions or ideals which we get from the spiritual science. Let the spiritual science be that authority in deciding what ought and what ought not to be done. "Having learned the spiritual law thou shouldst act accordingly"; and when that is performed and we rise above the spiritual law through that obedience, we ultimately reach the highest ideal of life, the attainment of knowledge of the *Atman*.

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9 यः शास्त्रविधिसुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥
तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥१६।२३-२४

Now the Scriptural ordinance is the command of the Veda in the form of injunctions and prohibitions (*vidhi* and *nishedha*). Generally the scriptural *karmas*, *yagas* and *satras*, when performed according to the strict laws of the Vedas, bring *Svargas* or heavens. But those heavens are not permanent. So Sri Krishna says not to neglect the scriptural laws, but to direct the aim and goal to the attainment of permanent happiness and peace which are reached by the realization of the *Atman*.

CHAPTER LII

THREE-FOLD FAITH

The seventeenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita* begins with the description of different kinds of faith. Of course, we all understand more or less that which is called faith and the meaning of it, and if we study the nature of this faith, we find that there are three kinds of faith, *sattvic*, *rajasic*, and *tamasic*. There are two kinds of men who are believers (*astika*) and unbelievers (*nastika*). The believers (*astikas*) fix their eyes to the teachings of the Scriptures (*Shrutis* and *Smritis*) and do, or do not work according to injunctions (*vidhis*) or prohibitions (*nishedhas*) of them. But Arjuna's question may be thus stated. Is the worship offered by them to God, or to different gods, etc. based on *sattva*, or *rajas*, or *tamas*?

Ordinarily we divide faith into two, blind faith and genuine faith i.e. faith without being aided by reason, which may be known as credulity, and faith with reason. So faith is to be found amongst those who believe in the injunctions of the Scriptures and those who worship God or gods by obeying those injunctions and following one particular kind of faith all over the world. For instance, one who believes in the Bible as the revealed word of God, has just as much faith as the Mohammedans who believe in the Koran, or the Hindus who believe in the Vedas as the revealed word of God.

That condition of mind is everywhere the same amongst those classes who do not try to analyse, but take it for granted, who do not wish to know anything about it, but accept it on faith. There is another kind of faith based upon reason. We want to find a cause for everything, and if that cause is satisfactory and appeals to our rational instinct, we accept it. This kind of faith would be different from that other kind I have just described, a faith taking that for granted that appeals to that particular class of mind, without reasoning or trying to find a cause for it.

The old idea was faith in the Father, and that was the foundation of faith in Christianity. And even that is the foun-

dation in the Roman church. The people belonging to that, accept faith anything, and if you ask what they mean by faith, they would more or less mean that they accept it, because it is beyond the reach of human beings, or because it is something that cannot be known or accepted or explained by ordinary mortals, something which would ordinarily be called impossible to explain. But that faith is not explained here. In Vedanta, that faith is not to be considered at all. That religion is a blind faith, because, in Vedanta, religion is science, philosophy, and reason, and their most important theory is that nothing is to be accepted unless it is based upon scientific principles, or supported by rational logic, or approved by the best thinkers and philosophers of the world. Vedanta would not ask you to accept blind faith. It would ask you to give the reasons of everything. If they say that the Scriptures are the revealed words of God, they would give the most wonderful arguments based upon logic and science. They would trace everything as the expression of Logos.

There is a philosophy of words which describes the origin of words, and that philosophy does not exist in any other country, and if you study that philosophy, which is called philology, you will see that it is wonderful as the science of language itself Sanskrit is such a wonderful language that from common roots you would derive the most wonderful language of the world. Monosyllabic roots are the oldest roots, and from a few roots Max Muller counted them, and said the most ancient roots or words were about one hundred and fifty, and from these roots innumerable words would be formed by prefixes, suffixes etc, by following the grammar. The Sanskrit grammar is the most perfect grammar in the world, and it would trace the meaning of these roots—how did they happen to mean those certain things by these root verbs. That is a wonderful science, and this science has given rise to modern science known as the science of language.

All the Oriental schools by studying Sanskrit grammar, get a higher idea of this wonderful scince, and they say that words are beginningless and endless, and they would say, that all words that we utter are but expressions of that eternal voice of the universe, and that eternal voice is the expression of the one universal Being, the Logos. The Logos was at one time

considered to be the first manifestation of God, the first-born Lord of the universe, and, in the Christian Bible, the Logos is identified with Jesus the Christ, and he became the Son.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God," says the Bible. It says that Word was the foundation of the universe, and from that the whole universe has been created i.e. projected. In fact, the whole phenomenal universe, according to this philosophy and science, is nothing but the expression of that one eternal Word. So you see everything described in the Scriptures, is considered to be eternal.

So the arguments that would be advanced in regard to the revelation of the Scriptures, or the Scriptures as the revealed Word of God, are the most wonderful arguments given in any language by a human being. So you see the ideas which you have learned here, are considered to be childish ones, when you consider them as not founded upon any universal truth, and when these are compared with the most wonderful truth known by the Seers of the Vedic period. So all these arguments you hear in support of the Scriptures as revealed Word, are childish. They do not explain any universal truth by it, but, on the contrary, if you study the Scriptures and philosophy of India, you will find that every philosopher has given the most philosophical and scientific proofs that have been given, or could be given.

In Vedanta, when you find that the word 'faith' is used, it is not blind faith, but it is based upon rational arguments. By faith they mean the conclusions gathered through the sayings of these sages who have realized the Truth, and through the writings of these sages when we accept that Truth, there is that true mental condition of conviction. When that mental condition is supported by science and logic that would be faith. So here Arjuna asks Sri Krishna about this faith. The Sanskrit word for faith is *shraddha*, which means a kind of conviction that can never be changed, because it is founded upon universal truth. We generally use the expression of this faith in ourselves. We always have faith in ourselves. Everyone has it, and it is a part of our being. You are sitting here and listening to me, you know you are, and if the whole world say you are not doing this, you would not believe it, because

this faith in itself is based upon your own consciousness, and when faith has such a foundation that faith, can move mountains and even the whole world. That faith based upon the knowledge of a thing, is given in Vedanta philosophy and religion, and that faith is at the root of everything. It is at the root of our lives and earthly existence. Whatever we do, if we take a step and walk from here to the street, we must have faith. If we have no conviction that we will be able to do a thing, we cannot do it. If we have not that self-conviction that we can do and accomplish this, we are worthless. That kind of faith is at the bottom of everything, and that kind of faith is at the foundation of religion. Faith is at the foot of Godconsciousness, and without faith nothing can be accomplished. It is a kind of self-knowledge, or a kind of self-conviction.

Arjuna asks. "What is the nature of those who endued with faith, worship the Deity setting aside the injunctions of the Scriptures? What faith is theirs? Is it *sattva,* or *rajas,* or *tamas*?"[1] Suppose a person has faith, but does not care for the injunctions of the Scriptures, what kind of faith is that? Those who believe in the Scriptures, have faith in the universal Truth, and they follow the Scriptures and the laws, and that is obedience. They accept it, because they do not want to ask any question. And if anyone would ask a question, the priests would say it is sacrilege, and if you ask questions, you would commit a kind of crime or sin, and that has been the case with doctrines of different religions. They are not intellectuals or thinkers as the priests think of them, and whatever they say, their words are swallowed by their disciples. That kind of faith is to be found in every country. A certain class of people accept everything given in the Scriptures, but here is the question as to what is the nature of faith of those who, endued with faith, worship the Deity, setting aside the injunctions of the Scriptures?

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1 अर्जुन उवाच—

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।

तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः ॥१७।१

Arjuna's question may be thus stated: Is the worship offered by them to gods, or to God, etc., based in *sattva,* or *rajas,* or *tamas* ?

This faith can be divided into three classes. Is it of *sattva* or godness, or of pure knowledge, or of realization? Does it arise from a kind of passion or feeling of emotion, or does it arise from darkness, illusion, stupidity, dullness, and ignorance? This question was asked by Arjuna. The nature of the question is very deep. Such questions are philosophical, and this was asked in the battle-field where hundreds and thousands of enemies were ready for fight.

In India, the grammarians have devised a philosophy of an eternal immortal word which is known as Sphota. Specially Panini, Patanjali, Bhatrihari, Mandana Mishra and others have built their philosophy of words, or science of language, upon the solid rock of the theory of Sphota. The Mimamsakas also admit the eternality of sound. The upholders of Sphota say that Sphota is an indefinable causal Word, which is the base or ground of all the words or sounds of the world or nature. This causal and immortal Word is uncreated, and it can be considered as a revealed one. Now, though Sankara and other non-dualist philosophers have refuted the theory of Sphota,[2] yet Sphota or eternal Word is regarded as the root and cause and ground of words of all languages of all nations.

Arjuna was the great commander-in-chief on the battle-field of Kurukshetra, and Sri Krishna was the charioteer. Think of this time, about 1400 years before Christ, when there were no modern weapons, nothing but bows and arrows. At that time they used chariots with horses in the battle-field. Sri Krishna was the charioteer, yet he was the Incarnation of the Divinity. He did not fight, but was giving the highest knowledge in the battle-field. That is symbolical.

The Divine in us is Sri Krishna, the God-incarnate, and if we follow his directions, we have success and glory and victory in everything. Sri Krishna answers; "Threefold is the faith of people, which arises from their individual nature; there is *sattva* or peaceful nature, *rajas*, or passionate nature, and *tamas*, the nature of ignorance. Do thou hear of it?"[3] Here

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[2] Vide the Commentary on the *Brahmasutra* 1.3.28.

[3] श्रीभगवानुवाच—

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा ।

सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ॥१७।२

one word has been used which has a deep meaning. It is *samskara* (impression) which arises from our individual nature. Each individual has certain peculiarities, and these peculiarities give a direction to that faith which rises naturally in the individual's mind. That individual again is the result of all thoughts and deeds, and impressions and ideas, that he has gathered during his lifetime. That faith which we have in this life, is the result of all that we did and thought and gathered in our previous incarnations. At the time of death, as the resultant of all these, comes the faith, and that faith leads us to the proper destination. At the time of death whatever you have gathered in this life, just before death, will come up in the form of faith, and you will have a certain conviction, and that may be defective, but it will have a certain conviction, and that may be defective, but it will have a certain effect in your next life.[4] Wherever you come, you will carry it with you, and that is what is understood by this term *samskara* or impression. It rises from the people's individual nature. And that is of three kinds If the nature be spiritual, the faith will arise in the form of worship and belief in the existence of a Supreme Being Some are born with that faith naturally you will find, while others are not Some believe in the Divine Being who is the Supreme Ruler of the universe, while others do not care for that belief. Others believe in certain powers and forces that are stronger than themselves They have no certain god, yet they have faith, but not in the Supreme Being, the Brahman.

Some beileve in disembodied spirits, or in disembodied spirits of their departed ancestors They believe in their

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Regarding *svabhaba*. Sankara said "जन्मान्तरकृतो धर्मादिसंस्कारो मरणकाले अभिव्यक्तः स्वभाव उच्यते। ततो जाता स्वभावजा—सात्त्विकी सत्त्वानिर्वृत्ता देवपूजादिविषया, राजसी रजोनिर्वृत्ता यक्षरक्षःपूजादिविषया, तामसी तमोनिर्वृत्ता प्रेतपिशाचादि पूजा विषया।

[4] Sankara said that faith is born of the individual nature (*svabhava*) i e *samskara* or tendency made up of the self-reproductive latent impressions of the acts or works, good and bad, *dharma* and *adharma*—which were done in the past incarnations (births) and which manifested themselves at the time of death.

existence, and are ready to worship or invoke them, and pray to them. So these are of three kinds, one that is entirely a spiritual belief in the Supreme Being, the other is partial i.e. that faith which arises simply from selfish motives and governed by that. They believe in certain things, because those certain things have done so much for them. The last is the kind which arises from ignorance, and blindness, etc. They believe in anything and everything, and that faith is generally directed towards doing injury and harm to others and to themselves. But these three kinds of faith have been governed or controlled and improved and changed by right knowledge of those truths which are described by the ancient Seers of Truth. If we study them, we can govern and direct this natural faith. So that faith which is governed and corrected by truths, or by the universal Truth, would be of one kind, and that would be the highest kind of faith. That would be amongst those who would follow that course, but amongst others that would be according to the natural conditions. "The faith of a person is in accordance with his own higher nature or construction of his mind. The man is made up of faith, as his faith is, so is he," says the Lord.[5] This is a wonderful verse. The faith of any person is in accordance with his nature or constitution of the mind. If the mental constitution be of *sattva* quality. That quality which brings purity, peace, tranquility, and devotional nature, and also realization of Truth, along with feeling of renunciation or non-attachment, would be the nature of *sattva*. The *sattva* state is that in which one realizes the transitoriness and unreality of the deceitful phenomenal universe. Then the mind naturally turns toward that which is permanent, eternal, and unchangeable, and everything that is changeable and produces unhappiness or misery or trouble of any kind, is not to be considered, or cared for. In that state, faith rises toward the Highest i.e. for that which is permanent. So you will be able to understand the Truth when it is said: 'Everything is in accordance with the construction of the mind'. Everything that is worldly, will appeal to that worldly mind; everything that corresponds to the welfare

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[5] सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥१७।३

in this life, will appeal to that mind, and that mind will possess a faith in everything that is temporal, or tangible, or perceptible, and that brings results which are material, and that would be the construction of the mind which has that kind of faith. That mind being very low, ignorant, untrained, uncultivated, verging on the animal state, and living on the sense plane entirely, the higher things do not appeal to him. Such a mind which will not have faith in the highest, does not care for it. If you speak to them of the highest, they do not understand it; they do not want it. You cannot blame them, and that is in the process of evolution. What are you then going to do with them?

The philanthropists of the West do not understand these things, and try to do good to everybody, and bring everybody to the same understanding. They do not succeed, because the people are not ready for it. Why do you not educate the minds of all, and make them see things? It is impossible; they cannot do it.

The great Seers of India understood the evolution of the soul and all the other conditions which make that evolution possible. That evolution may be slow in some persons. You cannot force the souls to rise quickly, you cannot give any stimulous, and it will take a long time. Some minds are slow to act, but from constant repetitions you will find that certain impressions will begin to act. Other minds are very quick. Those which are slow, are of *tamas* quality. They will have more dullness and imperfection. If you can understand all this, you will see that the mind is like a mirror that reflects things right away, if it be perfect. Suppose that mirror is covered with a thin layer of dust, it will not reflect so perfectly, but still it will reflect. If it be covered with mud, will it reflect anything? No, so polish it off, and it will take a long time, because the mud is thick But after a time you will find the smooth surface of the glass, and that will begin to reflect a little. Such is the case of those with *tamas* qualities. Their understanding is covered with mud, and mud is of that quality which does not reflect. Animals do not reflect, because they are of the *tamas* nature. Their intellect is covered with something which may be compared to a layer of mud on a piece of glass. There are persons who do not

reflect readily. They have understanding, but it is misdirected. They do not understand things clearly, but they do understand some things well. But other things do not appeal to them. Their reflection is one-sided, as part of the intellect is transparent, and the other parts are covered with mud.

So we can divide the whole race into three different classes, and then can subdivide them. There will be mixtures of these three, and there will be infinite gradations intervening. So faith in any case will be governed by the mental construction or nature, and that nature or understanding or mental construction depends entirely upon the mode of living, upon food, upon acts, and upon thoughts and desires and tendencies, and upon what we do. All these should be considered, and everything is to be thought of. Every bit of your thought has something to do with your being. Every action, mental and physical, has something to do with your being, every bit of your mind has something to do with your being, and every bit of food would build up certain parts. And these things we ignore, because we are still child-like in our understanding. We look at these things as a child who does not understand. If you tell him one hundred times that gravitation is working through his body and keeping the molecules together, he will not understand. The forces work just in the same manner, they will not stop, because we will not understand them.

So you see these various kinds of faith arise from, or are in perfect harmony with, the construction of our mind and being, and we under all conditions, are in harmony with our thoughts, ideas, and mind of any incarnation or life. What we are today, is the resultant of our past, and we are responsible for it. What we have made of ourselves, we have got. What we have not made, we have not got. It is not fatalistic. Some will misunderstand me and say that Vedanta teaches fatalism (*adrista* or *adristavada*). But Vedanta does not teach fatalism, rather it teaches that you create your own future. You are not like slaves, but you create your own faith, you are the architect of your own nature and character, and it is in our power to mould it. It makes us more responsible, and not fatalistic at all. So what we have got, we deserve; what we do not deserve, we do not get, in every possible way. So whenever you find any difficulties or troubles, physical or

mental, it is your own making that you are reaping. You have forgotten how you made it. If you had kept a record, you would know this, if you kept a record, you would remember many things.

Try to understand the laws and complications, how one course runs into another, and leads to a certain direction, and gradually becomes powerful like little springs, and like little streams in the mountains. They come down, and form larger and stronger streams, and these gradually come together, and form a kind of rivulet, and a kind of river, and other rivers come together, and fall into the ocean, and the other springs are all sources of these waters. We do not understand how these things are working in our own being, so we blame our parents and our Maker, and curse the devil, but this is all through ignorance.

People of the *sattva* nature i.e. those whose hearts and minds and intellects are purified, and understand things, worship the manifestation of Sri Krishna. The Lord says. "*Sattvic* men worship the gods; *rajasic* ones worship the Yakshas and Rakshasas, and *tamasic* ones worship the Pretas and the hosts of the Bhutas."[6] The commentator Sankara said that by a general principle laid down in the Scripture, *sattvic* and other faiths have been determined through their respective effects. The *tamasic* ones worship the departed spirits (Pretas) and the Bhutas who are also the seven Matrikas, as described in Tantra.

Now people of the *sattva* nature i.e. those whose hearts or minds and intellects are purified, and understand things, worship the manifestation of God with devotion. There are various manifestations with various forms, and they are known as *Devas,* or bright ones, or the supreme divine ones. The Supreme is called the Divinity, or the infinite Divine Being He has infinite manifestations. He may manifest in one parti-

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6 यजन्ते सत्त्विका देवान् यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।
प्रेतान् भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥१७।४

The gods, such as Vishnu and others Yakshas, such as Kuvera and others, Rakshasas, such as Nairrita and others, Pretas are those who neglect the *sastric* duties, and Bhutas, such as the Pauranic and Tantric Matrikas.

cular tribe or nation in one form, and, in another, in another form. All these manifestations of one particular being are the same as the Supreme Being, and the *sattva* nature understands that, has faith in that as the same manifestation, and has faith in that same unity in variety, and, consequently, worship and revere and honour other manifestations, because they understand the law. So the people of *sattva* nature worship the manifestation of the Supreme Deity.

Those who are *rajasic,* worship such beings as can give or express wealth and worldly prosperity. They worship certain forces, and go to such beings who have such powers. They are not the highest, but they are intermediate. There are certain manifestations of some individualised spirit or soul. There are some other manifestation of natural forces, or psychic powers, but the *tamasic* people worship and pray to disembodied mortals or other spirits. They practise black magic, or wish to injure others. They worship all supernatural powers, of course, and there is no such thing as supernatural, still we use the word. We do not say that ordinarily there are evil spirits, such as those who have passed away and are trying to do some injury to others. Such disembodied spirits are worshipped by those who love to injure others. 'We are not spiritualists, and do not also believe in modern spiritualism, but still the existence of departed spirits we do not deny. It is a fact that there are many frauds and many fraudulent things claimed by the mediums etc., and we do not approve of those methods which modern spiritualists have adopted. There are many things to be said for and against them, but the simple truth is that the souls of the individuals are not destroyed by the death of the bodies. The soul continues to exist, the soul is immortal, and that is the firm foundation of the religion of Vedanta. Vedanta teaches that the disembodied souls exist, some remain earth-bound, some go to higher realms or to their ancestors, and some can do harm or good. Some can communicate, others cannot, and so they are not reached by mortals. But the evil spirits are those who have evil tendencies. There is a certain class of people who live to do injury to others. There are lots of them everywhere in the world. They love to do injury and harm others, and it is their pleasure. Others take that tendency with them,

and even when disembodied they will be doing the same thing. They cannot be transformed into right one after death.

Each individual carries the tendency or character developed during the life-time, and that is true. We may not understand that truth now, but when we come to higher perception, we will be able to know it better. But these are higher laws, and the modern scientific researches are disclosing many facts of similar nature. Many laws and facts that science laughed at twenty or fifty years ago, are growing to be established truths, and there are many things still not properly demonstrated or explained by the scientists. There are lots of scientific men who are fond of public opinion and they are afraid of being laughed at. You will find amongst scientific thinkers lots of them.

Sri Krishna says: "Those people who practise terrible austerities and penances not enjoined by the Scriptures, not approved of by the great sages and spiritual Seers of the world, who are fools with hypocrisy and self-conceit and are impelled by the power of their desires and passions, undergo tortures and weaken the elements of their bodies as well as the divine part which is dwelling within their bodies. Know this to be of demoniac determination".[7] Now there are certain fanatic classes of people, of course, you do not find them, perhaps in this country. In India, there are fanatics amongst the Hindus and the Mohammedans; and, in the middle ages, they used to torture their bodies, and go through all kinds of penances. That was one of the doctrines of the Roman Catholics also. They also tried to go through all kinds of torture. Amongst the Hindus you have heard of the *fakirs* who hold up both

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[7] अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः।
दम्भाहङ्कारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलान्विताः॥
कर्शयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः।
माञ्चैवान्तःशरीरस्थं तान् विद्ध्यासुरनिश्चयान्॥१७।५-६

The meaning of 'अन्तःशरीरस्थं मां च' is 'तत्कर्मबुद्धिसाक्षिभूतं मां वासुदेवाख्यं नारायणं पुरुषोत्तमं शरीरादिसाक्षीभूतमीश्वरं वा कर्शयन्तः कृशीकुर्वन्तः'। That is, men of demonic (*asuric*) nature neglect Me, the Narayana, the Witness of their thoughts and deeds, and thus they weaken and neglect God, the Purushottama, the Supreme Lord of the universe.

of their hands, and remain in that way and, gradually the muscles would die, and they cannot use their hands, and some body would have to feed them They cannot do anything, and their hands are dead They are fanatics. Why do they do such things? They get certain ideas into their heads that if they give a part of their limbs in this way, they would have certain desires fulfilled. Most of them wish to become kings or emperors in their next incarnation, and they believe in this so strongly that they torture their bodies, and go through terrific austerities believing that these are the means by which they will fulfil their desires. Spirituality does not depend on, or is not a result of, any penances or terrific austerities, but it is a flash when the darkness of ignorance or nescience is removed. It is a revelation which is not an action or a qualification of the *Atman*. Sri Krishna has said: "They are not to be considered as spiritual men or women. Many in every country go through these penances, and they torture their elements, weaken their organs, and also torture the divine spark dwelling within them They really torture Me". They torture their own souls, but what good will that accomplish? They will not accomplish worth-anything, and will not have the highest realization, but they will have certain fulfilment of their desires of worldly ambition or passion. The resolve which leads to such fanaticism, is not considered as good.

From those different acts and tendencies you can show the three different divisions of faith, that is, of course, faith in an abstract quality, or that cannot be understood except through its manifestation in the form of a tendency. Any tendency we cannot understand except when tendency is expressed outwardly, so those who do not follow the injunctions of the sectarian Scriptures, but only follow their own mental condition or tendencies, would be divided into these three great classes, *sattvic*, *rajasic* and *tamasic*. They are (a) that which leads to the realization of the Highest, and (b) that which fulfils and brings only temporal results, and (c) that which leads to torture pain and misery without bringing any good result. Either it brings harm to the individual who does that kind of thing, or to others. So these three classes of faith we find amongst individuals of every country, and also among the Protestants in the middle ages. These protestants killed

thousands, and burned the witches. Two centuries ago spiritualists would have been burned at the steak. Their faith is governed by ignorance, *tamas*, which produces fanaticism. All kinds of religious persecution result from that fanaticism.

There is another formidable evil, called bigotry. In India, in Japan, and everywhere else, these classes are universal. Now, understanding all this, we should examine what kind of faith we have, whether it proceeds from selfish motives, or from the Highest, and we should also examine whether our faith is rational, and is founded upon universal truth or not. If it is not based upon universal truth, we should correct and improve our knowledge by gaining spiritual insight into the laws which govern our souls.

CHAPTER LIII

THREE-FOLD FOOD, WORSHIP, AUSTERITY AND GIFT

We heard of three kinds of faith, and three kinds of worship, and now I will discuss the subject of three kinds of persons in the world. Some are extremely spiritual, some are worldly, and some are very ignorant, foolish, and superstitious. These three classes are the general divisions into which the human beings can be classified, and they have their peculiarities, tendencies, ideas, opinions, and methods of work. They vary, and their food and mode of living also vary. When we understand these three classes, we can guide ourselves in our daily life in right way How to live aright it is a problem. What to avoid and what kind of things to expect, we should learn first, and then we should make efforts to reach the highest goal of life.

The highest goal is one and universal. It is not confined to any particular nationality or time or place. Of course, we have often repeated that the highest ideal of mankind is the attainment of perfection, and that perfection can be reached by any individual at any time, in any age. The only thing that is necessary for us, is to start from where we are and to direct our actions and thoughts along the right path, so that all the thoughts and actions and daily works will help us in marching upward toward that universal goal.

Referring to those distinctions of the three clases the Lord says: "Three-fold is the food which is agreeable to eat, and so in sacrifice or worship, austerity, and gift. Do thou hear of this, their distinction on."[1] One food is agreeable to a certain class, another is agreeable to another certain class etc. Of course, there are individual tastes. Each individual has a particular taste for certain things which he eats, but we are going to deal with the general classes, and need not go into

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1 आहारस्त्वपिं सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः ।
यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥१७।७

details. So there is sacrifice as worship,[2] which includes those forms of worship, austerity, penance, hardship, physical or mental, performed by different followers of different sects and creeds. Now listen to these distinctions. First, Sri Krishna describes the various kinds of food and such things as are pleasant or agreeable to those who are spiritually minded. Other kinds of food are agreeable to those who are passionate and worldly, and the third class are those who are living on the lowest animal plane of spiritual evolution, or evolution of the soul like certain kinds of food, and that is also given here

The foods which increase longivity, energy, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, which are tasteful and oleabinous, and which are substantial, nourishing and palatable, are liked by those who are spiritual.[3] They are the best. The highest spiritually-minded people eat such food as increases vitality and brings new energy, strength, health, joy, cheerfulness, and such other things. Which are tasteful and oleaginous? They are those kinds of food which are oily, or of fatty substance. Some people think of giving up all kinds of oily substance and of eating entirely dry food. Thus, they think, they will become spiritual, but they are mistaken, that is an extreme, and through, extremes all kinds of ailments come.

Of course, when the Lord is describing this class, He does not include any meat or animal food. Animal food is considered to be unhealthy, and it is injurious in most respects. The spiritually-minded person is not supposed to take any animal life for food. That was the idea which existed in India in ancient times, and it exists today. The spiritually-minded people generally do not eat any animal food, but they get enough of life, energy, strength, health, and joy from vegetables of various kinds, fruits, nuts etc.

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[2] Sankara also said that as food is divided into three classes, according to the tastes of men of *sattvic*, *rajasic*, and *tamasic* natures so object of sacrifice as worship, and the like are divided into three classes, according to three qualities (*gunas*), *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, so as to show how a man may find out and give up the *rajasic* and *tamasic* ones and resort exclusively to the *sattvic* ones

[3] आयुःसत्त्ववलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।
रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥१७।८

Foods which are very bitter, very sour, of saltiness, hot or pungent, dry and burning which cause pain, misery and disease, are liked by those who are *rajasic* or passionate, and whose taste is worldly.[4] They vary. Such stimulants bring strong sensation to the tongue and in the system. But those which are *tamasic,* of the lowest class, like food which is half-cooked or not properly cooked, stale and tasteless, putrid or rotten, and those are refuse or impure. Such foods are agreeable to that class of people.[5] From these general descriptions we can judge what food we ought to take. We ought to take such foods as bring health, life, increases vitality, and nervous energy, and make us feel happy, pleasant, cheerful; and such other foods as prevent us from getting into any physical or mental disease. That kind of food we ought to take, which will not injure any life. That is spiritual food, and we should try to live according to these descriptions.

After describing the three kinds of food liked by the three classes, Sri Krishna describes next sacrifice as worship. "That sacrifice as worship is good which is performed without desiring any fruit or any result, but considering it only as a duty".[6] If one worships God, the best form of worship is not to ask Him to give us this or that, but to worship Him, because it is the first duty of the embodied soul to worship the Supreme. That would be the best thing. We should not worship Him seeking immortality or pleasure of any kind, or any of the comforts of this life, or the enjoyments of prosperity, or this or that, but because it is our highest duty. Each individual is bound by certain duties, the duties toward parents, duties toward neighbours, duties toward society, and duties toward spiritual teachers, and toward ones self etc.

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4 कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः ।
आहारा राजसस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥१७।९

5 यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितञ्च यत् ।
उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥१७।१०

6 अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदिष्टोऽ य इज्यते ।
यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः ॥१७।११

* पाठभेदः—'विधिदृष्टो' ।

The highest duty toward one's self is to worship the Supreme, and to think of the source from which we have come. If we consider it as a duty, then all religious quarrels, animosities, fanaticism, and bigotry will vanish. That feeling should be cultivated, and if we perform our devotional exercises as our daily duty of life, not thinking of anything else, it will be our first duty best done. When we wake up, we should think of the Supreme before we do anything else, and before sleeping, we should think of Him considering it as our duty, and there is no other question to be asked or answered. That is the method of worship adopted by the great spiritual teachers of the world

That worship is *rajasic*, which is liked by those on the worldly plane i.e. on the plane of desires, and is performed for some worldly rewards, for obtaining money for the purposes of worship, and for show etc.[7] They wish to show that they are spiritual, and perform certain religious acts simply to make a show to other people But that kind of worship is not the highest Some people go to places of worship, and pray to some saints or sages simply for material prosperity, for children, for wealth, fame or position, for health, and for the cure of disease etc That kind of worship belongs to the class which is worldly, and it proceeds from desires, pride etc

They declare that worship to be *tamasic*, or proceeding from darkness, ignorance, and superstition, in which the injunctions of the spiritual sages are disregarded, and in which no food is distributed, and which is devoid of sacred hymns, gift, and faith Such worship is considered to be almost the worst[8] Whenever a good thing, or a religious act, is performed in India, they feed the poor. That is one of the special methods of performing a religious ceremony, or virtuous deed If a person is going to get married, after the marriage, or at the time of marriage, neighbours and relatives will be invited, and served with sumptuous food, but after two or three days or on the next day, the day will be set for feeding the poor

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7 अभिसन्धाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत् ।
इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम् ॥१७।१२

8 विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम् ।
श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते ॥१७।१३

All the poor people of the neighbourhood, if it be in a village, will be invited, and the parents of the bride and the bridegroom will distribute food and gifts, and sometimes they distribute money etc. Then at the time of the birth of a child, they feed the poor, and when a person dies, after the funeral ceremonies are over, they invite thousands of poor people, who have no work, and are very ignorant or lame, or blind, or such persons as have been rejected by society. People who have no standing in society, such persons are invited and are fed with delicious food. In memory of a great sage who has passed away, they feed the poor, and perform religious ceremonies. Feeding the poor is considered a duty all over Asia In Europe and in America, they have poor houses. Amongst the Mohammedans they have the same custom. They feed the poor, and it is one of the best methods by which they can develop a sympathetic feeling. We can develop the feeling for the poor, and it is a great gain, but when you give anything through charitable organizations, or draw a check to an unknown person, the feeling is neither developed , nor does it find any proper opportunity to express itself.

Now Sri Krishna describes austerities. He says there are three kinds of austerities. One austerity is the service of the Supreme Deity, since to those spiritual masters and wise ones. Purity of the body, cleanliness, straightforwardness, continence, and practice of non-injury or non-killing, are declared to be physical austerities.[9] These physical austerities every spiritually minded man or woman should practise, and, in past ages, whenever they found any spirituality in a person, they would notice that these are the characteristics. They bow down before the Supreme. They prostrate before the wise-ones, and before the saints and before those who have acquired knowledge of any kind and have acquired the highest wisdom. In all places of worship, they go in reverence. They do not injure or hurt the feelings of others, and do not kill any animal for the sake of pleasure. They practise cleanliness, and go and bathe and wear clean clothes, and live in clean places,

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[9] देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शोचमार्जवम् ।
ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥१७।१४

and practise continense. They are straightforward, and walk like princes in the street. They do not care for the world, and are never dejected, nor worried. The Lord further says there is another kind of austerity which is called vocal austerity, and that should be practised by everybody in all countries Speech that is truthful or true, which causes no pain, and is pleasant and beneficial, and also the study of the texts of the Vedas and of other Scriptures, are called the austerity of speech.[10] We must learn to be truthful, but at the same time must use pour of discrimination. We must not say disagreeable things to anyone, however true it may be, but we must tell the truth in such a way as not to hurt the feelings of another, and without causing any pain to anybody. We must make it pleasant, and not antagonize anybody, and we also should repeat or recite such familiar texts which would arouse in us spiritual ideals. We should study such books as would remind us of the highest or the Supreme, and of that which is eternal, permanent, and real We should learn to utter such words as would convey that ideal, and also would be the austerity of speech Why is it called the austerity of speech? Because, people like to gossip and chatter, and when they try to control their tongue and speech, it requires a tremendous effort People try to criticise, and say unkind words to others, because, having sprung from lower animals through the process of evolution we have that animal tendency jealousy etc., and we do not like to see good in other people We think of ourselves as very high, and that other persons are beneath us, and that vanity and self-conceit are at the bottom of all confusion that arises in individuals.

Now, we should learn to mind our own business and not to discuss other people's affairs We should correct our own faults and not those of others There is a tendency in every country, and that tendency is to think that they have come to save mankind They have been commanded by the highest Being to save mankind and to criticise others, but not to criticise their own conceit. That tendency is the result of self-

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10 अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितञ्च यत्।
स्वाध्यायाभ्यासनं चैव वाङमयं तप उच्यते ॥१७।१५

conceit which is inborn in us and, therefore, when we try to control our tongue and speech, it is an effort which is beneficial in the end and would produce beneficial results, and that effort we should make.

Mental serenity, kindliness, purity of purpose,—these are called mental austerity.[11] We must be serene, calm, and not agitated. We must be kind, and must practise silence in speech. This must be preceeded by silence in our thoughts. When the mind is restrained, the tongue is restrained too. When the mind is restless, then we cannot control our tongue, as thoughts bubble up and express themselves in words. You have read in the lives of great saints and sages of the world that they used to go to the wilderness. Christ himself went alone from twelve to thirty years of age. Nobody knows where he was. Perhaps he lived in a cave restraining his own thoughts and words. God always speaks in silence and not with speech and tongue.

I have seen men in India, who would not utter a snigle word for months. They would not speak to anybody. When they wanted to communicate, they would make a sign and not utter a word, and it would be good for people in this country to practise that for half an hour every day, not to speak to anybody, go and sit in silence quietly It is also a good punishment. Solitary confinement is the worst punishment, but when we punish ourselves and practise self-control, it is no longer a punishment, but we enjoy it.

Self-control means control of the senses as well as control of the mind. We should regulate our thoughts, and learn to discriminate, and not to follow the emotional nature, but use our own common sense and intellect and form an ideal, then we should not do things that others do, but live up to our own ideal. That would be the easiest way. Thus mental austerity is good and helpful to every man and woman in every country.

Mental serenity is that state which is free from worry and anxiety. You do not have to think of all the minute details and get worried and disturbed. If you can keep your mind free

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[11] मनःप्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।
भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत् तपो मानसमुच्यते ॥१७।१६

from worry and in silence, you would feel that utter confidence in spirituality. This is the best thing for anyone and everyone to go ahead and practise. People say so many things about their exercises. They like them, but they cannot practise them, because they live in boarding houses etc. But where there is a will, there is a way. Some one will disturb anyone who is practising anything. If we find an opportunity when no one is around us and if we are in our own room, we can find ample opportuity to practise the exercises. How can one obtain the great things which require so much, when one cannot practise little things? And that is a thing which should be considered very seriously Then when mind is quiet, we should think of the highest ideal as well as the highest purpose of life It is not seeking objects of enjoyment, or going to theatres This sort of pursuit is a disease. They think they cannot live without it. It is a kind of bad habit, because they are so dependent in the end like slaves. In the same way, you will find there are so many different habits, and they ought to control these habits gradually, and practise austerity, and quiet their minds. Some will have a great sorrow or a melancholy state of mind. They go, and drink alcoholic substances to get rid of that state of mind But this habit should be corrected, because they are so injurious and harmful to ourselves It hinders the development and the evolution of the soul They never think whether it is a waste of energy or not.

When this three-fold austerity is practised by devout men and women with highest faith, who desire no fruit, it is called spiritual or *sattvic*[12] Those who perform these austerities, can be divided into three classes Some perform them for certain gain for some immediate reward, and others practise through faith without seeking anything in return, but they think it is their duty, and feel that it is natural for them to live this way Others make efforts, and come to the path of spirituality by efforts Their desires are weakened, and are restive. But they perform them and gradually, in course of time, they come to perfection But there are some who cannot

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[12] श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत् त्रिविधं नरैः ।
अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते ॥१७।१७

live without certain things and cling to certain tendencies. Others do not care for those things, as they had enough in their previous incarnations. This is not the first time they have come to this world, and that is the only explanation why certain people like certain things and others do not like them. That is the explanation, because, otherwise everybody would like the same things. If you knew what the majority of people are longing for, they would not care for these things, they would not enjoy them even when they would get them, and such people are not fools, and they are not wasting their energy for nothing. Those who are practising austerities, are not to be considered uncivilized. On the contrary, they are more advanced and more spiritual, and all the struggles which other people are having in this incarnation, have been gone through in their previous incarnations, therefore, their desires are satisfied.

There is another class who perform these austerities for honour. When it is practised with a view to obtaining respect, honour, reverence etc, it is said to be *rajasic*, and this is changeable and impermanent.[13] You will find many in every country, who perform austerities for getting respect in society and amongst their neighbours. They do not perform for anything else, just for seeking name, fame or wealth or something else, and they are full of desires and ambition. But those results which they are longing for, are changeable and impermanent. They do not produce permanent results, and they are not helpful to the soul in spiritual advancement.

The lowest class are those who practise austerity, and it is now described. That austerity which is practised with some foolish notion, for self-torture, or for the purpose of injuring another person, is called *tamasic*, rising from ignorance.[14]

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[13] सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत्।
क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम् ॥१७।१८

[14] मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत् पीड़या क्रियते तपः।
परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा यत् तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥१७।१९

Three kinds of austerity, according to three *gunas*, are described in 17th, 18th and 19th verses. Sri Krishna proceeds to show that the foregoing austerity,—bodily, vocal, and mental, as practised by men, is divided

Persons living in the darkness of ignorance and who have foolish ideas of charms, get certain ideas into their heads. They go through certain practices and rituals, and torture themselves for certain results. Sometimes some of them try to injure others for their own selfish motives, and practise black magic, and go through certain austerities. They fast and control their tongue and their senses for a certain length of time until they have accomplished these results, and they become different beings. So we find that the ignorant torture their bodies in various ways simply to gain earthly prosperity either in this life or in the next. They are foolish and superstitious, and these are of the lowest class.

Now three kinds of gifts are going to be described: "That gift is best which is given to a worthy person, who desires no service in return, and it is given in the right place, and at the right time, and this proceeds from the feeling of duty".[15]

When you find a person worthy of the gift, in the right place, and in the proper time and, if that person does no service in return, you ought to give it to him, because you could not find any one more worthy, not thinking whether that person wants it or not. So give it to him with this thought, that he may use it for his own benefit or not. If you find a worthy person in the right place and time, and if that person does not seek your gift, then he is worthy. When you give anything to that person, do not seek anything in return, or expect any-

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into classes according to *gunas, sattva, rajas,* and *tamas.* Sri Krishna says.

(a) "This threefold austerity, practised by devout men with utmost faith, desiring no fruit, they call *sattvic*" (17.17)

(b) "That austerity which is practised with the object of gaining good reputation, honour, and worship, and with hypocrisy, is said to be of this world, to be *rajasic*, unstable and uncertain" (17 18)

(c) "That austerity which is practised out of a foolish notion, with self-torture, or for the purpose of ruining another, is declared to be *tamasic*" (17 19)

[15] दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।
देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥१७।२०

thing, simply perform your duty, and enjoy such an opportunity and feeling of doing something for another.

But that gift is *rajasic* which is given for the sake of an eternal benefit, or for fruits in the next world, or with some pain of reluctance. Such a gift rises from desires, and it is not the highest.[16] When you give anything to a person for the sake of getting something in return for the return of benefit, or for some future good, it is motivated by some selfish desire. Some people think, 'give, and it will be given to you'. They give simply to get more in return to get more wealth in future, after death, and that is not the highest, and it is *rajasic*.

In the teachings of Vedanta, we find that even the celestial gift and pleasures we do not desire. It is not the highest. But we must consider it as a duty of not seeking any return, whether earthly or celestial, and that is the best, because it makes us forget ourselves and all our little personalities. That is helpful. Whatever we do with the sense of 'I', is the greatest bondage. It keeps us down on the material plane, and anything that is spiritual or uplifting or divine, helps us to rise above the sense of 'I', 'me', and it is to be considered as the best. When the sense of 'I' is vanished or disappeared, we are in the right path. "God enters when the sense of 'I' is taken away", therefore, anything that helps us in forgetting ourselves and in not emphasizing the sense of 'I', is beneficial When we do anything good, we do not say we have done it, we do not say we can do this in sense of 'I', because it is the cause of all our troubles and separations from the Divine. We separate ourselves from the Supreme for ignorance. The place of 'I' should be taken by 'Thou' and 'Thine', and say: "Whatever is mine is Thine". Jesus the Christ taught this, but few understand it. All the greatest teachers of the world have taught the same thing, but it is seldom realized.

The gift is the worst, which is given to an unworthy person at a wrong place, at an improper time, without respect, or with insult. When we give anything without respecting the person to whom we give it, or simply with contempt or thinking we

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16 यत् तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः ।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद्दानं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥१७।२१

are much higher than the person who is receiving it, that gift is the worst, and is known as *tamasic*.[17] The giver does not received the benefit of such a gift. We must not give anything with the feeling of contempt or insult, but must consider that it is the best opportunity we have for developing our spiritual nature, and if we could feel the divine within the soul of the proper person, that gift would be the best.

In India, that is practised by the majority of ladies. When a beggar comes to the house, the ladies give some things, either some food or some sweets, or some money, or clothes, or a glass of water. They cultivate the feeling that the poor person who has come to the door, is one through whom the divine One is manifesting His powers, and when they give anything, they think they are offering that to Him. If we can practise that thinking that we are giving to the highest, the Divine dwelling in the form of that worthy person, that gift will bring its proper result. That gift will purify the soul, and will make one rise above the plane of selfishness. We should sacrifice a little for the sake of such a worthy person. If we go in the path of unselfishness. But if we constantly think of ourselves and do this and that, we will not get the things which we may need in future. And that idea should not come to our minds when we find a worthy person to whom we ought to give. So, that kind of gift is considered to be the best which we give to the worthy person without considering any return. We should, therefore, perform acts in the sense as if we were performing our duty and worshipping the Supreme dwelling in the body.

In India, every householder knows that even in the body of the lowest dwells the Supreme, and when a guest comes to the house, they do actually worship him. In some places, they burn incense, and give him fruit and flowers. And this idea is so strong that if a murderer comes to the house, and if the family and other guests actually know that he is a thief, or a murderer, they would not take revenge so long as he is a guest, but they think so long as he is a guest, his body is sacred,

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17 अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत् तामसमुदाहृतम् १७.२२

and must not be touched. That is one of the customs, and it has been handed down to us from time immemorial. Even at the time of great wars the soldiers used to call upon one another, and go as guests without fear, and so long as they were guest, they would not be hurt. So they practiesd that custom in every department of social and religious life.

CHAPTER LIV

OM TAT SAT : THREE NAMES OF BRAHMAN

You have often heard the Sanskrit words 'OM TAT SAT'. After the prayer we always repeat 'Om Tat Sat'. What do these words mean and when are they used? This question has been explained beautifully in the *Bhagavad Gita,* in the seventeenth chapter, in last few verses. 'Om is 'that', 'the Real'. These three are said to be the triple designations of the one Absolute used by the knowers of the Brahman, the absolute Truth. This chapter tells us of the sacrifices of older times. Of the three, 'Om', 'Tat', 'Sat', Om—Pranava is the first, 'Tat' means That, and 'Sat' means Reality.[1] Existence comes from the same root verb from which the English word 'is' has come forth, and 'esse', to be, in Latin. 'Tat' or 'That' means absolute existence, and not relative existence The phenomenal spatio-temporal existence is called relative. It is not the absolute existence, but the absolute existence is the Brahman, the eternal One. God exists absolutely, or, in other words, the existence of God does not depend upon any other existence but, on the contrary, the existence of everything else depends upon God, the Absolute (Purushottama of the *Gita*).

Now the world exists, as we exist, and, therefore, our existence is not absolutely independent, but it is dependent upon something else When one thing exists in relation to another, or when the existence of one thing depends upon that of another, then it is called relative existence. For instance. we are sitting here and it conveys the ideas we have bodies,

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[1] OM=Vachaka, the determinate (*saguna*) Brahman.

Tat=The Brahman or Atman the indeterminate (*nirguna*) Brahman

Sat=Real Existence, which is no other than the Brahman or Atman.

Therefore, the indicator (*vachaka*), the determinate Brahman can unlock the real mystery of the only existent (*traikalika-satya*) Substance (*vastu*), which is really the indeterminate absolute Brahman, and this real Existence transcends the categories of time, space, and causation, which are no other than nescience or *maya*.

and our existence at present depends upon the existence of this room, this house, this city, this earth, and the existence of the earth depends again upon the existence of the sun, the solar system, etc. So nothing is independent, as one thing depends upon another.

If we examine the form of the body, we find that it depends upon atoms and molecules, and force of attraction and gravitation, and all these forces are those upon which our existence depends, so it cannot be absolute, and, therefore, it is called relative existence. The whole universe and all the phenomena of the universe similarly depend upon one another i.e. depend upon other phenomenal existences, but if you can think of an existence which does not depend upon anything else, that something would be independent of the rest of the phenomena, and would be absolute. Can you imagine such a thing as an absolute existence? You may think of space, you will think that space exists independent of anything else, but if you go deeper, you will find that even the existence of space depends upon something else, upon the ego, or upon the being which conceives of it, or knows the existence of space, so that is not absolutely independent, as it depends upon the knower of space and the knower as the knower depends upon the object known, or the object of knowledge. If the object of knowledge does not exist, it will no longer be the knower. So the individual ego, as differentiated, depends upon the object, or matter, or upon object of knowledge.

But if you can imagine the undifferentiated knower, that would be the Absolute. Then it is no longer the knower in its relative sense, which depends upon the object of knowledge, but it will be like absolute knowledge itself, an ocean of knowledge, or an ocean of intelligence. If you can imagine that you will find the attribute of this absolute existence, know that absolute intelligence and absolute existence are one and the same, upon which everything else depends. And that absolute existence is called the absolute Reality of the universe. God, as the Creator of the universe, would be relative.[2] That is, the Creator can exist so long as there is crea-

[2] From strict sense of non-dualistic Vedanta, God who creates the world-phenomena, is neither the indeterminate transcending (*turiya*)

tion, or the created objects. If the created objects cannot exist, that Creator is no longer called the Creator, just as a player cannot be called a player, if he does not play. That title cannot be given to the player who does not play. So the Creator is a title given to God so long as He stands in relation to His creation.

This Creator, or God as the Creator, is relative, and is not the Absolute. The Absolute would be higher than that. The Creator would be the manifestation of the Absolute, as differentiated.[3] But these three words 'Om Tat Sat' refer not to the Creator, but to that which is beyond the Creator and beyond all relativity; they refer to the absolute independent existence, the ocean of intelligence and reality. Why is it called OM? Because OM refers to that Absolute, and it is the name of the Absolute. Whenever that name is uttered, it does not mean anything else other than the Brahman. These are the eternal words which have come out like the breath of the Absolute, like the Vedas.[4]

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and that Word is the eternal 'OM'. And you will find the other name. When we cannot express in words what that absolute is, we say 'That' (Tat), that which is beyond, and that something which exists forever Therefore the words refer to absolute existence. Therefore these three 'Om Tat Sat' are said to be the triple designation of the Absolute. Therefore OM is that Reality. These three

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Brahman, nor Isvara, the Prajna or Avyakta, but is the Hiranyagarbha-Isvara, the Third Principle

[3] The idea as contained in it, has been stated before. The pure and nescience-transcending absolute Brahman is the ground or essence of God, the Creator, but, in fact, when the Brahman is differentiated from its original status, for the contamination with *maya* or causal nescience, He is known as God the Creator. But it is true that God the Creator is not different from God the Absolute, in His essence.

[4] Similarly, in the *Upanishad*, the world-appearance along with its objects as well as the Vedas came out from the Absolute like breath· "निःस्वसितं एतद् जगत्" । The idea is this that as breath comes out without any effort, so the eternal words, the Vedas and all appearances came out from the eternal womb of the Nature effortlessly, because all things remain as unmanifested (*avyakta*) causal form in Nature (primordial *Prakriti*) which co-exists with *Isvara*, the Avyakta or Prajna

words are not to anything else but to the Absolute, and by that Absolute, the knowers of Brahman, or the perfected souls, have realized the Absolute and the real meaning of the Scriptures and spiritual laws and all the methods by which they can be obtained or realized. Such different phenomenon was created i.e. projected by that Absolute.

For this reason all acts of worship, gift, and austerities, as enjoined in the scriptural sense, are performed by wise men by always uttering 'OM' at the beginning. When they begin to do anything, they begin by uttering the name of the Absolute, and no other name is so perfect and so natural as the name 'OM', because it includes all other words that can be uttered by human mouth. All sounds are included in 'OM', because the word 'OM' is composed of three sounds 'ah', 'u' and 'ma'. 'Ah' is the basic sound, and 'ma' is the last sound, and 'u' is the intermediate. Now when you pronounce the word and utter the sound 'ah', in what position do you put your mouth and tongue? You leave it quite open. Then when you utter 'u' from 'ah', you half close your lips, and leave a little opening, and when you pronounce 'ma', i.e. make the 'm' sound, you close your lips entirely. So you see that from the basic sound 'ah', when you leave your mouth wide open, and to the last sound when you close your lips entirely, then between these two extremities, all other sounds that we utter, are placed together in the intermediate state. If you go from 'ah' to 'ma', you will have to come by the way of half-closing the lips. That includes the whole, and all of the alphabets and sounds that can possibly be uttered through the human mouth, are included in it. Therefore all words are included in it, because all words are the combination of different sounds beginning with 'ah' and ending with 'ma'. Phonetically all the sounds are included, therefore, any other name which you can give to God, would be a part of this OM, call him God, or the Creator, or the Absolute, or the Infinite. All would be a part of this OM. And when that OM is uttered, no other thing can be meant by it except the universal Being which is the combination of all sounds, all words, all thoughts, and all ideas. Therefore, when we begin any work of our daily life, if we utter 'OM', we utter the name of the Absolute, and think of

the Absolute in doing all that, and thinking of the Absolute it is purified, or perfected, and all deficiencies and defects are corrected, because everything that we can think of by our relative minds, everything that we can utter by our imperfect language, would be perfected by thinking of the Absolute That is the way we can perfect anything, because the Absolute is all perfection, and in trying to express the Absolute, we simply make it imperfect.

That Absolute can never be uttered by any human mouth, or by any words, because it is indescribable and unthinkable The moment we try to think of the Absolute we make it limited by our limitations When we try to bring it down to the plane of our consciousness, we limit it. Therefore, the Absolute as the Absolute can never come down to our plane of consciousness, nor can it be brought down to our limited sense. But in order to perfect it, or in order to make our thoughts perfect, we simply indirectly think of the Absolute by uttering the name of OM, which includes all words, and refers to the perfected pure Being, and it is for that reason the wise men, whenever they performed any worship and devotional exercises, or give anything to any one as a charity, or when there was any practice of austerity or doing any philanthropic work, they uttered the word which signifies the Absolute, and that is sacred 'OM'.

Now we have understood the first part of this triple designation of which 'Tat' is the second part With the utterance of 'Tat' or 'That' are performed worships or austerities and other religious acts by the seekers of Truth for emancipation of the soul Those who do not work or perform any austerity or sacrifice for obtaining fruits of their works, they utter this 'Tat', because by thinking of 'Tat', the Absolute, they do not care for any limited or finite result, but that fulfilment of all desires is there in that Absolute. When all desires are fulfilled, we reach the Absolute, and nothing is left to us but the Absolute. When perfection is reached, we realize the Absolute, and that realization of the Absolute and the attainment of perfection come simultaneously. Therefore, when we perform any act, at the time of performance of that act we should think of 'Tat' or 'That' which is peaceful, blissful, and perfect. Really 'Tat' contains the fulfilment of all desires;

by attaining which no other thing is to be attained, but freedom is obtained. So, in the beginning of any good deed, the wise men utter 'OM', and at the time of performing that deed or work, they utter 'Tat', and the word 'Sat' is used in the sense of Reality, and absolute goodness. So also that word is applied to all virtuous deeds, and the utterances of these three words are the means by which we can purify our hearts, and can perfect our action. All actions which we perform with our limited finite bodies and finite minds, are naturally imperfect, but if, in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end, we think of the Absolute, which is perfect, we can perfect our finite limited acts and thoughts, and can purify our souls.

Whenever we wish to purify our mind and heart we should repeat that 'Om Tat Sat'. If we have given anything to any body, or have done any good deed, we should be conscious of our imperfections which we might have left unnoticed and, in order to perfect these actions and to make it absolutely perfect, and also to purify our hearts and souls, we should think of the Absolute, and repetitions of these three words would bring the realization of the Absolute in the end.

And it is all goodness, and it is the absolute goodness. Anything that is virtuous, that is righteous, whether we can perform it by our actions, or perceive it round us, that is a part of the manifestation of the absolute goodness. So the absolute goodness is manifested in this world on the human plane as the virtuous deeds, righteous thoughts, righteous acts, truthfulness, and everything that bring peace and happiness in our souls. Therefore, know that to be the manifestation of the absolute goodness. When you see an imperfect person, or a sinner performing any sinful acts, if you can make that sinner think of the absolute goodness, that sin will be pardoned, and he would be able to realize the mistake which he has been committing. If you try to purify a sinner, give him that word, and send that thought of absolute goodness to that sinner's heart, and it will be purified. No one can purify the sinner except the thought of the absolute goodness, because whatever we do, is more or less sinful, and is more or less mixed with imperfection or mistake. No one is absolutely sinless in this world when we consider the meaning of sin and imperfection, and then we are all imperfect. But the differ-

ence is only in degree. One commits sin in the mind, and another commits sin in acts. But we are all making mistakes. Some are making big mistakes, and others, smaller ones. So, in this world of imperfection, if we can spend a minute or a second in thinking of the Absolute, which is absolute goodness and perfection, we have done enough. As much we have learned, so much we have purified ourselves. Therefore, in practising austerities, in doing any meritorious deed, and in performing good acts, we should always think of that eternal purifier of the souls, the Absolute. The absolute goodness alone can purify us, and the very thought of the absolute alone will make us free from all sinfulness and imperfections, and will make us rise above all limitations.

Devotion, worship, austerity, and gift are also called 'Sat', the Reality, and also the work in connection with this or for the sake of the Lord, is included by the word 'Sat'. This word not only refers to absolute goodness, but also to virtuous deeds, such as devotion and worship, and austerities and gift. These are the purifiers, and these help us in purifying our hearts. Practising austerities, devotion, worship of the absolute supreme Being, are necessary. But what kind of worship is that? This worship is thinking of the Absolute, and is being devoted to it in spirit. If we are devoted to the absolute goodness, we can never make a mistake consciously Austerity includes truthfulness, forgiveness, right living, right thinking, etc Whatever we possess, if we give a share of that to others, then we gradually outlive vanity, selfishness, egotism, pride, and attachment to earthly objects. These degrading things make one limited and imperfect. All these persons who are extremely selfish, are imperfect, because their hearts and souls are not purified. They are not conscious of the absolute goodness, which is free from all limitations. But by giving a share of what we possess, we sacrifice a little of our selfishness, and sharing with others, so much we expand ourselves. This little self which is limited by body and mind, should be expanded and made universal, and when that expansion comes, we gradually rise above all limitations, and approach the unlimited, the absolute perfection.

This word 'Sat' is also used in the sense of work for the sake of the Lord and not for any other result. That work

which we do for the sake of the Absolute, let the result of that work go for the sake of the Absolute. That work is the best of all. If we do not think of anything else, but think only of the Absolute and let all the results of our works go to the Absolute, that work is the best of all works. It is absolutely spiritual and helpful and uplifting. So when we understand the meaning of these three words, and use them properly, we have understood the method by which we can purify ourselves as well as our acts and thoughts, and that purification is absolutely necessary for spiritual realization i.e. for the realization of the Absolute.

So, how to purify and perfect the defective acts, Sri Krishna says: "OM, Tat Sat· this has been taught to be the triple designation of the Brahman. By that were created of old (at the beginning of creation by the Prajapati) the Brahmanas and the Vedas and the sacrifices (17.23). Therefore, with the utterance of Om, are the acts of sacrifice, gift, and austerity, as enjoined in the Scriptures, always begun by the students (devotees) of the Brahman (17.24). With 'Tat', without aiming at the fruits, are the acts of sacrifice, and austerity and the various acts of gift performed by the seekers of Truth or *moksha* (17.25). The word 'Sat' is used in the sense of reality and of goodness; and so also, O Partha, the word 'Sat' is used in the sense an auspicious act (17.26)".[5]

Sri Krishna further says: "Whatever is offered, whatever gift is given, or whatever austerity is performed, or whatever is

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[5] ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधा स्मृतः ।
ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिता पुरा ॥
तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।
प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥
तदित्यनभिसन्धाय फलं यज्ञतपःक्रियाः ।
दानक्रियाश्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः ॥
सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत् प्रयुज्यते ।
प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥१७।२३।२६

done without faith, is called 'Sat'."[6] It is of no avail here, nor after death. Anything that is done without faith, does not produce any good result. Then what kind of faith do we require? The faith that we require, is the faith based upon knowledge of realization. If we give anything without having faith in the Absolute, or in the law that this will produce certain things, will purify our heart and soul, otherwise that purification will not come. So Sri Krishna says "If we perform any austerities, or if we offer any prayer and devote ourselves to prayer, without faith, that will not produce results, and it is called 'Asat', or unreal, because that faith does not produce anything."[7]

Now we have described three kinds of faith in the beginning of this chapter That faith which depends upon knowledge, or upon the laws which govern our spiritual nature, brings us closer to the Absolute. Both of these are helpful, but anything that is done without having faith in the back of it, is considered to be like nothing, because it does not produce the results that we want That faith, it is said, is in each person in accordance with his nature, or construction of his mind. The man is made up of his faith "As his faith is, so is he." So that faith depends upon our own construction of the mind. Some persons have no faith at all. That is also dependent upon their construction or nature But those who have faith, have faith in the Absolute, and exercise that faith, with the help of that faith in the Absolute, and the Absolute is realized very soon.

If you perform anything without faith, you cannot discover any truth. If you try to invent anything, you must have firm conviction that it is going to be so. Therefore, all these discoveries of modern times and all those discoveries of

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6 यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।
कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥१७।२७

7 अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतञ्च यत् ।
असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तं प्रेत्य नो इह ॥१७।२८

That is, 'whatever is sacrificed, given, or done, and whatever austerity is practised, without faith (and devotion), it is called 'Asat' or unreality, O Partha, it is naught here or hereafter.'

ancients etc. are to be based upon faith. First of all, they get certain glimpses of truth through mathematical calculations, or through some experiment when they get a certain glimpse of truth, then they get a firm conviction that it must be so; and when they try to find out the results of these convictions or faith, they discover it. It is called scientific faith, because from science that has its foundation. There is no scientific work where you do not find this scientific faith at the bottom, but here what we know by faith, is more than scientific faith. Scientific faith is limited only to such objects of the objective world. They have no faith in a thing not subject to experiments. They do not have faith in the existence of the soul, or in that of the absolute Spirit, because they cannot prove it by experiments. But here we include faith in the Absolute, which is beyond the reach of the experimental science. We must have also a faith in the province of philosophy, in the province of metaphysics, along with the provinces of science, physics, etc. which are within the scope of sense perceptions.

The province of religion is not within the sense perception, but it is within the perception of the higher sense i.e. of the spiritual sense; and those who have faith in the perception of spiritual sense, or in the object of the perception of spiritual sense, would obtain spiritual results very rapidly. The others who simply investigate and have no faith, will find the results with great difficulty. And these perceptions of the higher sense have been handed down to us through the writings of those great Seers of Truth. When we take them for granted or accept them as truths and, having accepted them as truths, if we try to get the results or experience of them, then we succeed very quickly, but otherwise we are doubtful, and cannot get the results so quickly, because the attitude of a doubtful mind is different from the mind which is full of faith and conviction. We cannot put all our forces together, and cannot concentrate our energy if we have doubts, therefore, those who are doubtful, cannot get the best results. They cannot concentrate their mind. That is, half of their mind is concentrated, and the other half is watching and trying to find fault, consequently, they cannot get the full benefit of their efforts. But those who can devote the whole of their heart

and soul toward the realization of the Absolute, attain to the best results in the shortest possible time without any difficulty. And for that reason it is said that without rational faith a man cannot realize the Truth. Not by merely scientific faith i.e. faith which is limited by the sense perception, but by faith which is beyond sense perception, and is in the province of the higher or spiritual sense, one can realize the Absolute. Those who have discovered the spiritual truths, go to the superconscious state and realize certain things, and then give to the world their experiences. If we wait until we have gone to the superconscious state like them, it will perhaps take a long time, and we may not reach that state in this life, if we go on living in the way of the world If we do not follow their instructions, until we have reached that superconscious state and have realized the Absolute, we shall have to wait for a very long time. Suppose we have attained the superconscious state, then why should we depend upon the methods? The methods would then be useless. But they are given simply to make those who have not reached that state, or have not come to attain to that state easily. Therefore we should have faith that others have attained to that state, and if we have faith, we can also attain to this. But if we wish to study chemistry or other branches of science and try to make experiments as other scientists have done, then we must have faith in following their path and, if we do make experiments, we must have a kind of conviction that it is going to be like that, because others have arrived at the same results, and their results are very high With that faith we will start and, after making experiments we will have to start with this faith in order to get results.

You will have to do this also in the spiritual life. Physical science is based on repeated observations and experiments on the material plane, but all these spiritual experiments should be done by persons whose hearts and souls are purified, then all the results will come properly. But, otherwise, persons with impure heart and soul who wish to get the same results right away, will not succeed. They will have to purify themselves first. Therefore that faith will be centered upon the Absolute whose name is 'Om Tat Sat'. When you give anything to the poor, you have faith that this will purify the heart

and soul, and make you more unselfish, and will help others. It is one of the means for attaining to the Absolute, and then you will get very wonderful results.

In conclusion, it can be said to sum up the teaching of the discourse of this chapter that there are three kinds of devotee, *sattvic, rajasic,* and *tamasic.* But all the devotees who aspire to get the absolute knowledge of the *Atman* or Brahman, should cultivate pure *sattva* by avoiding *rajasic* and *tamasic* kinds of food, and it should remembered that when their acts of worship, gift, austerity, and thought, are found defective and incorrect, they may be perfected and pure by uttering the names of the same absolute Brahman, Om, Tat, and Sat (Omkara, That Brahman, and Reality). With their *buddhi* and *vichara*—intellect and reason—thus purified, they should engage themselves in the study of Scriptures, and in the subsequent stages of investigation into the real nature of the *Atman* or Brahman. Thereby they attain a direct realization or immediate divine awareness of the absolute Truth and are finally liberated.

CHAPTER LV

SANNYASA AND TYAGA DISTINGUISHED

The eighteenth chapter begins with a question which Arjuna asked his Master Two words have been used indiscriminately in the preceding chapter—the question of renunciation (*sannyasa*), and the other the abandonment of the fruits of work (*tyaga*). Arjuna does not understand the difference between these two words. The one is *sannyasa* and the other is *tyaga* *Sannyasa* is the same word from which Sannyasin is derived, and the Sannyasins are the ones who have renounced the world (i.e. world of desires or *maya*) The other word is *tyaga* which means abandonment. In many places, these two words have been used in the third, fourth and fifth chapters[1] and, in other chapters, you will find that injunctions have

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[1] In the third chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, we find

(a) ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ।२।३

(b) मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।२।३०

(c) यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ।
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥४।१९

(d) श्रेयान् द्रव्यमयाद् यज्ञाज् ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥४।३३

(e) सन्न्यासः कर्मयोगश्च * * ।५।२

(f) ज्ञेयः स नित्यसन्न्यासी * * ।५।३

(g) योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ।५।११

(h) सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।५।१३

In the sixth chapter, Sri Krishna has also said:

(a) अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।
स सन्न्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ।६।१

(b) यं सन्न्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।६।२

been given to perform the works of daily life, and not to seek the results i e. to abandon and renounce the results of work etc.

Here, being disturbed in his mind Arjuna asks this question: "I wish to know, O Mahavahu, Hrishikesha, and the killer of demon, Keshi, the truth of *sannyasa* and also of *tyaga*, the latter as distinguished from the former."[2] Here you will see that the word renunciation is generally misunderstood in the Western world. The word renunciation frightens the mind of the people of the Western country and the people of Europe, because they do not want to renounce anything, but they want to possess everything, though desire to possess is natural to people of all countries. How much can we get? How much more do we need? The endeavour of special effort of the individuals has been to fulfil that desire. People have the ambition to get more money, more wealth, more position, more comforts, more luxuries, and everything more and more and more. Nobody else thinks of how less he can get, how less he may need, and the result is that those who do not succeed in getting more and more, are the most unhappy and wretched creatures. They do not sleep at night, they have no comfort and pleasure in their life, and their life is a burden. They are unhappy, because they do not possess more. They look at others around, and become jealous of their comfort and luxuries, and they try to obtain the same, and do not succeed; consequently, the result is unhappiness and

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Though the sixth chapter has described mainly the state and status of a Yogi, yet this Yogi is no other than a Sannyasi, said Sri Krishna "न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन" (६।२)

In the beginning of the eighteenth chapter, Sankara also said in his commentary:

"सर्वेषु हि अतीतेषु अध्यायेषु उक्तोऽर्थः अस्मिन्नध्यायेऽवगम्यते। अर्जुनस्तु संन्यासत्यागशब्दार्थयोरेव विशेषं बुभुत्सुरुवाच।"

[2] अर्जुन उवाच—
सन्न्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम्।
त्यागस्य च हृषिकेश पृथक् केशिनिषूदन ॥१८।१

misery. If you give them anything, that is like a drop in the ocean. Their desire is like the ocean, which swallows and possesses everything. The poorer classes in Europe have the same trouble. They come to this country with tremendous ambition to get more wealth by the easiest possible means, and that has been the trouble with most of the emigrants. They come here to have more freedom, wealth, and power etc. Of course, there are other high aspirations which you will find amongst very few, but the majority have come to make money. The city of New York is just like a money market. The inhabitants care more for gaining money and for becoming rich etc. So, if you speak to them about renunciation and abandoning the fruits of works that would be just like crying in the wilderness. But, in India, you will find directly the opposite. The wealthy person is not revered by the masses; a millionaire is not the ideal of society there, but just the opposite. A man who possesses the least, is honoured and respected. A man who does not possess anything, is the greatest man in the world. He will lead society, he will be a leader of mankind, and he will be just like Christ. If Christ had been a millionaire, no eastern nation would have bowed down to him. The easterners consider that though Christ possessed nothing, yet he is great and noble and adorable. So the easterners know the value of Christ. They know why Christ was great. The western nations do not generally know him, and they do not realize his greatness, and so they fail to follow him and his example Christ was an Oriental, not a European, and not an American. He was embued with oriental ideas. He denounced everything; he did not possess any large fortune; he did not have any earthly ambition, and the earthly empires did not appeal to him. If they had appealed to him, he would not have been Christ. He would have been just like the German emperor, or any other emperor, or a millionaire, and the world would not have bowed down to him.

So that is the idea of the East. Did you ever find any one in this western country who enjoyed poverty,[3] who was

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[3] Swami Abhedananda was delivering at that time this *Gita* lectures in America.

perfectly happy when he did not possess anything. I have not found anything like this. In India, you will find that they enjoy poverty, and consider it the greatest bliss that they do not possess anything. Take the example of Buddha. He was a prince and the only heir to the throne. He had all the luxuries, comforts, the most beautiful dancers, servants, and everything that he wanted. You have heard of some of these oriental monarchs and princes how luxurious they are in their life. All these luxuries Buddha left behind him and went into the forest dressed in rags, taking a bowl in his hand, sleeping under trees with a stone for his pillow, and he enjoyed it, because he was not forced by circumstances, but his renunciation was natural, and it was firmly based on discriminative power, and so he gave up the princely life. He did not care for such things. The rest of the world has always been longing for these things, because it is the natural tendency of the human mind to possess more and more But that tendency is denied and crushed and overcome by a man like Buddha, the Prince. He had a wife and a child which he left behind him. From the worldly standpoint this is a very queer way to do, but there are other standpoints which are higher. From the worldly standpoint the world would criticise Christ when he said: "Who is my father, who is my brother and sister?" But from his standpoint it was the greatest thing he could do. We must not judge the character of another by our standard. We must take their standard, and judge things from their standard. That would be the right judgement, otherwise it would be a mistake. So, in the East, you will find Princes and Rajas and Maharajas who will bow down to one who does not possess anything, who has voluntarily renounced everything. What charm is there in renunciation? There is something. You must not look at a person from the standpoint of a vagrant, or a tramp. A vagabond who has no work to perform, has not renounced anything, and that is different; but what charm is there for a man who does not possess anything, who is absolutely contented and happy without possessing? Any one can be happy who possesses and satisfies every desire, but who could be happy without possessing things? That question has been solved in India, in the East.

Let me relate two stories, one of which is a story, and the other is a real happening First one is this that once, Emperor Akbar saw a Fakir (mendicant) who was begging alms (of mercy) from God. Akbar was struck with wonder, because it was quite new to him that a begger did like to beg from no one other than the all-merciful God. So the Emperor approached the Fakir, and asked him as to why he did not approach to him (the Emperor). The Fakir at first laughed, and then said with a smile "Yes, I know that the Emperor is also a begger, as he aspires more and more for the expansion of his kingdom and wealth and pomp, and so he begs and prays to God for his empire and wealth Therefore, it is not proper for me to beg from a begger, and it will be wise for me to beg from Him to whom the Emperor also begs" Akbar was a pious man, and so he realized the real meaning of the holy Fakir's saying Akbar approached the Fakir, bowed down to his feet, and asked his blessings. Similarly there runs another story of the saint Sanatana Goswami, who renounced everything for the realization of the *Atman*

The second story, nay, the real happening which we witnessed in our own eyes, is that Sri Ramakrishna, our Master, married, kept his divine consort by his side, worshipped her as a living embodiment of Divine Energy or *Adyasakti*, looked through his consort all women of the world as the Divine Sakti, and recognized her (his wife) as a real helpmate in the path of his spiritual progress. Sri Ramakrishna did not, therefore, abandon his wife, as Buddha and Chaitanya did, but looked her as the adorable Deity who was not different from the Divine Deity, Bhavatarini, in the holy temple of Dakshineswar So think about Sri Ramakrishna's severe penance, renunciation, and non-attachment, which should be followed as an ideal by all men and women of the world, in their path to spiritual progress. Such examples of renunciation are not rare in India, the holy land of spirituality.

Therefore, we must not be frightened by the word renunciation when it is used, but we must consider that it is something higher than our ideal, and even higher than the ideal of worldly men or women. Then the Lord says "Sages understand *sannyasa* to be the renouncement of the interested

or desired works, and the abandonment of the fruits of works, the wise, or the learned, declare, is *tyaga.*"[4]

The fact now is that *sannyasa* or renunciation means the renouncement of the works arising from the desires for fruits, while *tyaga,* the other word, is declared by learned to be the abandonment of the fruits of all works. The one is the renunciation of desires, and the other is the abandonment of all works that proceed from desires with fruits. When the desires are not renounced, the works are not renounced, but when the fruits are abandoned, that is called *tyaga,* and that is the difference. The one is complete renunciation, the other is partial. Some consider that all works which proceed from desires, with their fruits when abandoned, that is renunciation, while the ordinary works of daily life and occasional duties are not considered as works arising from desires. They are the performance of certain duties which are absolutely necessary for the nourishment of the body and keeping the body and soul together, and for the fulfilment of the duties toward relatives, friends and others. But there are certain works which proceed from desires. For instance, we may perform certain

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[4] श्रीभगवानुवाच—

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं सन्न्यासं कवयो विदुः ।
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥१८।२

Madhusudana Sarasvati differentiated the word *sannyasa* from *tyaga* by saying: "तदेवं सकलकाम्यकर्मत्यागः संन्यासशब्दार्थः । सर्वेषामपि कर्मणां फलाभिसन्धित्यागस्त्यागशब्दार्थः ।"

Sankara said: "यदि काम्यकर्मपरित्यागः फलपरित्यागः फलपरित्यागो वा अर्थो वक्तव्यः सर्वथापि त्यागमात्रं सन्न्यासत्यागशब्दयोरेकोऽर्थो, न घटपटशब्दाविव जात्यन्तरभूताश्रौ ।

That is: "The abandonment of desired or interested works and the abandonment of fruits (of works) being intended to be expressed (by the two words), the meaning of the words *sannyasa* and *tyaga* is in any way one and the same, so far as the general idea is concerned, namely, *abandonment.* They are not quite so distinct in meaning as the words jar and cloth" Therefore *sannyasa* connotes the idea of abandonment of desires (*vasanas*), and *tyaga* the idea of abandonment of results of works (*karmaphala-tyaga*).

acts to get some result like celestial pleasures, or happiness, or luxuries of life. To devote a great deal of energy, desiring the fruits of labour, and scheming and planning different ways for becoming rich at other peoples expense etc—these are the works which are considered as works arising from desires, but ordinary works like daily duties of life and for the maintenance of the body or the family are not considered as the works especially arising from desires

Of course, there is to be found some desires even in the duties of those who are spiritual, but these occasional duties are excluded from the list The daily duties of a spiritual man would help in the development of a spiritual life as well as in the purification of the heart and also in uplifting the soul from the world of ignorance and sorrow These daily duties will stand for results, but we do not seek for the results. If we perform the daily duties of life, for instance, meditation, concentration and cleanliness, truthfulness, non-injuring, kind acts, gifts, and practice of austerities etc, then these will produce results

Work includes all the activities of mind and body These are acts, but when we perform things without having any special desire, we do not do things for any special result, but we perform them as duties. We have different duties toward ourselves, our parents, children, relatives, society, neighbours, and country and all these duties are considered as the daily duties When we perform these duties, we do not seek any special result, still they do produce results So these actions must not be renounced But any action any one does with a special desire for a great result, either in this life or in the future, that work should be classified as proceeding from desire The performance of the daily duties and occasional duties when is not considered with any desire for fruits or results, would purify the heart gradually When the heart and soul are purified, the enlightenment will come, and it is bound to come. Here the commentator quotes from the Vedas different passages which have the same meaning.

One may say what would be the incentive for work if we do not seek the results. If we perform great works without seeking the results, what would make us perform these duties, and what would be the incentive. The question has been

asked in this way. All these works which I have just described as performance of the duties of daily life and duties toward friends, relatives, society etc., will end in the desire for knowledge. If a man of the world performs these things carefully, he will have, when his heart and soul are purified, extreme longing for spiritual realization, and that is the result of these good works which are not for any especial selfish motives; and when this desire, or extreme longing for spiritual realization, or realization of the truth, come, and we must know that all these works have produced their highest result, and that longing for spiritual realization should be the incentive. We should first of all hold that as the ideal. The spiritual realization, or the attainment of divine knowledge and wisdom, is the ideal, and through these works, when our hearts and souls are purified, the longing for the realization will be stronger; and when that is stronger, the works, mental and physical, have produced this best result, and that result means the spiritual realization.

But these works which we perform through material desires for earthly prosperity, or for mere success in business, are merely temporal, and these will not purify only our hearts and souls, but they will end after fulfilling these desires, and that would be the difference. If we desire anything special on this earth, and devote our energy for the fulfilment of the desire, all the works and activities of the body and mind would lead to that result, and will end after producing the result. They would not purify the heart and soul, but would lead to the temporary result. The daily duties of life without seeking the result, will purify the heart, and the result of the purification of the heart would be the longing for God-consciousness, which is the spiritual enlightenment, and when that longing has come, the spiritual enlightenment is not very far.

There you will find a perfect harmony between the teachings of Vedanta and the teachings of Christ. "Blessed are the pure in heart and they shall see God" said Christ. If you do your duties without seeking the results in life and with a longing for spiritual realization of the Truth, self-purification is bound to come. And to this effect here is a quotation. In order to know the Truth, the sincere seeker will perform those

functions, and those functions are the works or acts of worship, gifts, austerities, and performance of daily duties, etc., but not seeking any immediate results. It is only for the longing for spiritual realization, and that longing will last so long as we have not been able to discriminate the spiritual truth from the relative phenomena, or the eternal from the non-eternal—spirit from matter, the unchangeable from the changeable. So long as we have not succeeded in realizing the difference between these, the longing will remain, and the longing for realization will increase gradually. When this has increased tremendously, other desires will be merged into that one great longing, just as you have seen, perhaps, in mountain districts. Many large streams come from springs, and all flow from different directions, and gradually merge into one, and become wider and stronger in current, and gradually find the main stream And that main stream, being strengthened, becomes very large like a river, and many streams come and fall into that main river, and this river with its tremendous strength carries all the waters from that valley into the mighty ocean.

Similarly the longing for Divine realization will gradually become like the main stream or river, and all other earthly desires along with other little desires for relative things will merge into that tremendous longing; and when that river of longing begins to flow with tremendous force, it will ultimately reach the goal of spiritual realization or attainment of perfection. So you see this longing is desirable, and until that longing has come, we must keep that longing in mind, go on performing the duties of life, must not leave them, and must not abandon them But at the same time we must not devote these works for any especial material object That would not be the immediate end and aim, that may come, but it would not be the aim of our lives. Have one big aim, and that would be the realization. Little aims, like going to market, for instance, are little things. These will all merge into one big thing, as each daily act has its immediate result These are all right, but when they are done for the main aim, these will merge into it just as little streams merge in the river, and if the aim of your daily life be the spiritual realization, then all the doings of the daily life like going to perform the duties, etc. will merge into a great one which is

the Ideal. One cannot live without performing the little duties of life, like wearing clothes, keeping the body clean, etc. which will also help the spiritual realization, but these are not the end and aim of your life, but are the means to the end of your spiritual realization. This worldly life would not be worth-living, if the highest spiritual realization be not the highest ideal of life.

Many people live only to eat and enjoy all things, but others eat to live So you see eating to live, and not only to live, but to gain Divine realization would be different from simply living like a glutton, for eating and enjoying are luxury. So if we make our aim the attainment of perfection, then the longing will be very strong in the end and you will have naturally renunciation of all these earthly things.

Some people find fault and say that philosophy teaches that you should not care for these things But when the longing for spiritual realization has become tremendous, it will be the natural thing, and other things will seem as trifling, and will be on a lower plane You would, therefore, outgrow those things. When you were earthly and enjoyed quietly, you frivolously enjoyed certain things, but when you become a little older and had common sense, then these things would not appeal to you. Would you say that you have neglected these things? No, you have outgrown them. That is renunciation. You may say you have renounced these things forever, and that renunciation is natural. You do not have to make any effort for this renunciation, but it will grow by itself, and when this natural growth or evolution comes, you cannot help it. Take the duties of life. In school, you had the duties of a school boy, and all these were duties, but when you were married, those duties disappeared, and you had renounced them, and outgrown them. After the married life is over you have outgrown that state also. That is not to be considered as the highest aim of life. When the child is born, the duties of a mother begin. So, at each stage of life we consider that to be the greatest. Therefore where we are staying, we do not see forward nor backward. We consider that state to be the best, because we are there. We are best wherever we are. It is love for our own self that makes us feel that everything we do is best. Each considers himself or herself the

best in his or her own opinion So, in whatever stage of life, that person may be, whatever duties that person may perform, these are considered to be the best for the time being, but the time will come when these things will not appeal to us any more, otherwise there would be no growth or evolution. We must outgrow certain things One performs all the duties of life so long as such evolution or renunciation has not come for all material and earthly things. Only such works as are related to the spiritual realization, or worship of the Supreme, or thinking or meditation of the Supreme, will be regarded as the ideal, and then these things will appeal to us.

Now we understand why the wise ones say *sannyasa* or renunciation means the renouncement of the works arising from desires for fruits or results, and *tyaga* means the abandonment of the fruits of all works. We know the difference We may renounce the fruits of good works, but still we perform a great undertaking, or charitable work, or for certain earthly pleasures, or performing ceremonies for future happiness, or performing these without thinking of the results, but simply all acts we ought to perform for the spiritual realization, then our hearts will be purified, and we would attain to the highest end.

Sri Krishna says "Some philosophers declare that all works should be abandoned as evil and bondage, while others say that acts of worship, gifts, and austerities should not be given up."[5] We cannot get absolute good from any work, as

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[5] त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः ।
यज्ञदानतपः कर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ॥१८।३

Sankara said "तत्रैव यज्ञदानतपः कर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे । कर्मिणः एवाधिकृतान् अपेक्ष्य एते विकल्पाः, न तु ज्ञाननिष्ठान् व्युत्थायिनः सन्न्यासिनोऽपेक्ष्य * * कर्मफलत्याग एव सात्त्विकत्वेन गुणेन तामसत्वाद्यपेक्षया सन्न्यास उच्यते, न मुख्यः सर्वकर्मसन्न्यासः । * * ये तु परमार्थदर्शिनः सांख्यास्तेषां ज्ञाननिष्ठायामेव सर्वकर्म-सन्न्यासलक्षणायाम् अधिकारो नान्यत्रेति न ते विकल्पार्हाः ।"

The word 'चापरे' means the Mimamsakas, who maintain that *karmas* like sacrifice etc create *apurva* that causes *svarga* or heaven, and so, they say, *karmas* like sacrifices (*Yajnas*) should not be abandoned. But those are Vedantists and *Vichara*, they say that any kind of work is the

it produces some evil somewhere in some form or other. We may perform very meritorious deeds expecting great good, but we know that no action can be performed without sacrificing something, some higher being, or some lower creature, however small it be. Of course, we cannot go into details of the argument on this, because I have described this in my lecture on *Philosophy of Good and Evil*, published in separate book form. Others prescribe acts of worship and austerities, because they are helpful.

Such acts are performed for the sake of the Lord, or without seeking the results, or for offering the results to the Lord. If we say after performing the works, 'Lord I have done this work, here are the results which this work will produce, let it be at your feet, I do not want it, the whole of the results of my deeds and thoughts I offer them to Thee,' no matter, however imperfect the work is, the Lord will accept it, and your life will be blissful. So you offer the results to th Lord after performing your duty with the utmost ability, then you repeat that and make even a material offering, that will help, and that act will be an act of worship. In fact, the trivial acts will also be acts of worship, and that would be the greatest work.

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cause of bondage of *samsara*, and so *karmas* or works should be abandoned.

CHAPTER LVI

THREE-FOLD IS THE FRUIT OF ACTIONS

We were discussing about renunciation of work, (कर्मफलत्यागः). Some people think we ought to renounce all duties and works of our daily life in order to attain to divine realization, while other people think it is not necessary. With regard to this question Sri Krishna says. "O best of the Bharatas, the truth about this renunciation learn from Me. Verily it has been declared to be of three kinds, O best of men."[1] Renunciation of work or abandonment of works is of three kinds. "Practice of worship, devotional exercises, and gifts and austerity, should not be given up, this kind of practice is necessary, worship, gift, and austerity are the purifiers of the wise," says the Lord[2] Even when other good works are not performed, these should be performed, because they are the purifiers of the heart. The practice of devotion exercises includes prayer, concentration upon the Supreme, meditation, reading of the holy texts, gifts, helping those who need help, and the practice of austerity, and all these best practices are necessary The word austerity includes cleanliness of the body as well as cleanliness of the heart or mind The heart or mind is purified by such thought, and you would not avoid sacrifice. You would not have to perform any other kind of sacrifices other than those things. Sacrifice means offering to God, and that is the best form of sacrifice. The old form of sacrifice was to give to God the best thing. If you read the Scriptures, you will find that the forefathers gave their best things. If they

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1 निश्चयं शृणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।
त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः सम्प्रकीर्तितः ॥१८।४

2 यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव च ।
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥१८।५

'पावनानि मनीषिणाम्' means "चित्तशुद्धिकारणानि मनीषिणां फलानभिसन्धीनामित्येतत्"—Sankara

gave an animal, that would be the best thing, as the real meaning of animal sacrifice is to give up and to check all kinds of animal propensities. Their wealth or the best fruit was given to the Lord, and that was a sacrifice. That sacrifice you can perform in your daily life by offering the best results of your daily life. Just think that you are offering that to God, and, consequently, that is the best form of sacrifice which will purify your heart or mind.

The best gift is that which you give without seeking any return to the right person, at the right time, in the right place, without seeking any return for your gift.

Austerity includes physical and mental and spiritual austerity. Cleanliness, truthfulness, and purification of the mind have been described already. These should be performed always, even when God-realization has come, because, if we are to live in this world, we will have to perform some kind of works, and we will keep this habit as the constant action of our body and mind, because this world is the real platform from where men can reach to the ultimate goal. The world is the real Kurukshetra or *karmakshetra.* So when our mind is working on this human plane, we will try to do good to others without seeking the results. Whatever we do in our daily life and act we perform, we will offer this to God as long as we live, and always practise truthfulness, cleanliness etc., and that would be the right kind of sacrifice. Now we understand the difference.

The renunciation of desires with works comes when the longing for spiritual realization becomes very strong, but the other renunciation is renunciation of the fruits of works and the performance of the duties of life until purification of the heart or mind and longing for realization have come. So we must not give up works, because we cannot live in this world of work without performing some kind of work. But as long as we are going to live in this world and perform our duties, we must find the method by which we can make this work the means for the attainment of the highest spiritual realization. Then we will enjoy everything, and that will come to us without murmuring and complaining. We will accept everything and, understanding the secret of work and devotion, we will live in this world, and try to fulfil the highest

purpose of life, and that is the attainment of perfection, or spiritual realization, or divine communion and absolute freedom.

Even such a person who has attained to realization and become saintly and divine, must not abandon good works. So long as one has not reached realization, one must not renounce one's works, but must practise them. But when realization has not come, the works of body and mind proceed from selfish motives, and when this has come, then it is no longer necessary to make any effort for such good acts, but they come spontaneously. One who has realized the Supreme, cannot do any evil act, and even cannot hold any evil thought against anybody. Then his mind cannot think of anything that will hurt or injure anybody physically or mentally. All the works of his body and mind are directed toward the Supreme. Even the works of his daily life he performs not for immediate results, but as acts of worship of the Supreme. His business and duties toward family etc., he will perform as means to an end, and that end is the Supreme, the Divine He never thinks of getting any earthly results, and his aim is the highest.

Ordinary people of the world perform these duties simply to gain immediate results, for keeping the body in great comfort and good health, and takes care of the children and family for earthly results But a man of saintly character who has attained the highest knowledge and wisdom, does not live in that way Outwardly he may live as an ordinary mortal, or as a householder, performing all the duties of life. He remains always busy, but yet in his heart and soul he knows he is not doing for any earthly gain, but all the acts are the acts of worship of the Supreme.

Sri Krishna further says "But those actions i.e. acts of worship, gift and austerity, should be performed without attachment and without seeking results This is my firm and highest opinion."[3] Therefore there should be no attachment to those

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[3] एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥१८।६

Here the word 'अपि' (एतान्यपि) is very significant, and that means that inspite of performing actions without attachment and asking results

conditions. We must not feel that certain conditions which are favourable and agreeable, must remain with us, or we cannot live without those conditions, and cannot act without those conditions. In fact, we must not be attached to any condition whatever. If any change of circumstances comes, we must learn to face it, and be always ready and prepared to face these changes of circumstances, because nothing will remain with us forever. Today I am here (in America) talking before you, tomorrow I may be somewhere else. If I am not ready and prepared to face the change of condition, I will not be happy. So one must not forget that all these earthly conditions are changeable, transitory, and passing away, nothing remains permanent. What you are attached to today, tomorrow may be taken away. Time takes away everything. The dearest thing and the one you love most may be taken away, and you will be ready to face that? A saint is always ready and, therefore, he never gives in to worry, or is not unhappy. He enjoys happiness under all circumstances, because he knows the difference between saintliness and worldliness. If you wish to be saintly and prepared always to face the changes of conditions and not to be discouraged or depressed when these changes will come to you and if you can live in that way and perform your duties in that way, you will remain unattached to the conditions provided, of course, you do not seek the results. That is a point which the Western minds cannot easily grasp. To work without results is the most difficult thing. When we perform our duties, we should not seek results, because results are the bondage themselves, and result bind men in the den of delusion 'फले सक्तो निबध्यते (5.12). If we can hold the thought in our mind that we are paying off our debts, or if we think of the Supreme as the

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or fruits if bondage comes to the wise, yet those actions should be done, because non-attachment to actions and to their fruits brings purification of the mind, which means attainment of freedom and eternal peace. So Sri Krishna has said to all to perform acts like worship, gift, and austerity (*Yajna, Dana,* and *Tapah*) setting aside attachment and fruits, because, He assures, those selfless works will purify the mind, and that purification translates or transforms the mind into pure consciousness (i.e. *manas* without *samkalpa* and *vikalpa* is transformed into pure *chit*).

giver of all results and allow those results of our works to go to the Supreme from whom they have come, then we can work without seeking the results.

These are the three methods. Either work as worship, with the thought of paying off one's debts, or leaving the results with God. So, one who performs works in this manner, gradually attains to the purification of the heart When the heart is purified, all the higher realizations will come People often ask, 'why do we not have the realization of the Supreme?', and the answer is 'because our hearts are not purified.' Performance of all these duties and works in the stated manner and the performance of gifts and austerities and devotional exercises will purify our hearts or minds Of course, devotional exercises are proper only for those who believe in God as a personal Being, but those who do not believe in God as a personal Being, can perform devotional exercise in a different way by directing the results of all works to the impersonal Being, the eternal Truth, and then all those acts of our daily life will be the acts of worship.

Now Sri Krishna describes the three kinds of renunciation or abandonment of work The abandonment of the obligatory duties is not proper Whatever duties we have to perform we must not leave it undone, but must fulfil it. If this renunciation be done through ignorance, it is the lowest Here we must remember that, so long as we have the sense of duties, we must perform the duties, and fulfil them, but time comes when the sense of duties vanishes for some reason or other, and when we have no sense of duty, we do not feel bound to fulfil it If we believe, or if we hold any thought, that this is my duty and I am obliged to do it, then I must do it. But if I hold this thought and at the same time neglect my duty, or abandon the work, then I commit a mistake, and do not understand the law To hold that a duty is obligatory and then to abandon, it involves self-contradiction Therefore, the sorrow of renunciation is due to ignorance We cannot and ought not to abandon a work of any kind when we feel it is a duty, or we are obliged to do it This feeling of obligation as well as this sense of duty bind us to certain principles of our daily life. All our life is a term of duty In our childhood, we had certain duties toward our parents and when

we went to school, we had certain duties toward our teachers and toward mates and others; and when we are married, we have duties toward wives and husbands; and if there are children, we have duties toward them. When living with parents, we have duties toward parents. So long as our parents are living, we have duties toward them and our brothers and sisters, and toward our neighbours, our countrymen, our nation, and to the whole of humanity. So our whole life is a term of duties. We cannot shrink from performing these duties and these duties may produce instant results, or may not We may not seek them, but simply should perform them as such, for the purification of our heart or mind and paying of our debts, and so we must not abandon them. But when the heart or mind is purified, when the realization of eternal Truth has come, then all these duties vanish. That is the peculiar condition, and that condition cannot be judged by the standard of the world. Then we will learn the true meaning of "First serve God and obey thy parents". Until then we cannot learn. This learning is difficult indeed. Earthly relations and concerns belong to one plane of existence. So long as we are on that plane, so long as our relations are earthly, we have not outgrown them. Our duties toward our relations must exist, and we cannot abandon them. But we must not think that this all. When we enter into the kingdom of heaven, old duties vanish and new ones begin. Earthly relations are there mostly dead and gone. Our higher and new birth takes place. We do not abandon them through ignorance then. But the relative world abandons the soul, because the soul has outgrown that plane. Just as in a school or college. there are different classes, and when we have finished the study of one class, the duties of the class have abandoned us, but we have not abandoned the duties of them. When we have finished the earthly relation on the plane where earthly relation begins and prevails, it has outgrown the soul, and then it has abandoned the soul. That abandonment is the renunciation. When our mind does not care for anything of the world and does not see anything of it, then the longing for divine communion comes, and nothing else would appeal to us. When the soul is awakened to its true spiritual relation, then it cannot be held back by earthly relations and

conditions. Then it is impossible, because these earthly conditions exist up to a certain point, beyond that they do not exist.

Here in the Western world people forget this, or they have never been taught that. If they have been taught, they do not understand it. And if they do understand, they do not practise it. But those things we must not forget, on the contrary. We should always remember that our earthly conditions or relations are not all, and these duties which we are performing are not all. The performance of these duties is not the end and aim of life, but the end or aim of life is something higher; and when we forget that we delude ourselves.

A man living on the animal plane who fulfils the animal tendencies and desires, thinks he has performed the duties. He does not think of anything higher, but when he becomes moral, his duties are different. Moreover, when he becomes spiritual, his duties will be still more difficult. At present when we are living in a house, we have a similar relation and a very limited circle. But the tendency of the soul to evolve into the universal is natural. When we have succeeded in making it universal, we have reached the plane of divinity, because, divinity is universal. When our feelings toward our children, brothers, and sisters, are the same as our feelings toward all the children of God, then we have enlarged that circle. Then we have become saintly and Christ-like, and that is the secret. Any one capable of doing that any time, is Christ-like, and is divine. Christ was not the only one, but there have been many such souls as have felt for all in just the same way as Christ did for all living creatures. There have been souls who felt so for even the vegetable kingdom as we feel for our own friends and relatives A soul outgrowing all limitations, comes in direct contact with the infinite Being and feels that the infinite Being is manifesting not only the human beings, but also through all animals and all vegetables, and all animate and inanimate objects of the universe The essence of the animate and inanimate objects of the universe is the Supreme Spirit. He is all-pervading. He dwells in all that we have. We cannot see that, because our hearts are not purified, and our spiritual sight is not opened. When

through the performance of our duties, our hearts and souls are purified, we begin to see that Lord of intelligence who manifests Himself through the animate and the inanimate. Therefore, we must not abandon the works until then. There are some people who try to give up all the works, because they are so painful, so much full of troubles, and so much full of sufferings, and for that Sri Krishna says:

"Verily, the abandonment of an obligatory duty is not proper, the abandonment thereof from ignorance is declared to be *tamasic* (18.7). Whatever act one may abandon, because it is painful, from fear of bodily trouble, he practises *rajasic* abandonment, and he shall obtain no fruit whatever of abandonment (18.8). Whatever obligatory work is done, O Arjuna, merely because it ought to be done, abandoning attachment and also the fruit, that abandonment is deemed to be *sattvic* (18 9). He hates not evil action, nor is he attached to good one,—he who has abandoned, pervaded by *sattva* and possessed of wisdom, his doubts cut asunder (18.10). Verily, it is not possible for an embodied soul to abandon actions completely; he who abandons the fruits of actions, is verily said to be an abandoner (18.11). The three-fold fruit of action, —evil, good, and mixed,—accrues after death to non-abandoners, but never to abandoners (18.12).[4]

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[4] नियतस्य तु सन्न्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।
मोहात् तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥
दुःखमित्येव यत् कर्म कायक्लेशभयात् त्यजेत् ।
स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥
कार्यमित्येव यत् कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव सत्यागः सात्त्विकः मतः ॥
न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।
त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः ।
न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी सत्यागीत्यभिधियते ॥
अनिष्टामिष्टं मिश्रञ्च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् ।
भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु सन्न्यासिनां क्वचित् ॥१८।७-१२

Now when a man performs obligatory works without attchment and intense longing for fruits of works, his *antah-karana* or mind or inner sense, unsoiled by desire for fruits or results and regenerated by the performance of obligatory works, becomes pure and transparent. When pure, transparent and tranquil, the mind or inner sense is fit for contemplation of i.e. concentration and meditation upon, the *Atman*, the higher Self, and then the man is prepared to acquire the Self-knowledge (*Atmajnana*). Then he attains to *jnananistha* or devotion in knowledge and realizes the *Atman*.

Sri Krishna says that the interested desired actions (*kamya-karmas*) become the cause of *samsara* and bondage by producing a body, but performance of obligatory works (*nitya-karmas*) without attachments to results cause freedom and *mukti*. And when a man is permeated with *sattva* quality, which causes *viveka* and *vichara* i.e. discriminative faculty or knowledge of the Self and the not-Self, he is gifted with real knowledge and wisdom which remove doubts caused by nescience of *avidya* and cuts asunder the knots of *maya* or *samsara*, and thus attains to Godconsciousness.

Those who are ignorant and do not possess discriminative power, are not competent to perform works without attachment to results of works, and so they are blind to wisdom But those who know the secret of Karma Yoga, abandonment of all desires for results is not impossible. The wise ones can know also the secret of three kinds of work, evil, good, and mixed, and by performing Karma Yoga, they attain the *jnana-nistha* or path of discrimination and knowledge and destroy

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Regarding the seventh verse (18.7), Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"काम्यस्य कर्मणोऽन्तःकरणशुद्धिहेतुत्वाभावेन बन्धहेतुत्वेन च दोषवत्त्वाद्बन्ध-निवृत्तिहेतुबोधार्थिना क्रियमाणस्त्याग उपपद्यत एव। नियतस्य तु नित्यस्य कर्मणः शुद्धिहेतुत्वेनादोषस्य संन्यासस्त्यागो मुमुक्षुणामन्तःकरणशुद्ध्यर्थिनां नोपपद्यते शास्त्रयुक्तिभ्यां तस्यान्तःकरणशुद्ध्यर्थमवश्यानुष्ठेयत्वात्। * * "।

In this way, Madhusudana Sarasvati mentioned the opinions of Vyasa of the *Mahabharata* and Manu, together with the opinions of the Mimamsakas, Tarkikas, Sankhyas and others, and said that among *sattvic*, *rajasic*, and *tamasic* performers, the *sattvic* ones are the best, because they perform the *nitya-karmas*, but do not desire to get the results, and thus they purify their mind and get wisdom and freedom

the seeds of *samsara* or bondage. But he who abandons all works from fear of bodily trouble, says Sri Krishna, thinking that it is painful, practises some sort of renunciation. That renunciation is through passion. It is not pure, and it obtains no fruit of true renunciation. We must not leave any work, thinking that it is very painful and disagreeable. If we leave all such works as would purify our heart, though giving us physical trouble or pain, then our hearts will never be purified, and, consequently, the result of renunciation will not come to us. It has already been explained that the highest result of renunciation is the attainment of Godconsciousness The direct perception of the Divine which means the acquirement of perfection in this life, will not come to one who abandons these works, thinking they are painful, or they create bodily trouble.

But that renunciation is deemed to be the best when one constantly performs one's duty, merely because it ought to be done, not with any other aim, without seeking results or being attached to them. Such a man practically renounces everything. By renouncing attachment to results and conditions we renounce the works in the proper sense. It is the attachment to the conditions that makes us miserable, and the desire for results binds us to the law of cause and sequence, and, therefore, when we have abandoned all attachment to the conditions, we have opened the door for happiness. And when we have abandoned the longing for results, we rise above the law of cause and sequence, consequently above all relativity. Then we are worthy of the highest results of renunciation through the purification of the heart as I have explained it before. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" Such a soul does not think of anything or any work, however disagreeable it might be, but he performs calmly, with patience, without seeking results, and without being attached.

When a person is endued with *sattva* quality which manifests itself at the time when the heart and the soul are purified, it is all goodness that ever rises from the heart of such a man, and all the blessed qualities proceed from that soul, and nothing is for selfish gain. He who is endowed with *sattva* or goodness, has perfect understanding.

Another result of *sattva* quality, or purification of the

heart, is perfect understanding i.e the understanding of all the conditions as they are in reality. But so long as we are deluded by our ambition and attachment, we do not see things as they are in reality, because we see only that side which appeals to us. Let us examine our own lives and we will see how very seldom we have seen things as they are, because our self-interest was at the bottom of all the works performed, and, consequently, we had put on the peculiar colours of our own interest, and wherever we cast our eyes, and looked through these glasses, we saw everything tinged with that colour. It is always the same. Whenever we had any particular interest, and tried to think of various things, we did not forget that interest. It lurks in every movement, it is directed toward the fulfilment of all our desires, and, therefore, we do not see things as they are in reality. Therefore, there are mistakes But when that self is put away or is subdued, and self-interest is subdued also, then we are capable of examining things in their truest light without shrinking or hesitating for a second.

Suppose we stand today on the street, or go home, and there we would not think of anything that would interest us, then we begin to examine our own character and also the characters of those to whom we are attached, putting aside our self-interest, and then we will see things in a different light. We would open our eyes and, perhaps, we see many things that we have never seen before. In the mode of our living, if we would examine it, we will find a great many things we have not noticed. This self-examining is very helpful The more we learn to examine ourselves and find our own faults, instead of finding the faults of others, the better we are, and the more progress we make in our own path This is really self-culture, which means studying our own character and trying to remove all the defects by performing such acts as will purify our hearts by holding the thoughts which will make us unselfish, and bring unto us the reflection or remembrance of the Supreme. That is something necessary, and that self-culture is really the path on which the individual soul travels, and the destination of that path is the attainment of Godconsciousness. There is no other way All religions simply express this fact in a clothed language, and

through ceremonials and rituals, and symbolism of various forms. If we go down to the bottom of those religious sentiments, or acts of worship, we will find that this self-culture lies there. Therefore, Vedanta speaks about this self-culture.

So, perfect understanding will come when the heart is purified, and the lower animal self is in abeyance. "He, who is endowed with goodness and perfect undersanding, has his doubts cut asunder", said the Lord. Today we have many doubts, because our hearts are overshadowed and are not purified. So one of the conditions of the purification of the heart is that all doubts will cease and, there will be the attainment of Godconsciousness. Doubts proceed from ignorance, and doubts cause to kill all men and the *Gita* says: 'संशयात्मा विनश्यति'। When we do not know anything, we are doubtful about it. But that ignorance is like a veil which covers the light of wisdom. If we put a thick layer of mud upon a mirror, we do not see any reflection of the sun, even when we have placed it in the sun So, let us remove that mud and we will see the reflection. That is purification, or removal of the mud. This mud of ignorance is not outside, but it is upon the mirror of our heart and, therefore, we cannot get the reflection, and all doubts rise in that state.

"He who has purified his heart and cut asunder all doubts, has all his questions answered." These are not answered by any outside person, they are answered by the inner soul. The all-knowing Spirit reveals the true knowledge unto the soul i.e. in the purified heart of the soul, which reflects the answers to doubts and questions. No sooner are the doubts come than the answers are ready, and, therefore, there is no delay of any kind. There is another state still higher where doubts do not rise, but everything is open and clear, as in bright sunlight. We can pick out the minutest thing, and see its nature clearly; but when there is darkness in the road, or at night when we cannot see things properly, then we question whether it is a stone or wood, whether it is a snake or a rope, then these questions come up, not in bright sunlight. So all doubts are removed when the purification of the heart is accomplished, and he who is endowed with such a pure heart and whose doubts are cut asunder, does not dislike any disagreeable work,

nor is he attached to any agreeable work, but he is really the one who has renounced. Only such a person has received the fruit of renunciation. The renunciation will lead to these things or conditions, and that true renunciation must not make us hate any disagreeable work, however menial. The lowest kind of work will then be nothing but as high as the best work The cleaning of the street, or the sweeping or scrubbing of the floor, or a more menial work, will be as great as worshipping the Divine by sitting in silence. What is the difference? All activities will appear to us just as great. Activities of body and mind, or like reading etc. are all the same. What is the difference then?

It is in the results we find the difference, but when we do not seek results, we may choose the simplest in our activity of body or mind, and the differences in results will not affect us. That activity is the outcome of the forces of nature which is working within us in our mind and body Certain works will purify our hearts, other works will not purify them, and they will rather increase the bondage Therefore we must choose the works which will not increase our bondage when we are on the plane of ignorance But when we have removed all obstacles, there is no need for further discrimination Therefore, nothing is disagreeable, and nothing is agreeable, but all adverse conditions and circumstances will be just as good for us as the good and favourable circumstances are

He who performs the duties of the daily life and other obligatory duties without seeking the results, gradually purifies his heart, and when the heart is pure, the light of wisdom begins to shine The true nature of the soul is then revealed, and then comes the tremendous love for that wisdom We would then sacrifice everything of the world and everything which we possess for that knowledge and wisdom. Nothing is too great wealth and riches, but all those pleasures of life will appear as nothing, because then we have seen the true nature of things. The things that are on the surface, will not appeal to us when we have gone below the surface. We will never think of them, they will rather vanish away from your sight. So long as we are looking upon the surface of the water in the ocean, we do not see the wealth of treasure at

the bottom. We only see on the surface that some things are floating, but a diver who has gone down to the bottom does not think of the surface. Similarly, when we have gone down to the bottom, we do not think of the surface. Similarly, when we have gone down to the bottom of this ocean of phenomena, we do not care for these things which attract only the minds and souls of those on the surface, and that is a great difference. At present we are living on a plane and thinking of nothing else. We do not know what to do under the present circumstances, but when we have gone down, we will look it ourselves, and say, "How foolish I was when I said such things." There are so many things yet to be known, and so many things exist below the surface. How wonderful it is, and when we come up again, we bring a message that means, 'what are we doing'. Let us go down and see something so different and we will pity the ignorant people, because they have not got our vision. And that is the way the great Seers of truth pity those on the surface. But those, who are on the surface, think that they are insane. They think, 'Can it be possible that such things exist?' They cannot see them, because they are on a different plane. They gauge everything with a different standard, and measure rods which are good only for the surface, and when they cannot find anything, they say, "These people must be liars and fools." Such is the world where we are living. We do not blame them, but simply take their statements, and place them where they belong, which is on the surface. But a wise man is one who has gone below the surface, and if we wish to see our true self and to know the divinity, should go below the surface. By simply abandoning the work, nothing will be obtained if the heart is not purified.

"Verily it is impossible for an individual being to relinquish all actions completely",— 'न हि गेहाभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः' ॥ Therefore you must perform work mentally or physically. If you do not do it, can you live on this plane? No, you cannot. How would it be possible for an embodied being to relinquish all actions completely? He who abandons the fruits of work, is said to be an abandoner or renouncer. Here Sri Krishna describes that there are three kinds of results: "Three fold is the fruit of actions—disagreeable or evil, agreeable, or

good, or mixed."[5] Mixed one with good and evil accrues after death to one who has not abandoned, but not to one who has renounced. If we do not renounce the fruits of works and expect them, what would be the condition? They are the works performed by our body and mind, and they must produce results by the law of action and reaction. We must receive them if we have attachment to results. When we analyse the results, we find that some of them are agreeable, some are disagreeable, and some are mixed. Those which are agreeable, we call good; those disagreeable, we call evil, and those which may be good in one case and evil in another, we call mixed. That which is agreeable to you under a certain state of mind, will not be agreeable to me or to yourself when the condition of mind, or the circumstances, are changed. So good and evil are two of mind, or the circumstances, are changed. So good and evil are two relative terms, and the other kind is mixed.

In this relative world whatever we perform, cannot be absolutely good or evil, but all are mixed, and these results we are bound to get after death In this life, we receive the results of our actions in the form of reactions. So the reactions which cannot come to us in this life, will come in future, and we will have to receive them. But if we renounce the results, those results will not come to us If we seek them, they will be determined by these results of our own actions and will mould our future. If we have purified our mind, we will have favourable conditions in future, and if we have not purified our mind, disagreeable results will come to u All disagreeable things which have come to us, will be the result of our past acts. Everything from which we suffer, comes to us as the result of our own actions, and when certain results are mixed, partly agreeable and partly disagreeable, we must know that these results are the causes or the results of works which were mixed. Our future life after death will be determined by our acts, and if we have mixed results, we have come to this plane, because the human plane is the plane where good and evil are mixed.

If we are all good, we will rise higher and higher to the

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5 अनिष्टामिष्टं मिश्रञ्च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् १८।१२

heaven. If we are all evil, we suffer after death, and remain earth-bound in the state of ignorance. Then we come out of that state, and are born again, perhaps, on this plane of good and evil. So all those future conditions will be determined by our present thoughts and deeds But there is one question regarding the three kinds of results, and that is whether they are permanent or impermanent. All results whether agreeable or disagreeable, celestial or purgatorial or human, are transitory and not ever-lasting. They may last for thousands and thousands of years, but still they will come and end. Even celestial pleasures are counted as conditions within the realm of phenomena which are relative. They are within time and space and, therefore, all these results, however long they may last, are transitory when compared with eternity. Therefore, we must not think of these results. If we have purified those acts through the purification of the heart, we will transcend this earth and also transcend the realms of delusion.

It is our desires that create our destiny. So after death it will be determined by our present acts, thoughts, deeds, or living in this life, and this is the resultant of our past. So our future will be the resultant of our present. But he who has renounced the fruits of work and abandoned attachment, will not be bound by the laws which govern phenomena. He is free to attain perfect freedom of the soul in the infinite state of peace forever.

CHAPTER LVII

FIVE CAUSES FOR ACTIONS

We have learned that fruits of all works are three-fold. One is disagreeable, or evil; the other is good or agreeable, and the third is mixed, i.e. part of it is good and part of it disagreeable. All these fruits of our works bind us So long as we are actors and doers, we shall have to reap the results of our works. The law of cause and sequence, or action and reaction, is very irresistible, and we cannot avoid it Even after death, the results of the works performed during our life time, will come to us, if we have not already obtained them, or reaped them in our present life.

As the result of our past works we have got this body, and all of the conditions, sorrows and sufferings. All these come as the result of our own works, though Vedanta says that the material body is the outcome of *avidya* or *ajnana,* and so are our works or activities of the material body. In fact, we do not get anything which we do not deserve living in the world of nescience. We may forget it for the time being, but when some unjust thing comes to us after many births, we are reaping the result of certain causes, and something comes unexpectedly, or in all these causes we are reaping those results all of a sudden. So we cannot avoid this. But he who renounces the works, can avoid it. Renouncement of works is meant non-attachment to the results of works. If we gradually escape the law, we are no longer bound by the results. If we work for works sake i.e. for the sake of God, we will transcend the inexorable law of nature.

The great thinkers of India studied this law of cause and effect, or action and reaction, and their minds were directed towards the escape from this law Really freedom is the goal, and, in trying to find the way to freedom, they discovered the wonderful method which is described in no other religion or philosophy. It is rather unique. It is neither visionary, nor speculative, because if we study the law which binds us so strongly, we will find it is the mental condition behind our acts,

attachments, and desires, which keep us on this plane and make us remain within the realm of laws.

These three-fold fruits of actions come to all, but not to one who has abandoned the results, or the attachment to the results of works. Then Sri Krishna describes the philosophy of work what is the philosophy of work? It is the most difficult and complicated of all philosophies, and we cannot understand it clearly. In the fourth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna describes: "We must know this philosophy of work: what is right work and what is wrong work, and what is inaction" etc.[1] These are the three things i.e. three forms of work. These three delude the minds of most people. Even wise men are deluded in trying to decide what is right work and what is wrong and what is meant by absolute inaction. It is very difficult to describe their nature, because our minds are so different and our circumstances so changeable that we cannot decide what is right and what is wrong. That which is right at one moment, may be wrong at another, when we find out more certainly the conditions which brought about that particular kind of action.

But, first of all, in studying the philosophy of work, we must learn the causes which produce works, and then what is

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[1] In the fourth chapter, we have already read, Sri Krishna said to Arjuna: "इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम्। * * चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम्॥

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यञ्च विकर्मणः।
अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः॥

* * *

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः।
कर्मण्यभि प्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किंचित् करोति सः॥४।१, ३, १७, २०

That is, "I taught this imperishable Yoga (Karma Yoga) to Vivasvat * * this is the supreme secret. * * For, thou hast to know something even of action, something to know of unlawful action, and something to know of inaction, hard to understand is the nature of action. * * Having abandoned attachment to the fruits of action, even content, dependent on none, though engaged in actions, nothing at all does he do.

That is, Sri Krishna said that when works are performed without attachment to their results, they are known as inaction (*akarma*), and they bring unto us emancipation or *mukti* even in this world of nescience.

above all activities. There is something which is above all activity and all actions. Ordinarily we cannot think of that, and cannot think that we are the actors and doers, and agents and perform all the works, mental and physical and reap the results That is the end of our knowledge. But we must not remain satisfied with this vague knowledge i e. knowledge which I have just described, is very imperfect. When we analyse all the conditions under which action is possible, then we know better, and philosophy means that analysis, finding out the proper, right attitude and the right causes mental and physical

Here in the thirteenth verse of the eighteenth chapter Sri Krishna describes "Listen to Me, these are the five causes for the accomplishment of all works as described in the philosophy of work".[2] This is a path of the Vedanta philosophy, and it is called Karma Yoga, or science of work, or philosophy of work. There are five causes of all actions, and these are described in the next verse "The seat, the actor, the various instruments of sense-organs, the several functions of the internal organs as well as the Divinity the presiding deity—these five are the causes of all works or action".[3] First is the seat which is the body the seat of desire, hatred, happiness, misery, and the like In order to perform any kind of work we must have a body, and without a body we cannot perform any kind of work on this material plane. Physical work is impossible without a body, and these works which bring best and highest results and knowledge have been performed by embodied souls, and not by the disembodied. Even disembodied souls desire to have bodies and forms in order to perform certain acts, and manifest certain powers which would bring better results We must not think that all disembodied souls are happy, because they are out of the body. The majority of them are crav-

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2 पञ्चेमानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥१८।१३

3 अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्त्ता करणञ्च पृथग्विधम् ।
विविधाश्च पृथक् चेष्टा दैवञ्चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥१८।१४

The word पृथग्विधम् means five *karmendriyas*, five *jnanendriyas*, *manas* and *buddhi*—these twelve *indriyas* or sense-organs

ing for bodies, so they will have to come back, because desires hold them. They are full of desires, and cannot be happy when they cannot manifest these latent powers and desires. The first consideration is that we must have physical bodies in order to perform all the works we ought to perform A physical body itself would not do much if there were no actor, or the sense of 'I' behind. The action would not be produced. A dead body does not perform any work, but a body which is backed by self-consciousness, intelligence, and a soul, will perform work which might have desires, various tendencies, and knowledge. All these things are necessary for the performance of works in this world. The duty of a lower animal would not be able to perform the acts or works which a human being performs intelligently. A man who lives like an animal and simply eats and sleeps, would not be able to do any work of any kind that requires intelligence etc., if sense of 'I' be not there, which is the cause or actor, which we call the ego .Man's ego is the propeller of this material body.

First of all, we will understand in a general way that there is some conscious entity which moves this body, and makes it go from here to there, or makes it move its limbs and perform certain things in a certain way. It is the thinker, or doer, or actor. The third thing that is necessary is the various instruments of sense-entity without the instruments or organs, then no action can be performed, and all kinds of knowledge will be impossible. Now, what are these instruments? The instruments are the sense-organs, five senses of knowledge and perception. They are eyes, ears, nose, mouth and touch. These are the gates through which human soul comes in indirect contact with the external or objective or material world. If you were to close these five gates, the whole external world is shut off. If you close your eyes, all colours of the lower world will disappear Shut your ears, all sounds will vanish. Taste will vanish when the sense of touch is gone, and nothing is left because other senses have risen from this one primary sense of touch, which is the first sense. With these five senses we are dwelling in the midst of external objects. These external objects, which attract so much of our attention and take so much of our time, depend entirely upon these five gates of knowledge and perception. In superconsciousness or *samadhi* when the

Yogi rises above these sense-perceptions or shut off these gates, the whole world will vanish like a dream. Then the Yogi will be able to know what is the nature of that realm which is beyond sense perceptions.

Most of the scientists think that this world is all or everything, because their higher sense is not open, and they do not know how to shut off their senses and sense-perceptions and rise above them. But the nature of the soul is such that each individual soul dwells on the lower plane, and comes through these sense-organs in direct contact with the gross material objects. There are also the five other organs like limbs, hands, feet, and those of speech, and these organs are considered as senses of work or activity (*karmendriyas*). They are five in number. All the works that we perform with our are called organs of activity or action. Then internal organs are the brain and the nervous system. These must not be rejected When we study psychology, we see very little of the physiological side. Then we deal with mind and intellect. Physiology deals with the brain, but when we see a dead body, we do not see anything more important in the brain and nervous system We cannot do anything else, so these must also be considered. These are the instruments (*indriyas*). If you take the figure of a dog, or a wax figure like the human body, and put all the organs in their proper places, that body would not work The organs are there, but they will not do any conscious work Charge it with electricity, but still there would be no conscious activity. Therefore work means conscious activity. So these senses are the instruments. They are five senses of perception, five senses of action, and the internal organs. Then the functions of the internal organs, heart, lungs, and digestive organs—all these should be considered. These are necessary for the performance of all kinds of physical work. All the activities and functions of the mind (the mind including the reasoning faculties, cognition, intellect etc.) are also necessary. We can sense an effort and specify, then what particular function is called by what particular name, but that would take too much of our time, so we do not want to do that.

There are the internal organs. The fifth is environment. If we have only all the organs and their activities but do not have proper environment, then we cannot perform any work.

In order to know and perceive colour, we must not only have the eye, the retina, the optic nerves in perfect order, and the brain-cells, but must have external environment and the light. Without space and light, our eye would be useless. If we go into a perfectly dark room where we could not see anything, how would be the environment? Similarly the sound is only vibration of air, and that air must vibrate to make the sound and when that sound comes in contact with our organs of hearing and produces a vibration is carried by those nerves and that is then carried to the brain, and there it produces a vibration in the molecules of auditory nerves. Then that is translated by the conscious energy into sensation, and that is again presented by that conscious energy to the soul, that is, to the supreme source of consciousness, and then we know there is a sound. Such a complicated psychological process goes on every time when we perceive either colour or sound or odour or taste or touch anything. All these are done by that conscious energy or entity. The vibrations and molecular changes of the brain-cells must be translated, and then they are understood as sensation, perception etc., but, if there be no environment of any kind, we cannot perceive anything, cannot move, cannot go anywhere, and cannot do any kind of work. So the environments are also necessary. These five things are absolutely necessary.

What is the nature of that ego which acts, or thinks of itself as the actor and knower? We must analyse that first of all. We must understand what function belongs to the organs, how much belongs to the body, and how much to the mind, and then must understand what is the nature of ego, and what is behind that ego. All these things will come, if we carefully study the philosophy of work and analyse the truth in our own minds in silence. That analysis, or self-analysis is the best way to learn, and the philosophers and great thinkers, whatever they have given to the world, had learned that by their self-analysis and observation of what was going on in their minds and souls. And these results they have given in the form of wonderful revelations to others. First of all is the ego, who thinks, 'I do, or act, or think, or see, or smell.' All these things, seeing, hearing etc. are related to the sense-activities. That is possible when the ego identified itself with the organ of vision. Then

it is conscious of itself, as 'I am the seer' When it identifies itself with the organ of hearing, it knows and understands I am the hearer etc.'.

All these functions do not exist in the soul, but they exist in the organs themselves. These organs are active and produce certain changes which are reflected upon the ego which is like the mirror within, and when that reflection or image, or sensation, is identified with the perceiver or doer, then the soul, or ego, is called by that particular term. When the sensation identifies itself with the body, it thinks, 'I am sitting or standing or hearing or walking or moving or doing some work' You are conscious of sitting here. You do not identify yourself with that activity known as walking. You are not saying now that you are walking. But the same ego identifies itself sometimes with one work and sometimes with another The work or activity of the body changes, but the ego remains the same. The self-conscious entity is the sense of 'I' with it That sense of 'I' must be joined with every kind of activity. otherwise you are not conscious of any activity. Similarly. when you are thinking or reading, you are a thinker, or a reader That is mental activity. Mind is not the same as the soul. Mind is the medium through which the ego, or the true nature of the soul, the *Atman,* works on the sense plane. In English, we find great difficulties in analysing this ego. In Sanskrit, we have different terms for mind. intellect, brain functions, and the *Atman.* The *Atman* is the true nature of the soul, or the source of self-consciousness. The mental functions are not the functions of the source of self-consciousness That which is the source of all self-consciousness, is our true being But it is very difficult to separate that source of self-consciousness from mental or intellectual activity; and the ego would be like the source of self-consciousness, which is pure and divine *plus* these mental conditions which are changeful and are constantly changing the thinking principle, intellect. and mind substance with its functions etc. All the mental attributes like reading, thinking, memory, and emotion, should be counted as the functions or activities of that which is called mind substance.

You are now to remember that the mind substance which, when it comes in contact with the source of consciousness, be-

comes active, and produces various functions which are called mental functions, but they all stop, as for instance, in sound sleep. Your mind and intellect stop when you are not dreaming anything, or not thinking of anything. The mind with all its functions stops temporarily, or goes to its causal state, and remains in a latent form as impressions, but your self-consciousness does not stop. That is the one which is constant, and that exists even when you are not conscious. When you are not conscious of external objects, or of your own body, still you are conscious of certain things. A man going into a hypnotic trance, would not be conscious of any external object, but still he is conscious of something very deep, or something very fine; and when you wake up from that deep sleep, you will, perhaps, remember that you feel you did not know anything at that time you were actually unconscious of all these things. That is a kind of memory, and that memory would not be possible, if you were not conscious of that darkness of ignorance which you felt at the time of deep sleep, when you did not know anything and everything was shut off and cut off from it. Memory is impossible when you are not conscious of it.

Sometimes you will find there are different kinds of personalities. At one time you are conscious of one personality, of another at another time, but that would not change the truth of the fact that self-consciousness remains always the same. The personality depends upon the mental or the thought forms and ideas. You may identify yourself with some other person, or with the idea of some other person, and you may act like a different being, but still you are conscious for the time being. In a dream, you may think of yourself as an emperor, or a murderer, or a lion, and at that time you identify yourself and think of yourself as such, but still you are conscious. Otherwise you would not think of yourself, or would not be able to identify yourself with that gross body. And when that is dead and gone, you would be different, and will not be seen in this particular form, but yet, even then the self-consciousness will remain just the same. It is the one thing that is constant. If you analyse people, you will find that is the one constant thing in us devoid of all attributes which are the functions of something that I have described as mind substance. Every other

thing which you call your own, does not belong to you, but belongs to nature, and nature exists as finer mind substance, and mind substance in the causal state of nature.

That causal state existed before the phenomenal universe came into this form. That is described as darkness lying over darkness. And that existed before the sun and the moon came into existence. That was before the beginning of evolution, but the whole manifested universe existed in a primordial homogeneous mass without any differentiation, and that was a state which we can get a glimpse of in our deep sleep, when there is neither the sun, nor the moon or stars. Where do they go during deep sleep, when we are not conscious of them? If the whole world of conscious beings become conscious of this earth, sun, moon, and stars, they may remain, but no one will be able to know or understand their existence. There will be no differentiation. So the existence of the objective world depends upon the existence of the subjective world, and vice versa We are living on a relative plane, and with all our knowledge and perception, we are dependent upon different conditions of mind and body and environment.

So we understand what this ego is. The ego can be divided into two parts. One is the changeable part, which is the mental one, and the other is the unchangeable part, the source of consciousness and intelligence. Intelligence and consciousness are not the result of any mental condition. They do not depend upon memory, but memory depends upon consciousness. Everything else depends upon consciousness of the self, but self-consciousness in its purest form does not depend upon anything else. Most of the psychologists make this great mistake. They try to deduce self-consciousness from physiological and mental conditions, but they forget that all mental conditions must succeed and not precede self-consciousness. Our great thinkers and philosophers of India have gone farther than the modern psychologists and philosophers of the West, and they have given to the world something which the modern Western philosophers have not given, and, therefore, the West will have to learn from the Eastern philosophers, because, in self-analysis, the spiritual knowledge of the East has gone beyond the reach of Comte, Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhaur, and the philosophers of any other nations. They

had to go back to the East to get some glimpses of things which they could not grasp, because the minds of the Eastern philosophers dwell on a higher plane. Their philosophies are known as *Darshana* which means Realization, or direct Divine Intuition, or immediate awareness of the transcendental Absolute. Their *Darshana* is not merely a speculative philosophy which appreciates only the glimpses of the Reality through intellect or intelligence, but their *Darshana* goes beyond the limits of mind and intellect. Their *Darshana* means to see God face to face, or to realize the *Atman* as their essence of the soul and existence. Their *Darshana* is inexplicable i.e. cannot be described by any speech and thought—*avam manasogocharam,* but it is felt or experienced only as an existent Divine Entity or *Sat—'astityekamupalabdhavyam'*. The Eastern philosophers understood the unreality of the changing phenomenal universe. They are the greatest jurists and the most speculative. They are particular. They try to live and show what they have realized. When they say the external world does not exist, matter does not exist, they will live and show it, and not simply talk. But the Christian Scientists will say that matter does not exist, and they are very busy for collecting and taking care of matter, and that absurdity you do not find amongst the Eastern philosophers. The Eastern philosophers are very sincere in their soul, and whatever they say they try to live up to. Therefore, the philosophers of the East are really the spiritual men. But in the West, anyone can become a philosopher when everything is going on nicely, but when conditions change, the whole philosophy goes to pieces.

You would find, these great philosophers of India have gone beyond the conclusions of Kant. The philosophy of Kant was not thoroughly understood by them, because he separated that from the objective world. He could not combine the objective thing-in-itself with the subjective thing-in-itself, and that you will find in Vedanta. Therefore, the greatest convictions of Kant have shown that what Kant realized, was not the highest. It was one side of truth, but not the whole. Schopenhaur's philosophy goes very deep and very high, but when he calls that Absolute by the term "Will", he mixes the unchangeable reality with changeableness. The absolute source of consciousness is far beyond the will. Will is a function of the

mind substance which is nature. Therefore, when we speak of will, we call it an action which required nature and self-conscious entity, otherwise there cannot be any will. So he who wills, is an ego, and willing is an activity of the ego. When you say the will of God, you mean nothing but the activity of the cosmic Ego. God is the cosmic Ego, and the universal Will is the same thing which you will understand. If you can understand your own will and make it universal, then all imperfections and limitations of your will vanish, and it will be a different thing. Then it will be perfect. Make it unchangeable at this moment, and it will be divine. You may say, 'I will this', which is a limitation, but that will vanishes at that very moment when you have been able to make it universal. It will be then a divine will. So, if you can understand the sum total of all wills and think of all individual wills collectively, then you will have some idea of the cosmic will, or the universal will.

Sri Krishna says. "Whatever work a man performs, with his body, speech, or mind whether right or the opposite, they are the resultants of five causes already described".[4] There are three kinds of action, physical, mental and spiritual, and these cannot be performed without those five causes which I mentioned in course of my discussions. All actions whether good or evil require these five causes. There cannot be any good or evil unless we think of the results of actions. When we think of the results and consider them from our standard, or when we try to consider them from the standpoint of our own interest, either of ourselves or others, then we call them good or evil. The same thing may be good under one condition and evil under another. When it is twenty below zero, fire is pleasing, and without fire it would be impossible to live. But the same fire in summer would be painful. When a fire would burn a house or a child, we would curse that fire, and call the source of the greatest evil and misfortune. But the nature of fire is to burn under all circumstances. Such is the nature of good and evil. The same thing when looked at from one standpoint, may be good from another, evil So all actions

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[4] शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत् कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।
न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः ॥१८।१५

which we perform with our body, speech, and mind, whether right or the opposite, must have these five and their causes and, having understood this and explained these five things the Lord said "Such being the case, all our actions require these five causes. Verily we who through untrained understanding look on the pure soul, or the *Atman*, as the doer is of perverted intellect, and does not see rightly".[5] That conclusion Sri Krishna brings. All these activities depend upon these five causes which are of nature, but the source of consciousness is beyond nature. The doer, the self-conscious entity, is not product of nature, but is the knower of nature. So if we say that we are doers, and we are actors, and if we forget ourselves as self-conscious entities beyond nature, then we are making a great mistake, because nothing can be done without the self-conscious entity. But the self-conscious entity itself is beyond all nature and sensual and physical activities. If we identify ourselves with all these conditions of nature, and cannot separate ourselves from nature, then we do not know that our intellect needs to be purified. But when purification of the heart or intellect has come, we shall see the difference between the self-conscious entity and nature. Understanding and intellect must be trained through the study of science and philosophy and through self-analysis by the teaching of the wise ones, so we must train our understanding to grasp the absolute Truth.

The study of Vedanta is the study of philosophy, science, psychology, and everything, because Vedanta is all-inclusive or all-pervasive. It deals with all branches of science, and so it must be studied in order to grasp the highest goal of life. Those who do study Vedanta, find the truths of all other

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5 तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलन्तु यः ।
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥१८।१६

Sankara said in the Commentary that "this shows the reason why the person here referred to is said to be a man of perverted intelligence. The unenlightened one, in virtue of his ignorance, identifies the Self or *Atman* with the five causes and looks upon the pure *Atman* as the doer or agent of the work or action, which is really accomplished by those five causes". In the *Adhyasabhasya*, Sankara also explained this fact clearly.

branches of science and philosophy in one. Nothing is excluded, because the highest goal of all religions is the same as the highest goal of all sciences. Sciences only describe that there is such a thing as truth, but we cannot know it through sciences, but religion tells us that truth which science cannot explain, and which can be reached only by realization, and that realization of the Truth is the goal of all religions. Call it by any name, God or Father or Christ, or Buddha or the Mother of the universe, the substance is the same, and the names only vary. The same Being is worshipped under different names, and the same Being is called the Infinite Being, or the Cosmic Being, but substance is one. We must not forget that all religions are nothing but so many attempts of human minds to grasp and realize that one eternal substance. These are all human efforts Some will get certain glimpses by going into the state of superconsciousness, or coming into direct communication with the infinite Being, and with the truth when realized, they will come down as the great inspired Prophets or Incarnations of the Divinity, and each one will give the message to the world, "This is the way by which I have found the truth, I am the path" Others will take to different methods. There is no quarrel or fight about the goal, but there is a great deal of fight about the method. So long as we forget the goal and think of the method as the ultimate end, we become fanatical, bigoted, narrowminded, and sectarian, and do all kinds of cruel and wicked deeds. Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, my Master, went beyond all narrowness, bigotry, and sectarianism, because he realized that methods and opinions are manifold (*Yata mata, tata patha*), but the goal, the God-realization, is one and the same. He practised all kinds of religious *sadhana* and reached the same goal. So to realize this one and the same Truth purification of mind and intellect are necessary in order to know the difference between nature and the soul of nature. The wise one who understands this difference, always understands his own soul He as a child of the Infinite is above all mental and physical activities. His limbs and body are working, his senses are working, and his intellect is also active, but he himself as the source of consciousness, intelligence, and bliss, is happy, peaceful, perfect, and divine That is, he finds the Divine in humanity. The Divine is the Soul of our souls Whom we

now worship in ignorance, not knowing His nature, we shall then worship in knowledge, knowing the relation between that Infinite and ourselves. Then if we perform any good works, we shall know that nature performs these works, and we shall escape the law of cause and effect He who will escape this and avoid the laws of the phenomenal world by identifying himself with that infinite or eternal pure Soul, cannot do anything that is wrong. He is above all good and evil. Here is the verse by which Sri Krishna describes the nature of such an individual· "He who is free from the egotistic sense of 'I', whose mind is not affected by passions and desires, does neither kill anyone, nor is bound by any work or its effect, though he may appear as killing somebody".[6] Even though he kills all living creatures, he is only showing and proving the wise one. Even if he does kill all living creatures, he is above all evil, because he is perfect. But by this he does not understand that the wise one will perform such acts, but he will show how any crime or evil will not produce any evil effect upon such a soul. He is above all imperfection. He has attained perfection in this life and reached Godconsciousness, and understood the true meaning of the philosophy of work.

यस्य नहिङ्कृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
हत्वापि स इमाँल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥१८।१७

[6] Consult here the Commentaries of Sankara and Madhusudana Sarasvati.

CHAPTER LVIII

THREE IMPULSES ACCORDING TO THREE GUNAS

In discussing the philosophy of work we learned that there are five causes for all actions, the seat, the actor, and the various instruments of acts and senses, that is, external organs, functions of internal organs, and mind and environments. All these things are necessary for the performance of any kind of work Now let us discuss about different kinds of knowledge, and what kind of knowledge is necessary for the performance of right work

Sri Krishna says "Knowledge, to know the object of knowledge, and the knower, form the three-fold nature of knowledge Others are the impulses necessary for all work Knowledge, the object known, and the knower—these three are the main media of work".[1] Whenever we perform any

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1 ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।
करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥१८।१८

Madhusudana Sarasvati elaborately explained and discussed this verse (18 18) from the viewpoint of Mimansa "संक्षेपेण मतं भाट्टमिदमत्रोपादितम्", and Veda

Regarding *jnana*, *jneya* and *jnata* Madhusudana said

"ज्ञानं विषयप्रकाशक्रिया, ज्ञेयं तस्य कर्म, परिज्ञाता (ज्ञाता) तस्याश्रयो भोक्तान्तः करणोपाधिपरिकल्पितः, एतेषां त्रयाणां सन्निपाते हि हानोपादानादिसर्वकर्मारम्भः स्यादत एतत्त्रयं सर्वेषां कर्मणां प्रवर्तकम्। तदेतदाह—'त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना' इति। चोदनेति प्रवर्तकमुच्यते। चोदनेति क्रियायाः प्रवर्तकं बचनमाहुरिति शाबरे 'चोदना चोपदेशश्च बधिश्चैकार्थवाचिन, इति भाट्टे च बचने क्रियाप्रवर्तकबचनत्वं यद्यपि * *। एवञ्च प्रेरणीयत्वं प्रेरकत्वं चानात्मन एव नात्मन इत्तभिप्राय। * * एवं कारकषट्कमेब त्रिविधं क्रियाया आश्रयो न तु कूटस्थ आत्मेत्यर्थः। * * गुणातीतश्चात्मा सर्वकर्मासंस्पर्शीत्यतभिप्रायः।"

The real contention of this verse is this that ego or egoistic idea or *ahamkara* which binds together *chit* (spirit) and *achit* (matter) is really

action, whether physical or mental, we must have knowledge i.e. we know what we are doing and what we wish to accomplish, and at the same time we must have knowledge of ourselves. Although there are five conditions necessary for the performance of work, yet they are insufficient. In spite of all these five mental, physical, and organic functions, the actor is necessary, and the doer must have knowledge or self-consciousness. If we are unconscious, and if we do not know what we are doing, we are not responsible for that work, but are responsible for what we do. If we are put into a hypnotic state and sent to do certain things we do not know of, then we cannot be held responsible for that. But all the actions we perform with our bodies and mind through consciousness, we must be responsible for them. Now, if we want to go forth from here, we must know that we are walking or going and are conscious of our movements. Then we must know the destination, the object, where do we want to go, and these three things, the knowledge, the object of knowledge, and the knower. Wherever there is knowledge, there must be the knower. So we cannot avoid these three when we perform any work. The organs are the instruments for work, the end is to act as the agent, and the doer or actor these form the three-fold basis of work. First of all, we must be the conscious actor or doer, and then we must have instruments which are in good condition for the work. If we are lame, we cannot walk. If we are paralysed, we cannot do any particular work of the body. These things form the basis of work, and then, of course, there is the desire i.e. the desire to enjoy and to avoid pain; to get something and to avoid something. That desire, of course, is included in the mental condition or function. Desire is a mental state. These conditions when properly considered and analysed, will make us understand how many things are necessary for the performance of the work. At present we are working like machines, performing many works continuously, and even in automatic action, each of these conditions must be fulfilled. When we play the piano.

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the doer or actor, or the agent of action (*karta*), and the *Atman* which is above everything, is immute (*kutastha*) and static (actionless), so it never does anything, nor it becomes the cause of any action.

or write automatically, even then we must have an instrument and mind in an active state, and we must have knowledge of what we are writing or playing. In fact, there must be a knower and the object.

The instruments are the organs of senses which I have already described. The five organs of sense perception are eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and touch. These five are the organs or instruments. Now when we come in contact with the external objects, or with those outside of our bodies, then we have five senses of work. Hands, feet, and power of speech are considered to be the senses. So there are ten instruments and two internal senses, the mind and the intellect.[2] Therefore, there are twelve of them, and some divide into still finer subtle states. We will find in psychology others also to make the number sixteen. A spiritual sense, which is not observed in ordinary persons, is called the sixth sense.[3] It is not to be found in ordinary persons. It is much higher than intellectual sense.

Performing works with the help of all these instruments we gain the results of our works. The results of the works will come back to the actor. The actor or doer must have to reap the results, whether good or bad. In trying to fulfil our desires, we will perform certain actions, and these will react upon us, and will bring the results sooner or later, perhaps after ten years, or in the next incarnation. So we must be careful in doing any kind of work remaining fully conscious of the law of action and reaction, for every action brings a certain result upon ourselves. Therefore that knowledge is necessary. Those who perform actions without using that knowledge, suffer in the end, and will have to repent. So we should not perform any act for which we will have to repent afterwards. That is a great thing, and the wise ones, or the

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[2] Twelve senses are five *karmendriyas*, five *jnanendriyas*, and *manas* and *buddhi*. *Chitta* and *ahamkara* are included in *manas* and *buddhi*.

[3] We find that gods and goddesses like Siva, Durga, Kali and others are possessed of a third eye in the forehead, and this third eye is the spiritual sense of *jnana-netra*. The Yogis can also develop their third eye by which they can see subtle and ordinary unseen and unknown things, and can also foresee the objects in distance.

sages, know that. If we understand the secret of law cause and sequence, we will never commit any act that will bring an evil result. If we have hatred or jealousy, or are angry with anybody, it will produce a wrong vibration in our mind, and when the mind is in a wrong state of vibration, it will produce a wrong effect upon the body, and we will find that we are the sufferer Every act we perform, good or bad, must reflect upon us. This eternal law has not been understood in the West even by the majority of the spiritual teachers, although there are passages like, "What thou sowest, thou shalt reap". But these passages have been little understood, and these things have been taught in the East for ages. Christ was an Oriental, and not a European. I have discussed about this interesting subject in my book, *How to Be a Yogi.* Christ went to India, and learned Indian Yoga from the Yogis of India, and so I have told that he was a Yogi. You must not think that what you have been taught, is occidental. Your religion itself is oriental. You will have to turn to the East to know the Truth, and to understand it properly you will have to go to the East. The West does not understand the core of the real truth, and does not know how to explain it. If you try to clearly explain the Truth, you will have to go into the innermost depth, or to the core, of Truth. You will have to realize the Truth, because Truth is Divine Realization, so without realization (*atmanubhuti*) Truth cannot be properly known or appreciated The Upanishadic Seers or Rishis directly got the vision of the *Atman,* so from their direct personal experience they described the inner or real nature of God, or *Atman,* or Brahman. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Great Saint of the nineteenth century perceived directly, or realized the absolute Truth, and so when anyone asked him whether he has seen God or not, he used to answer that he has seen God as he is seeing all living beings and things, and he can vividly show God anyone who is eager to see God. So the Seers and the true philosophers should be the God-realized men, otherwise how will it be possible for them to explain the real nature of God, or of the Absolute. Now Sri Krishna, the God-realized Superman, goes on to describe different kinds of knowledge, knowledge, action, and agent. In the commentary, Sankara has explained these three kinds of

knowledge, according to the description of three qualities (*gunas*). Sankara really means numbers. Sri Krishna also says impulses are three-fold according to the *gunas, sattva, rajas,* and *tamas* He says "Knowledge and action, and the agent, are said in the science of the *gunas* to be of three kinds only, according to the distinction in *gunas.* Hear thou duly of them"[4] Sankara says in the commentary that *karma* here means *kriya* or action. It is not used in the technical sense of the word denoting the object of an action, what is sought to be attained by means of action. Agent is the performer of acts. The science of the *gunas* here referred to is Kapila's Sankhya philosophy though *gunas* are opposed to us as regards the supreme Truth *viz*, the oneness or non-duality of the Brahman. The followers of Kapila are of acknowledged authority in the exposition of the functions of the *gunas* or qualities and of other products, and their science is, therefore, accepted here as an authority as serving to extol the teaching which follows.

Now these different qualities are numbered, and their nature is described most perfectly. This science was based upon the evolutionary process, known as the cosmic evolution. The founder of this science was Kapila who lived seven hundred years before Christ or perhaps earlier, and he is known in India as the founder of the philosophy of cosmic evolution Kapila explained it in such a perfect way that it has been harmonized with the greatest conclusions of modern science. He never believed in the creation theory In his system, you will find that personal God as the Creator of the universe, is denied How can a personal God create? Creation is impossible, and, in the place of creation, he substituted cosmic evolution i.e. evolution of nature (*Prakriti*) He described nature as possessed of different qualities, and these are

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[4] ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।
प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ॥१८।१९

The Commentary of Sankara runs thus:

"'गुणसंख्याने' कापिले शास्त्रे, तदपि गुणसंख्यानं वास्तम्, गुणभोक्तृविषये प्रमाणमेव परमार्थब्रह्मैकत्वविषये यद्यपि विरुद्धते । ते हि कापिला गुणगौणव्यापारनिरूपणे अभियुक्ता इति तच्छास्त्रमपि व्यक्षमानार्थस्तुत्यर्थत्वेन उपादीयते इति न विरोधः ।"

nothing but the different states of the first or primordial manifestation of that nature. Imagine the whole universe as an infinite ocean of ether full of finite particles and ethereal substances, all in constant vibration in attraction and repulsion (*akarshana* and *vikarshana*). All these were described by Kapila. He said creation is caused by attraction and repulsion of the particles which they call atoms or etherial particles, which attract and repel, and, as the result of these various degrees of attraction and repulsion, they produce molecules and the different states of vibration, and produce various objects of the phenomenal world such as heat, light, electricity etc. All these are the different conditions of vibratory particles of etherial substance. Here we have become embodied atoms. There is another system based upon the atomic theory conceived earlier. At that time the cosmic theory reached its perfection, and they understood the cosmic relations, and later on Kapila divided atoms, and the modern Thompson theory was explained in that age by Kapila in the Sankhya philosophy He divided atoms into four sets, and these make up the body of atoms, as Thompson called, corpuscles. They are like minute bubbles, and they attract others, and increase the density in a certain spot, and produce other elements of nature. But before this vibration begins there is a state of absolute equilibrium and balance, and that balance of harmonious homogeneity is the state of the cosmos, and that is described in the science of Sankhya. So you must not consider that it is a very unimportant science, but it is very important, and includes all the greatest discoveries and theories of modern science. Again, you will notice that psychology and philosophy as Kapila explained the perfect systems which have stood for ages as the standard of psychology and philosophy in the East. Vedanta accepts the cosmology, *i.e.* evolutionary process of Kapila, and Sankara, the greatest commentator of Vedanta, also explained how the cosmological process of Kapila should be considered to be the standard.

Here in the eighteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*, Sri Krishna differentiates between the ultimate conclusions of Sankara and the ultimate conclusions of Kapila, and there is one point where Vedanta differs from Sankhya, and that is the ultimate unity of the substance. Kapila believed in the

plurality of souls (*vahu-purushatvat*). Vedanta, starting from there, unifies all these souls into one. The universal Spirit, or the eternal infinite Being, is the Being of the universe. That Being is one and not many. That is the main point where Sankhya and Vedanta differ from each other.[5] In this science of Sankhya you will find that, when this equilibrium is described, these different qualities, or different states of vibratory ethereal particles, are thrown out, and *Prakriti* remains without a ripple, or a bubble, or any waves. Then, in that ocean, the waves begin to come, bubbles and ripples come out, and out of disturbance the universe with its objects come out.

In this science of Sankhya, Kapila says that cosmic evolution was caused by the natural state of nature, and the influx

[5] Sankhya philosophy differs from Advaita Vedanta in four main points: Firstly, Sankhya does not admit a prime principle like a Creator of the manifold universe, who is known as God, as Sankhya says that cosmic evolution happens when the inert and unintelligent Prakriti comes in contact with the intelligent Purusha, whereas Advaita Vedanta admits a Prime Mover of the socalled projection or cosmic evolution (cosmological process) for the manifestation of the unmanifested universe (manifold phenomena) which bears only phenomenal reality (*vyavaharika-satta*) and no permanent or absolute reality (*paramarthika-satta*). Secondly, Sankhya admits for the real cosmic evolution *parinamavada*, or theory of transformation, whereas Advaita Vedanta admits for the temporal and delusive projection of the phenomenal universe *vivartavada* or the theory of superimposition. Thirdly, Sankhya admits many liberated souls or Purushas who remain for eternity in the womb of nature or Prakriti (*prakritilin purushas*), whereas Advaita Vedanta admits liberation means the complete removal of nescience or *ajnana* or *maya*, and there shines only the secondless unique Brahman. Fourthly, Sankhya admits the state of equilibrium or complete balance of the Prakriti, or of the three prime qualities like *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which constitute the stuff of the Prakriti before the beginning of the cosmic process of evolution, whereas Advaita Vedanta admits the *gunas* and the state of their equilibrium so far as the projection of the phenomenal universe is concerned But in truth, Advaita Vedanta says that Prakriti is no other than the causal nescience (*karana-ajnana*) or *maya* or *avidya* that deludes men, and makes them forget their real essence So when emancipation (*mukti*) or realization comes, Prakriti, the combination of three *gunas*, or *maya*, is removed, or rather replaced by the ever-existing Brahman-consciousness which is only real and one without the second, and, therefore, the question of the state of equilibrium of the Prakriti is meaningless to Advaita Vedanta.

of the infinite Being, or the substance called *Purusha*, and when this contact of the *Purusha* with nature happens, there comes the change resulting evolution of the cosmos Here we should simply remember that these various qualities are divided into three different classes. One is called *sattva*, the other, *rajas*, and the third is *tamas*. They are known as attraction and repulsion and their balance. You can see in them the attraction inertia and the state of equilibrium. Wherever there are attraction and repulsion there is also a state of a neutral point, just as you see in a magnet, the opposite poles neutralize where there is neither attraction nor repulsion. I have already explained in my book, *Self-knowledge* that a magnet has two extreme points, positive and negative, and the middle point of the magnet where positive and negative points meet, is the neutral point. The neutral point of the magnet has no activity, *i.e.* has neither attraction nor repulsion (*akarshana* and *vikarshana*), but is possessed of a state of a perfect balance. This neutral point can be known as the *Atman* or Brahman. In the Sankhya system, *Prakriti* in herself remains in a balancing state, where there is no vibrations of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, and when the balancing state (*samyavastha*) is disturbed, then vibrations start and cosmic evolution begins. Again there are the positive *rajas*, the negative *tamas*, and *sattva* as the neutral point. The positive is activity, negation is inertia and it is anything that has not much activity, and the neutral point is that where there is neither one nor the other. Sometimes you are positive and sometimes negative, and sometimes you reach that point where there is a perfect state of rest and balance, and, therefore, it is called *sattva*. In the negative state you are simply stupid, exhausted, and tired out with the activities, and you go to sleep. It is not considered a high state. Whe you go into a hypnotic state that is negative. It is only the lowest kind of truth that will appeal to you. Even in breathing there are the same conditions. It is sometimes positive and sometimes negative, and sometimes it is in a state of perfect equilibrium. In the state of internal breath, you have no idea of external breath, and this is practised by the Yogis. That door is closed for the ordinary persons who do not know anything about it. When the mind goes into deep meditation, your breath will

stop. Then you will not breathe either in or out, and that is the best state of physical equilibrium. In that state, you will reach absolute physical harmony and perfect health. If you know how to harmonize these vibrations, you will reach that point where all these converging forces will equalize themselves, and the whole mind and body will come under your control. When a very strong and unbridled horse is trying to drag wagon into a ditch, the charioteer holds the lines, and then comes a stationary condition. It is not the same as inertia, but it is absolute control which is known as the balance of forces, and when you have that, you know how in anger, hatred, love, attraction and attachment, desires, passions, and emotion, you hold yourself steady, keep them all in balance, and hold them in and control them. It is not like a piece of stone or wood, but it is a tremendous force. That harmony comes through self-control. That should be considered as the state of *sattva*. In that state, perfect peace and tranquillity and all knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual truth, are revealed. So we must try to develop that power, then we will know what perfect divine peace of mind and perfect health and Godconsciousness are. Knowledge that comes in that state of *sattva* in perfect peace of mind, is the highest knowledge. That knowledge is *sattvic* by which a man sees the one inexhaustible and immutable Reality in all beings. The man sees the indivisible in the midst of the divisible, and that is the highest knowledge. That Substance or Reality is immutable, unchangeable, permanent, and eternal, and is never destroyed That dwells in all beings, in ourselves, in all living creatures, and in all animate and inanimate creatures, and is all-pervading If you can realize that, you have attained the highest knowledge, and you cannot do that except in the state of *sattva i e* in perfect peace and harmony, and in a state of equilibrium or perfect balance. It is the eternal Substance of the universe The suns, moons, the stars, the earth with all its animals, plants, and the minute particles of atoms will go back to the primordial condition, which is the eternal energy or the state of absolute equilibrium. But this one Substance, the Reality, which forms the background of the painting of this phenomenal world, will not change That is remarkable

So Sri Krishna says. "That by which a man sees the one indestructible Reality in all beings, inseparate in the separated, that knowledge know thou as *sattvic* (18.20). But that knowledge which, by differentiation, sees in all the creatures various entities of distinct kinds, that knowledge know thou as *rajasic* (18.21) But that which clings to one single effect as if it were all, without reason, having no real object, and narrow, that is declared to be *tamasic* (18.22) An action which is ordained, which is free from attachment, which is done without love or hatred by one not desirous of the fruit or result, that action is declared to be *sattvic* (18.23). But the action which is done by one longing for pleasures or done by the egnostic, costing much trouble, that is declared to be *rajasic* (18.24). The action which is undertaken from delusion, without regarding the consequence, loss, injury, and ability, that is declared to be *tamasic* (18.25). Free from attachment, not given to egotism, endued with firmness and vigour, unaffected in success and failure, an agent is said to be *sattvic* (18.26). Passionate, deserving to attain the fruit or result of action, greedy, impure, subject to joy and sorrow, such an agent is said to be *rajasic* (18.27). Unsteady, vulgar, unbending, deceptive, wicked, indolent, desponding, and procrastinating, (such) an agent is said to be *tamasic* (18.28). The three-fold division of intellect and firmness according to qualities, about to be taught fully and distinctively (by Me), hear thou, O Dhananjaya (18.29). That which knows action and inaction, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, fear and absence of fear, bondage and liberation, that intellect is *sattvic*, O Partha (18.30). That by which one wrongly understands *dharma* and *adharma* (merit and demerit), and pleasures and wealth, desirous of the fruit or result of each on its occasion, that firmness, O Partha, is *rajasic* (18.34). That with which a stupid man does not give up sleep, fear, grief, depression and lust, that firmness, O Partha, *tamasic* (18.35).[6]

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6 सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥
पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान् पृथग्विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥

Now, each individual has two parts, the changeable or mortal part and unchangeable or immortal part. We are wasting our time trying to keep this body forever. It is a foolish thing that will never bring unto us the eternal Substance. It will do some good on the physical plane, that is all. But that immutable Substance, the Reality, is finer than the physical, and it is the background of the physical. All other knowledge is unimportant, and it is the knowledge of the realms that govern the mortal side and that is not the highest. How can we get that highest knowledge? We can get that highest knowledge by a gradual process, and by culture. So let us study ourselves and our own being, and the study of such sciences will reveal unto us the highest truth, which will lead to that knowledge of the eternal Substance. Vedanta includes all sciences, but it does not dwell on the

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यत् तु कृत्स्नबदेकस्मिन् कार्ये सक्तमहैतुकम् ।
अतत्त्वार्थबदकल्पञ्च तत् तामससुदाहृतम् ॥
नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत् तत् सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥
यत् तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहङ्कारेण वा पुनः ।
क्रियते बहुलायासं तद् राजसमुदाहृतम् ॥
अतुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत् तत् तामसमुच्यते ॥
मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंबादी धृतुत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥
रोगी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः :
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥
अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।
बिषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥
बुद्धिर्भेदं धृतेश्चैब गुणतास्त्रिविधं शृणु ।
प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय ।
प्रबृत्तिञ्च निबृत्तिञ्च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।
बन्धं मोक्षञ्च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥

phenomenal sciences as such as others do. It takes the highest conclusions and ultimate results, and deals with these, and starting from there it generalizes and unifies all the various sciences into that one universal knowledge which brings together all sciences. There is a charm in Vedanta which we will find nowhere else. There is no other system in the world expounded or revealed, which will tell us anything like this. If we hear anyone talking like this, we may know it is a copy, or an imitation, borrowed from here and there. The theosophists borrowed their best truths from this. Even Christian Scientists have borrowed theirs ideas from Vedanta. Truth must be recognized, and the highest truth cannot be denied. In Vedanta, we come to the fountain-head instead of having it filtered through other people's minds, Vedanta means the highest end of wisdom and, through the study of Vedanta

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यया धर्ममधर्मञ्च कार्यञ्चाकार्यमेव च ।
अयथावत् प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ।
अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता ।
सर्वार्थान् विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥
धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥
यया तु धर्मकामार्थान् धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।
प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥
यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।
न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा सा पार्थ तामसी ॥१८।२०–३५

Now impulses, as have been mentioned before, are three-fold, according to *sattva, rajas,* and *tamas,* and Sri Krishna has described that though the individual souls *appear* as different from one another for the adjuncts (*upadhis*) of *gunas* or qualities, yet the *Atman* or Reality is not different in different souls or bodies like the all-pervading *akasha* The divisions are relative and delusive, and the *Atman,* or the Brahman, is non-dual, or is one without the second. Sri Krishna has, in this way, reminded all their transcending and non-dual absolute nature. The real contention of the verses 18.20—18.35 is that the impulses or natures of the human beings, designed by the three *gunas,* are changeable, but the immortal *Atman* that forms the background of all these changing impulses or natures, is unchangeable amidst all changes of the phenomenal world.

we will reach that highest knowledge very quickly. Take for instance of the monistic scientist like Haeckel. He called it a substance. Spencer called it substantiary or substance. In Kant, we will find it the same, and, in Schopenhaur, the same. Haeckel called it the insentient substance. He studied the objective nature, and so that substance which he reaches through the study of the material world, appears to him as insentient, but when he would combine the objective and the subjective, and analyse the subjective also, he would find that what he called insentient etc., are not so. Therefore, Vedanta gives something higher than Haeckel, although he accepts everything except the last conclusion that it is insentient.

Vedanta calls it the Brahman, the absolute Reality of the universe, that does not change, and dwells in all living creatures. What a scientist gets after studying all the questions, we will get in Vedanta. He may study and take care of the body and physical conditions, but our mind does not run towards the highest. There are very few who will appreciate the highest. In Wall Street (in America), how many would listen to me? They would put me in a lunatic asylum, and would think I am crazy. The majority of people would say that we are all crazy. But it is a fact that one man is crazy about money, and after a wife, and the woman after a husband, and the man after a wife. So both men and women are crazy after material things. They are mad after things which are transitory. But it is better to be mad after an eternal substance which never changes? Worldly people are mad after things that will not last until tomorrow and will vanish. Why will people be slaves running after these things? Even suppose we have kept this body for thousands of years, what good will it do unto us?

So that absolute knowledge is the highest by which a man sees the one universal Reality. So, first, find the unchangeable reality in yourself, then you will be able to see it in others. You cannot see it in others, because this is not an external sight. The seer did not see itself first. Then, wherever you cast your eyes, you will put on new spectacles, and that will be the glass of spirituality, and you will be able to see things in a spiritual light. Wherever you cast your physical sight, even there you will see it afterwards, but that knowledge will

come from within and not from outside. So if you can control your mind, either through the process of breathing exercise, or through concentration and meditation, or through devotion, or through discrimination, or through study, and if you can acquire that state of perfect equilibrium or balance of mental and physical conditions, then you will find that the eternal sun of wisdom will reflect, and there will be the perfect knowledge. It is the reflection from within. The absolute knowledge or highest wisdom can give you freedom and eternal peace. Just think that you are sitting on the bank of a mighty river of knowledge and so drink there the necture of knowledge. Remember that no one can help you unless you help yourself. You develop your inward sight, and see things with it, and do not be fooled. This knowledge is very difficult to acquire, and to preach truth is seldom appreciated. The world runs after material things. There is a fascination is sense-objects, and the desire to live is so strong in you that you want to keep this material body forever. And that is an error, and there we forget the laws of nature as well as you forget your immortal soul, and act like a fool.

The indivisible Spirit appears in the midst of the divisible, and it is natural. The Being which is the source of our beings, intelligence, love, and highest powers, is indivisible like a solid substance. How fine it will be, if it remains indivisible, and still you cannot see or feel how fine it is. Everything appears to you at present as differentiated, and you see there are man and woman, white man and black man, and cat and dog and stone and others. This is the knowledge of the relative, and that knowledge Sri Krishna describes as *rajasic*: "But that knowledge is *rajasic* which consists in different differentiations, and sees in all beings different realities and different conditions." We do not see the difference between dog and man. and between cat and tiger, but the connection is uppermost in the infinite Reality. You can feel the being of a cat or the essence of the cat, and not the physical part but the essence. You will feel that intelligence is working within the cat i e. in the soul of the cat. There is a soul in the cat, but it is in a lower degree of development, as it does not manifest all the powers as a human soul does. It has a difference in degree, but not in kind. There are intelligence and feeling

in it. We have seen the higher soul just like that of a human being, and that shows that they have feelings. The other day I was reading about monkeys and elephants. After a good deal of study of their characters it has been discovered that they are very humorous sometimes, they enjoy fun, they have feelings, and some of them are very highly developed. They have reason, the only difference is in degree. Go still deeper, and you will find the reality, the indivisible reality working through them. It is their spirit. They (monkeys and elephants) have spirit, and it would be different only in degree. If you can unify that on the highest spiritual plane, or on the finest substance, then you have known something that is neither a dog nor a cat, but divine. The Divinity dwells in dogs and cats. Do no think human beings are the only beings in which the Divinity is dwelling. The Divinity dwells everywhere, and in every atom. The Divinity fills the space and the higher knowledge only reveals this truth. Ordinary knowledge which does not reveal this truth is relative in nature, and it dwells on the surface. It is of the physiological conditions, and is not the highest. Ordinary persons possess this relative knowledge, but that knowledge will never bring permanent happiness. If it did, each one of us would have been happy, but are we? We must, therefore, try to find the highest knowledge. We have seen the difference between the dog and the man, or the difference between an ordinary man and one who is highly developed. Sometimes we are satisfied or contented after thinking that we have known everything that ought to be known, but that is not right. It is not the highest. That knowledge will be that by which you have no unhappiness. That thirst for knowledge will be quenched by knowing which all other things will be known "यस्मिन् ज्ञाते सर्वं विज्ञानं भवति" That eternal substance is the immutable Reality which dwells in all beings. We may read books, or Scriptures, or various branches of science, philosophy, psychology, and biology, but we will not find any real satisfaction by them It may bring a temporary satisfaction.

All questions of our life will be solved when we have known the indivisible Reality, or the unchangeable Truth, that dwells within us equally as it dwells in all animate and inanimate objects. Knowledge of unity is the highest, but know-

ledge of diversity is relative. So long as we know different things as separate realities, we have not reached the highest knowledge. First of all, we will have to understand what is meant by relative knowledge. In performing any action we will have to consider all the conditions to which that particular action is related. Ordinarily we say a train is running twenty miles per hour, or a human being is walking two miles an hour from the east to the west. He is perfectly happy, and knows that he is walking two miles an hour from the other standpoint? Think of the rotation of the earth on its axis from west to east, twenty-five thousand miles in twenty-four hours. The earth has moved backward toward the east one thousand miles, so how far has it come? It has gone toward west only. Think of the revolution of the earth around the sun. Eighteen miles per second, or six hundred and forty-eight thousand miles per hour, the earth is moving around the sun. The whole solar system is moving around another system. So which is the east and which is the west? Look at the universe as one unchangeable substance including the space etc. Therefore, the whole universe of an infinite being cannot move, and the universe is stationary, but the things which are in the universe in particular places, are moving. But, in reality, the whole universe is not moving. Where would it go. So all movements, say of fast express trains with a speed of sixty miles an hour, are all relative. We cannot see all sides, so we need not be conceited with what we know. There are lots of things we do not consider. Our knowledge is imperfect, but ultimately the knowledge will come to that indivisible and invisible something. The common sense will ultimately be Divine sense; so common knowledge will ultimately be the Divine knowledge. Just imagine a large ball and little microbes moving on that ball. The ball is stationary, and we are like the microbes moving on it. If we can find the north pole, what a tremendous commotion there will be. All these foolish things we are thinking of, yet everything has its value on its own plane, but on the plane of the universe it is worthless. From the plane of the world all the possessions we claim as our own, but they do not belong to us. Our home and house and this and that, our quarrelling and fighting and all this non-sense we are going through—all are useless.

Still all these things we must go through in order to know that they are useless. Nature is trying to show her miraculous powers, and is presenting all kinds of jugglery and delusions, and is fascinating and charming us. They are attracting us, and keeping us, and bringing us back to enjoy it over and over again. Now she (nature) gets a blow, and all is gone like a soap bubble. Nature is going everywhere, and doing everything to attach us to the world. The universe is a study. In this whole book of the universe, page after page, we turn and study. And after turning the pages we find that the whole book is useless and worthless. Then we turn to the highest knowledge, the knowledge of the unchangeable and infinite One, who is above nature *i.e.* who saturates and animates nature, but transcends nature. That knowledge is worth-having. All other knowledge which leads to a little distance, is very good when compared to ignorance, but when compared to the highest knowledge, it does not lead us far. Try to know and consider that the knowledge which is confined to diversity, is relative and secondary, and not the highest and primary one. Astronomy may teach us certain movements of the planets, where the planets exist, and where they exist in relation to us, and after describing the rotation of the earth and subtracting the revolutions of the earth around the sun, we may come to the conclusion that the stars are moving at this rate, and that is all approximate. Let us take it all for granted. When we study astronomy, we will have to consider this earth as a planet which has no magnet and no parts, otherwise we cannot calculate. The solar system is so vast and this earth is so big and is so full of treasures and of such interest with the V. S. and N. Y. City, is only one small corner. It is only one small point, and is smaller than dust. Considering the matter in this light, we will be able to calculate what an immensity is this universe,—thousands and thousands of tons weightier than our mother earth. The nebula mass is coming out and going back. Do we ever think of this? If not, we are in the darkness of ignorance. We take interest in the little knowledge that concerns ourselves, but that which is confined to one single effect as if it were all, which is illusion unfounded upon the truth, narrow, and limited, is not knowledge. We think of our body as all, and we

consider it as a thing we possess. It is ignorance. We have forgotten our soul, and have forgotten that we are a child of God. We have forgotten the universe. If we consider anything that is particularly interesting, that is the only thing that belongs to us, and nothing else we can think of, whether it is a child, a husband, or a dog, or a cat. That is the only thing that belongs to us, and we cannot live without it. That would be knowledge of the lowest kind, because we ignore the existence of the Highest Our mind and intellect are limited, and our understanding has become so narrow that we cannot see anything else. That kind of knowledge is the knowledge of the worldly ignorant persons. He who thinks that furniture, jewels, and garments are all, that kind of knowledge is very limited. We must outgrow that knowledge. We must rise above it, go to the causes of things, and see the vastness of the universe. In this infinite universe why should we be contented with the little things which last only for a few seconds? Our conception of time rests upon the rising and setting of the sun, but if such motion changes and the rising and setting be different, our conception of time would be different So why should we waste our time?

What is the use of having all these things when we know the eternal Truth? The only thing that will enrich our soul is the knowledge of the immutable reality of Being. That will enrich us, and expand us, and help us, and then we will know what the highest wisdom is. In it there is omniscience, because all other knowledge is included in that knowledge, and all other interests and ideals are included in that knowledge, therefore, we should try to acquire that knowledge. We must acquire it even though we may require to struggle for it. All limited phenomenal knowledge are relatively good, and have their own value in their planes, but still the knowledge of the Infinite is much higher, and divine, and when the knower has attained to that knowledge, what kind of knower is he? He is not like an ordinary man also is contented with a little knowledge, but he knows the path of the future, the beginning, and end of the phenomenal world i.e everything is known to him. He knows the condition of his soul, where he will remain after death, and why he came into existence. Does he care for trivial things? No. If you say

anyone is crying, he would pity him. So when a man or woman does merely concern himself or herself with material things, he would pity him or her. He would pity and help them to open their eyes. If he can or if he cannot, he keeps quiet, and helps them to work out their own salvation. So if we do work it out consciously, knowing the end in view, it is very pleasant. Otherwise it is groping in the dark, pushed from behind by forces not knowing where we are going. Where are we going? We have come here and are eating, drinking, and sleeping, but to what end? What are acquiring good things, gaining money, and paying taxes, but to what end? If it were not for that knowledge, I would die twenty times before I would do all these things for nothing. I stand for that knowledge. I stand to know what this world is, to know what nature is, to reveal the powers latent in my soul, to study the book of nature, and to fulfil the purpose of my life by knowing the Reality of the universe.

CHAPTER LIX

THREE KINDS OF ACTION

This world is a great field of work. All individual souls that have incarnated themselves on this plane, have been working. No one can sit or live in absolute ease without doing anything. So long as we are to perform some kind of work, we must understand the different methods of work, and that which is the best form of work. There are various kinds of methods with which we perform our daily duties and the works of our social and spiritual lives. We already heard that there are three kinds of works. All the actions of our body and mind can be divided into three classes. If we divided them according to our motives and also according to our methods and purposes, we can understand which method or motive we ought to accept, and which to reject. The action which is ordained either by Scriptures, or by social laws or household duties etc., performed without attachment and desire as to the fruits, is good, and that is *sattva*. We will have to examine our motives for the works which we perform during our daily lives. Works are of various kinds: some are household works, some are works which fulfil our duties towards our neighbours and relatives, friends, towards the society, and towards our own country. We have also spiritual works. All these should be examined properly. When we rightly perform all these works, which we have been doing, without attachment and desire or averson, then we do not exercise our own likes and dislikes.

It is not that we will always be guided by our desires and aversions, by our likes and dislikes, but sometimes we find that the work which we do not like at all, brings us wonderful results and uplifts us. The like and dislike vary. What one may like at a certain time, one may not like at another time. What you may like today, you may not like tomorrow. If you are always guided by your likes and dislikes, you would be like a magnet. What tickles such people's tastes and sensations, and appeals to them, they will do. If a thing be just the opposite, they will also do it if it appeals to them at that

moment. That is the reason why we suffer so much, and because we have no judgement. What we wish today, we do not wish tomorrow; our ideas change and vary, and we may like different things. But if we are guided by our likes and dislikes, we will not perform our daily works and get the best results. Likes and dislikes we will not perform in our daily works to get the best results. Likes and dislikes will depend upon the tendency. If you examine your own mental construction, you will find you naturally like certain things just as people like different colours and have different tastes. So different people have different likes and dislikes. We must therefore, sacrifice our likes and dislikes in order to gain the highest results. Naturally our mind goes towards sense objects, and we are attracted towards them, and like to enjoy them without feeling any kind of restriction. We want to enjoy them fully and all the time, but that would not be right, and that would rather be the natural tendency. The life of an animal is possessed of an animal desire. It will make that animal stay on the animal plane. And similarly, likes and dislikes proceed from selfish motives. We like those things which fulfil our selfish purpose and in which we are interested, but when we become unselfish, these very acts will not appeal to us.

Again think of attachment. Why should we be attached to the things of the world? They are not permanent, and this idea we must not forget. The objects of the world are transitory, because they last for a short time. We cannot carry them with us; they will be left behind. All those things which are permanent and everlasting, to them we should be attached and not to any other transitory object. The very house in which we live now, many have been born and have died there. How many people have had a home there? Here we are today, perhaps, others may come and take possession of this house If we at this moment attach ourselves to this spot, what will be the result? Will that attachment be worth-having? Some people say that without attachment we cannot work It is true that we need some kind of attachment, but that must not be on the surface, but must be deeper, and must go below the surface of things and with the everlasting portion of a thing We will be attached to it. We will seek that everlasting thing in every object. We will find God or the presence of

the Divinity, because God dwells everywhere in everything. All these objects of sense will appear to our senses, but the Divine Being who dwells in these objects, or who saturates and animates these objects, will attract or be attracted by the Divine Being. Then why should we desire to fight? The fighting is bound to come by the law of action and reaction So let us go on doing our duty, and we should not look for a fight. Those who have no faith in the law of action and reaction, or of cause and sequence, or in the law of retribution, are worry about results. Results are bound to come, they why they should be worry, or be anxious about them? If there be certain things which we want, may may work for them, and if we perform our duties faithfully and work diligently, then the results are bound to come. But the ideal must not be a transitory or worldly ideal, it should be the highest, and must be divine.

All these duties of life we should perform as acts of worship. Worshipping the Supreme by our works, and keeping that ideal in view, if we go on working, we do not seek any other results. The highest result will include all the smaller results. When we have attained God, what else to we want? We do not know how much happiness, how much knowledge and how much freedom will come to us then, therefore, we seek these things in transitory objects, not knowing, or not being conscious of that. But if we once understand and realize that by attaining to God, we must attain unto everything else. All states that arise from the contact with sense objects, are included in the happiness which comes from Divine communion. Then we do not see these little pleasures and small particles of pleasure. So the wise ones seek that infinite ocean of happiness, where they can search and dive and enjoy that happiness always, without having a reaction of any kind. Therefore, they sacrifice all these little attractions. They do not sacrifice in the ordinary sense, but they withdraw their senses from the lower objects of attraction, and fix them upon that infinite source of all happiness.

So all the works of this body and mind become acts of worship, and these acts of worship are necessary for the purification of our heart, and when the heart is purified the supreme peace is bound to come. Purification of the heart is necessary,

and that purification of the heart means that we should have the required knowledge, and should understand the difference between the real and the unreal, the truth and the untruth, and also what is permanent and everlasting and what is transitory and ephemeral. When we understand these things, our hearts become purified, not until then. And that purification of the heart is necessary before we can accomplish work without attachment and desire, and work like an act of worship is the highest kind of work, because all the great Saviours of mankind lived in the world, and worked like any other worker, but inwardly they were untouched, and within their souls they had no other desire for their own gain, or any selfish motive. They had neither aversion nor attachment to earthly pleasure, but they transcended the plane of relativity. Therefore, we should work in the spirit of worship so that we can live up to their ideal. That is the ideal of all religions.

What does Christianity teach? It teaches us to become like Christ, and likewise Buddhism teaches us to become like Buddha. What does dualism teach? It teaches us to become like the great souls called Incarnations of God, because they had the ideals. They lived in a way in which the ordinary mortals cannot live, therefore, they are great. We must worship them, and hold them as the ideal and try to reach that ideal, and manifest it through ourselves. That is the form of worship and of devotion. You constantly think of Christ, not as a human being, but as the ideal. Hold the ideal of Christ, and pray to Christ. Then you will see that your own individual soul is transfigured into Christ, and has become like it. Then you will have spiritual peace and happiness, and there is no question about.

Similarly those who hold other ideals, will reach the same goal, because the ideals are all on the same plane There is a mountain top in the highest part of the Himalayas, and if one goes there, one hears the divine voice, another comes and hears another voice, and others also hear other voices The great souls who have reached the height of perfection, have attained the same result, but it is expressed differently, because the great ones express their experiences according to the conditions which superinduce them If Christ lived in India, he would have expressed himself differently, but he lived under condi-

tions all against him and he was not appreciated during his lifetime. But Tathagata Buddha was appreciated, Sri Krishna was appreciated during their lifetime, and Sri Ramakrishna was also appreciated in a like manner. Their opinions were expressed differently, they had the same ideas with different expressions only. When you weigh the Sermon on the Mount and also weigh some of the passages of the *Bhagavad Gita*, you will find the balance is the same and there is no difference, because they had the same thought and ideal. Then why so much quarrelling and fighting prevail among the different nations? It is because of the ignorance, fanaticism, bigotry and superstition.

One day I went to lecture before the New York Church Association, I gave a lecture on *Relation of the Soul to God*, and they were very deeply impressed, and after the lecture was over one of the clergymen said: "Now this afternoon we have had the greatest pleasure in hearing the highest form of what we should call natural religion, but which is supernatural religion? Christianity is a supernatural religion, but this religion which has come from the East, is a natural religion". So you see they make a distinction between supernatural religion and natural religion. Then I said in answering that point: "The ideal of supernatural religion first originated in India, and that is the revealed religion. India is the home of spirituality and the idea of spirituality has been expressed in the highest logical, scientific, and philosophical explanations, and the Indian Seers have gone so far in understanding what real revelation means that no other nation up to this time has attained to that point". Then I explained how the worship, supernatural and natural, depended upon our conception of nature and what we understand by nature. I told them: "If we have divine conceptions of nature that which exists outside of that boundary line of the conception, then it is supernatural, and that which is within the boundary line, is natural. But when that conception expands and covers a larger area, that which was supernatural at one time when our conception was smaller, becomes natural, as it comes within the boundary line. But when our conception of nature covers the whole universe, then everything is natural, and nothing is supernatural. Now, what you call natural, includes

your supernatural. Therefore, religion of Vedanta includes Christianity, nay, all kinds of religion, religious faith and sect. But Christianity does not include Vedanta, because its field is not so large so as to include all philosophies of the world". They were pleased with the answer, and accepted it.

So we should understand what is the universal ideal. After-all the ideal must be the highest, and must be universal. We should work for that ideal alone. All religions give that same ideal as the highest goal. Truth is one and, therefore, we should hold the same truth as the ideal for which we should work and direct all our motives and efforts towards that one ideal. That will include all the smaller ideals, and all religious distinctions and sectarian bigotry, and creeds and dogmas will be included in it. They all are secondary things. They are non-essentials, but are necessary for those minds which cannot reach the absolute Truth without going through certain forms of worship or rituals, and ceremonials. But we must not mistake them for the highest Truth, but we must consider them as meansto an end, and that we learn in Vedanta. Other sectarian religions do not express that. They tell us that these are the ends, and the non-essentials are the essentials, but when you go a little deeper, you find they are necessary for certain conditions only and are not the ends of life.

There is spiritual childhood, spiritual youth, and spiritual maturity. What you need in your spiritual childhood, you do not require when you grow stronger and older. When you learn to feel the presence of the Divinity in your soul, you have done with outward worship or external means, or symbols. But so long as God is far away from you, you will have to hold something before your mind as the ideal, or as the representative or symbol of the ideal, then you gradually outgrow, and rise above it.

The highest and most spiritual method for worship I have described before. Now the method by which ordinary people of the world worship, is described. That action which is performed with the idea of obtaining certain results, with self-conceit, pride, and egotism, and with a great deal of trouble, proceeds from passion. Any work that we perform with a great deal of trouble and with the strong desire of holding the pride or egotism or self-interest as the most prominent thing,

is a work that proceeds from passion. It is secondary, and is not the highest. Any work which we perform out of passion, whether it is religious, or social, or personal, is selfish, and that work which does not proceed from passion, becomes a means to highest happiness and perfection.

Then we have the ideal kind of work. This is the third kind which we describe here. A work which is performed seeking consequence, with loss of worth, with injury to others, without regarding these things and undertaken through delusion, absolutely proceeds from ignorance. Any work that makes loss of worth or injury to others or to one's own ability and waste of time, and which does not bring and enlightenment of any kind, but rises from ignorance, is the worst class. When we follow certain people who are standing as ideals in society, we follow like sheep without regarding how much it would cost us to do the works which they are doing and of what results will be brought, that work is worthless. That work rises from ignorance, and keeps us in bondage, and does not bring enlightenment. Then we do not exesrcise common sense. We do not hold the ideal before our mental eye, but we simply do it to please somebody, or to please our own vanity, or to satisfy our own animal craving, and that is all. That kind of work we should avoid. We should avoid the work that proceeds from pasion, but it is better than the work which proceeds from ignorance, and the work which proceeds from goodness and spiritual unselfish motives, is the best.

Then there are three kinds of worker. The worker who is free from attachment, not asserting the self, is endued with fortitude, perseverance and energy, and is unaffected by success or failure, is called the spiritual worker. He is characterised by goodness and spirituality. A spiritual worker will perform all the works but without attachment. Outwardly you cannot see any difference except his own soul, but if you could see it, it would show the difference. You will see that he has no selfish motives, and never asserts his individual self or his personality, but he asserts that everything is done by the supreme Will. You may call that supreme Will the will of Christ, or of Krishna, or of Buddha, but it is all the same and that one supreme Will is there, and is meant. He is persevering and full of energy, and does not care whether success or failure

comes. He goes on working, meeting success or failure. He does not care anything, and even if the clouds fall, still he goes marching on. Those who seek success, do not get it. Those who are afraid of failure, get failure. But those who do not care, are always successful, because they exercise their highest ability, judgement, and common-sense, and are faithful to their duties. therefore they are the best workers.

The actor who is passionate, desirous of the fruits of actions, greedy, malevolent in spirit, impure, and is affected by joy and grief, is a passionate worker. That is, his work proceeds from passion. Now we can understand who is a passionate worker. Worldly men and women generally belong to this class, because they are full of passion, ambition, and hatred, and desire this and that. They always seek the results of their actions. They cannot do anything without thinking of the fruits, how much they will get, and how much will come in return. They are greedy, and always try to possess something. They are malevolent in spirit, and have neither conscience, nor generosity. If they have these things, they proceed from selfish motives Impure thoughts rise in their minds, and they try to injure others, and hurt their feelings, and serve their own purpose. They are easily affected by joy or grief. If one thing goes against them, they are very sorry, miserable, and dejected. If things go right, they are happy just like children They are passionate workers.

But those who are heedless, careless, arrogant, and dishonest, perverting others from gaining their livelihood, depressed in spirit and procrastinating, and ignorant, are called the worst class of workers We must not follow their example, and must not hold them as the ideal They are heedless, foolish, and idiotic . They do certain things not knowing why they do them They are dishonest, so you cannot trust them, and do not depend on them. They will try to make you serve their interest, if they can. They will take everything from you, and prevent you from earning your living, and they will try to enrich themselves at others' cost. They are always melancholy and pessimistic They do not find any good anywhere. because they are dishonest. They find everybody like them They do not perform any work readily, but if you ask them to do something, they will deceive you, and say they will do

it tomorrow, and keep you waiting for a month with their procrastinating nature. Such are of the worst class You will find lots of them in the world. So you should keep the ideal of the spiritual worker in your mind. The ideal of the spiritual worker is best, because he is free from attachment, he does not injure, is not selfish, is not pessimistic, but is full of perseverance and energy, and works with unselfish motives, unaffected by success or failure. Therefore one should hold that person as the ideal.

Therefore we shall understand three kinds of worker fully and distinctly. We should understand the intellect i.e. that intellect in performing the good and the spiritual and which knows when to act and when to abstain from work, what ought to be done, what ought not to be done, what is dangerous and what is not, and what leads to bondage and what leads to emancipation or freedom. That kind of intellect and understanding we must have. We must cultivate and polish our intellect, and purify it until we get to that point from which we can understand all that we ought to do and ought not to do. We ought to do that which would go with us and be a part of our soul, and which will build up our character, make us moral and divine. We ought to know what is dangerous and what is not dangerous; what we ought to fear and what we ought not to fear. The path which leads to worldliness, is dangerous, although we do not see it, and the path which leads to the realization of God, is not dangerous. That we shall understand when our understanding will be purified.

We should think what is bondage and what is freedom, whether at present we are in bondage or are free, and whether are we emancipatd or are we living like slaves. Really we are not slaves to another person, but are slaves to our passion and desire and all other tendencies. Have we controlled that? If not, we must try to do that, and find the proper method by which we can control that when we know the distinction between bondage and freedom.

The other kind of intellect which proceeds from discrimination, is what is right and what is wrong—what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. It is the faculty of discrimination Ordinary people whose understanding is not purified, do not know what is really right and what is wrong. The stan-

dard of right and wrong undoubtedly varies. We have not an absolute standard, because in different stages of life different things appeal to be right and wrong. That which is right for a man under certain conditions of life, will not be right when he rises above that condition. So with a woman, and so with everybody. But the highest standard of right and wrong is the eternal Truth, and that which makes us realize Truth in the best form and leads us to the eternal Being, is truly right, and we ought to do that first. But the passionate intellect does not discriminate in that way. It mistakes and understands wrongly. It gets confused as to what is right and what is wrong, and it does not know. At many moments of our life we have found that state of mind, but we do not know whether we should do this or that, and what would be good and beneficial. And, of course, those who hold certain scriptural standards, follow certain ideas. But again the scriptural standard varies, and it is not for all. The Scripture describes one standard for one person under certain conditions, another Scripture describes that as not right. You can see that in your own Bible, 'an eye for an eye and a teeth for a teeth' is one injunction. But the injunction of Jesus the Christ was 'If any one smites you on the right cheek, turn to him the left', therefore it is very confusing. Again Christ said: "Love your neighbours as yourselves", "Love your enemies". Then again, we will have to fight against our enemies. But when our intellect or understanding is purified, when it proceeds from goodness and spirituality, when we gain the spiritual standard, then we know exactly what is right and wrong, and we do not have to go and ask the priest. What does the priest know? He has a certain spirituality, but our own ideal will be a higher ideal than the priests, and we will find the highest judge in our own soul. Christ understood this, because he was purified. Therefore if we were purified, we would then understand the law and express it in our own way. All great seers understood and realized the law, because their understanding was purified.

The lowest kind of understanding is that which regards unrighteousness as righteousness, and that understanding takes us to darkness and ignorance and all things which are perverted We cannot see things straight, but everything seems to be different, virtue seems to be vice, and vice seems to be virtue. There

is the greatest confusion. If you tell them to discriminate, they do not know the method, they are not ready for it, but they will have to go through certain grades of evolution in order to come to that point. You cannot make everybody think the same way as you do. You cannot give them balance. That is the greatest difficulty. Those who have tried to help others, have discovered it in every age. They can suggest, but they cannot give them the brain, but it requires some intellectual evolution. You can polish them to a certain point, but you cannot take out their brain and put something else different, and it is impossible. I do not mean simply physical brain, but I mean intellect and understanding. Brain is only the seat of understanding or the power to understand. But some are born with wonderful intellect, others are not. Some bring that intellect with them. Intellect is not result of the mental condition, but the soul carries it wherever it goes. When that intellect is covered with the veil of darkness, nothing penetrates through that veil into objects of knowledge, and that makes the difference. It makes some time to receive that ideal. Therefore, even the Saviours with the greatest powers cannot help them. In the case of Jesus the Christ, we know few people understood him. Although he had such divine powers by which he could make them understand, still he could not make everybody understand. He could make some understand who were ready. So it was with other great teachers. That will take a long time before they will come to the perfected and purified understanding.

There is firmness or determination, and that is also of three kinds. That fortitude or strength or firmness of mind by which one holds fast the mind and mental functions, the breath of life, and the activities of sense organs with unswerving firmness through the practice of Yoga, is called *sattvic* firmness. That is the best. That comes, but strength of chracter is necessary, and it rises through the practice of concentration, meditation, and self-control by which the mind, the breath, the nerve-cells, and the currents and activities of sense-organs are held firmly under control. Nothing is beyond control. That is the best, and that we should exercise and practise.

That by which are held pleasure and wealth, being attached thereto with a desire of fruit, and when our minds are full

of desires, when we want to get first the objects of pleasure and wealth, and when we devote all the material and intellectual functions to the attainment of certain results, is the passionate.

And the third is that which proceeds from ignorance. That for which a stupid person, or a stupid intellect, does not give up sleep, depression and pride, is something which is wrong. A stupid person holds to it firmly. We do not understand that it is wrong. He who is sleepy, will go to sleep and will never awake. The spirit tries to awaken him, but he is angry, and says, "leave me alone, let me sleep". Some people have fear of ghosts, you cannot convince them otherwise or make them realize differently. Some have fear of hell and punishment. There is no reason for it, but they hold fast to that foolishness and stupidity. Some people have a certain grief, and that grief clings to them. They cannot get out of it, and that is a kind of firmness, and that is not desirable. There is again what is called depression. Some people are depressed all the time, and they cannot get out of it It is a very undesirable condition. Some have pride of possessions or intellect or some qualification, and they cannot outgrow it That is the worst type.

But the best kind of firmness, as I have described, is that by which mind and mental functions, although they are very weak, are under control, so that they can direct them towards any object, and where the activity of sense organs are kept under perfect control, there is no fear All the mental faculties of the mind run towards the Supreme without seeking any material result That is the best firmness. We should hold that as the ideal.

So, after learning of these three kinds of action, we should try to follow the ideal of firmness in this case, and hold that ideal, and live up to it in our daily life.

CHAPTER LX

FOUR CLASSES OF DUTY

Our life in this world is one continuous search after pleasure. We all struggle hard to enjoy and to obtain all kinds of pleasure that we can get on phenomenal plane. These are the natural tendencies of all living souls. Even in animals we find them on the abode of pain and suffering, and they suffer and enjoy. So with all human beings, from the smallest to the highest developed, the tendency is to take pleasure and to avoid pain. These pleasures are of various kinds, some enjoy one pleasure, others enjoy other things. We can classify these pleasures in several heads. Some enjoy pleasures in certain ways which would be disagreeable and not attractive to others; and when we study carefully the nature of these various kinds of pleasure which human beings enjoy, we can divide them into three main classes, and these three classes are described here. The second half of this verse 18.36 is constructed by other Commentators, such as Sridhara-svami and Madhusudan Sarasvati, with the next verse 18.37. Sankara has not also made clear how it should be constructed, though Anandagiri has thrown some light.

Sri Krishna says: "Now hear from Me, O Lord of the Bharatas, of these three-fold pleasures, in which one delights by practice and surely comes to the end of pain".[1] All these pleasures avoid certain kinds of pain and suffering. The word pain stands for all kinds of pain, such as physical suffering, sorrow, etc. All kinds of man try to avoid that, and trying to avoid that they seek the immediate attainment of pleasure and also immediate removal of pain and suffering, and that is the

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[1] सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।
अभ्यासाद् रमते यत्र दुःखान्तञ्च निगच्छति ॥१८।३६

The second half of this verse 18.36 is constructed by other commentators, such as Sridhara-swami and Madhusudan Sarasvati, with the next verse 18.37. Sankara has not also made clear how it should be constructed, though Anandagiri has thrown some light.

general tendency of ordinary mortals. We have no time to think of it, and the lower the development the stronger that tendency They have no self-control, and their intellect is not advanced far enough. They have no foresight, and cannot think of future results, whether it would be good and pleasant in future or not. They do not think of that side, and leave the future to take care of itself. They are like children who do not think of what will happen in future. If they have hunger, or thirst, or a pain, they want immediate removal, and they seek immediate satisfaction without thinking of the future, whether it would last or not. They are like children, and their intellect is undeveloped. They have no understanding and no foresight. They do not know what pleasure is lasting and what pleasure is not. But the wise ones seek the pleasure which will be everlasting, and not only lasting in this life, but will continue. Even after the death of the body the soul will enjoy the pleasure. Now it can be asked as to what is the real nature of pleasure, or, in other words, it can be asked as to what state of mind induces that feeling which we call pleasant. That is the difference between the wise men and the ordinary men of the world. A common man of the world has neither real joy, nor real satisfaction. He does not believe in the continuation of life after death. He is satisfied with that which is immediate and will be perceptible to the senses. The pleasure that is enjoyed by the wise ones is different from that enjoyed by these living on the lower plane of the world.

That which is like poison at first, or very bitter at first, but like nectar at the end, is declared to be good. This is the highest kind of pleasure, or the most lasting being born of the pure knowledge of the spirit That pleasure which preceeds from pure knowledge of the spirit of our spiritual being, is the highest kind of pleasure. Those who are developed spiritually, can understand this, and those who are in the sense plane, cannot understand what it means and why it is like poison at first. So Sri Krishna says· "That which is poison at first like nectar at the end, that pleasure is declared to be *sattvic*, born of the purity of one's own mind".[2] The real con-

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[2] यत् तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत् सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥१८।३७

tention is this that the methods that one will adopt in order to attain to that highest pleasure, will not be pleasing at first, because they will have to go through so many hardships, and spend so much time in exercising self-control, self-mastery etc., but when self-control is attained and mind is purified, then the pleasure appears as nectar. Sometimes you will get discouraged and feel that it is not worth having and that feeling comes to everyone, because it is so bitter. We will have to exercise the power of control all the time in order to gain the knowledge of the true Spirit or the Self. We are attached to the conditions of the body, and are identified with these conditions and rise above them. It is a pleasure which does not come through contact with the senses, and the objects of senses, but it rises in the soul, from within When the mind realizes the true Self, there comes a state, and in that state of purification and earthly attractions sense objects cease to be attractive, and they have no meaning; and the mind cannot enjoy pleasure in all those states which ordinary people, who are living on the animal plane, enjoy. They do not enjoy objects of appetite or sleep for a long time or all the pleasant objects of the senses, because they are all on the relative phenomenal plane. When the understanding or intellect is purified the spiritual glowing begins to shine in the soul, and the understanding of that spiritual glowing does not appear to the mind, then satisfaction comes, and earthly tendencies cease to bind the soul. The soul enters gradually into the state of Godconsciousness, and when the soul reaches that state, absolute happiness comes and that happiness does not end. When after that, the individual soul is tired or is experiencing anything that is not pleasant, he enters into that state of Samadhi, and thus he is free from all this, just as the sea is far away from the clouds.

As the clouds cannot touch the sea so that state of *samadhi* cannot be touched by sorrow, suffering, pain or disagreeable,

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Madhusudana Sarasvati also said: "यत् अग्रे ज्ञानवैराग्यध्यानसमाध्यारम्भेऽत्यन्तायासनिर्वाह्यत्वाद्विषमिव द्वेषविषेषाबाहं भवति, परिणामे ज्ञानवैराग्यादिपरिपाके त्वमृतोपमं प्रीत्यातिशयास्पदं भवति। * * ईदृशं यदनात्मबुद्धिनिवृत्त्यात्मबुद्धिप्रसादज समाधिसुखं तं सात्विकं प्रोक्तं योगिभिः।"

Such is also the contention of Sankara.

unpleasant feelings which rise in the mind like clouds, so that state of pleasure is worth-having. If the whole world changes and all the circumstances go against him, still he cannot lose that If your body be cut to pieces, even then you cannot suffer. That state of pleasure is everlasting and it can be obtained in this life. A wise man, knowing this, devotes his time and energy in order to attain to that even in this life. This happiness arises from the state of *sattva,* that quality of goodness, that state of peace and rest where the mind is peaceful, undisturbed by worries, anxieties, cares and troubles, ambitions and passions. In that state, if we have right knowledge of the spirit, we will have to wait until that knowledge comes, and the soul will reward us, and that rewarding will never cease, no matter under what conditions we are placed. The other kind of pleasure which the worldly people enjoy, is different. Sri Krishna says: "That pleasure is passionate which depends on the contact of the sense organs with the objects; it appears like nectar in the beginning, but in the end it turns out to be like poison and that is declared to be *rajasic*".[3] It is not worth-having, as it becomes very painful. The same pleasures which are like nectar at the time you are enjoying, continue to enjoy it, and you will find it is extremely painful, and all wordly pleasures have the same effect, they end in the same way. Let us go and examine the pleasures the worldly people enjoy, and consider at first to be like nectar, but, in the end, sorrow, suffering, misery, and unhappiness come. We are enjoying the pleasures from our contact with sense-objects. We will find that it costs so much, not merely the cost in money, but in various other ways. It costs our strength, vigour, knowledge, intellectual peace, clear understanding, wealth, and energy, and one becomes satiated if he continues to enjoy the pleasures of the senses But one who enjoys continuous sense-

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3 विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद् यत् तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।
परिणामे विषमिव तत् सुखं राजसंस्मृतम् ॥१८।३८

Sankara in his Commentary said "विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगात् यत् सुखं जायते, अग्र प्रथमक्षणे अमृतोपमम् * * ।" That is, the sense pleasure at first proves to be like poison, because it leads to deterioration in strength, vigour, colour, intellect, weath, and energy and because it leads to adharma or demerit, and, as an effect thereof, to hell (*naraka*) or eternal suffering.

pleasures, becomes weak, and when weakness comes, the cause for all diseases arises. Whenever we become weak, we become subject to all microbes and bacteria, and all disease will be present, how and when we cannot say. This is the weakness, and that is the enemies, like bacteria and microbes which are seeking opportunity all the time to enter into our bodies. Therefore they are the beings who cannot resist their attack and attraction.

We know how many people have wasted their strength, wealth and vigour, and their nerve-energies. Our brain-powers are injured by the objects of senses, and when we go on fulfilling our desires in this way in this life, what will it be after death? After death we will not have any celestial happiness, because these tendencies and desires will remain with us, will charm us, and if we have adopted any unrighteous method or found means to accomplish our ends, we shall have to suffer in various ways here and hereafter by remaining attracted and earth-bound and also by going through states where we would not recognize others and would not obtain the things we want etc. We would suffer for a long time, then perhaps we would be born under such unfavourable conditions where we would not get the things we most needed, and that would be punishment. That punishment most people find in this life, but do not know the causes, and if they investigate, they will find the causes were in their previous lives. The future will unfold according to the manner in which we live, and will determine pleasures and pain, and happiness and unhappiness even after death. That question about the continuity of life is never asked, because it is considered to be an exact truth in India. The very idea of the soul means that it is immortal. We do not have to attain to immortality, as we are already immortal.[4]

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[4] If we read the Commentary on the *Brahmasutra* (vide the Commentary on the *Sutra*: "तत्त्वसमन्वयात्" I. 1.4), we will find that Sankara has logically explained and proved that Self-knowledge (*atmajnana*) or emancipation (*mukti*) is a well-established fact (*vastutantra*), and it is already there in man, and spiritual practice or *sadhana* is required only to remove the ignorance (*ajnana*) about the *Atman*. The sun shines in the sky and when the cloud covers the sun, will you say that the sun is lost? No, the sun is hidden temporaryly being covered by the cloud, and when cloud is removed, the sun shines again as before. So the

We will have to learn to judge and to live, and when these ideas become a fact, or an absolute truth, then the whole ideal of considering and living become different. Then we know or realize that we are living in the Divinity. Then we do not think of the immediate temporary pleasure or satisfaction of our desires, but we live wisely for the future, and then the whole world changes and our vision is also changed. That change is necessary, otherwise what is the use of taking so much trouble in living a virtuous life? Let us then live like beasts and enjoy and die.

But if virtue and spirituality are necessary, and if we like these things, we cannot live being satisfied in the present only, for, in that case, they will have no meaning and no value. Take away all ideals, morality, spirituality, and continuity of life, what will be left then? Without those qualities a person will be miserable even in this life, groping in the darkness of ignorance and knowing not where he is going and what he is doing. The present is meaningless if we disconnect it from the past and future. If we live our life beginning every morning and ending after twenty-four hours, and if this fragment of life be dis-connected from yesterday and tomorrow, do we think our life would be worth-living? Not in the least. Do not think of tomorrow, and if tomorrow never comes and yesterday never existed, if these two ideas are blotted out of our memory, what will be life? Would our life be worth-living? No.

Similarly our present life, which is a series of daily events, is only a fragment to the soul. If we realize it, it would have some meaning. So the present must be explained as the universal, or the eternal truth. The falling of an apple from a tree is one instance. What is the explanation? It is according to the universal law of gravitation that all apples fall. So long as the instance is separated from the rest of eternity, it is meaningless and valueless. The explanation of a thing does not lie in a particular instance, but in the universal, or in general Therefore, our present life is a particular instant. It will

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Atman in its own glory shines always in man, but man for his ignorance and forgetfulness does not realize that shining, and when his darkness of ignorance is removed by right knowledge, he at once recognizes his own glory.

have its meaning when it is connected with the eternal life of the soul.

Then, after death we shall be born under circumstances which will not be very pleasant if we live only for temporary worldly pleasure i.e. for only sense-pleasure. That is the kind of pleasure which rises from the other quality called *rajas* which is the cause of the passionate feelings, tendencies, and desires All these rise from that state of *rajas*.

If you can classify heavens and mental conditions into three states, there comes a state of absolute peace and happiness, tranquility and eternal knowledge, and wisdom and good memory. This is the highest state. But there is a state where one has anxiety, suffering, and anger etc. But there is a state there were sleepiness, dullness, stupidity, and lack of understanding. In that state one likes to sleep, and cannot grasp any meaning. If we read a book in that state, the mind gets dull and drowsy, there is no strength of mind, as if there was a veil over the brain, and nothing can penetrate, and that is the third state, or the state of *tamas*, the state in which animals are. The *tamas* state pervades all of the lower animals, and very rarely we find any growth of intellect or perception which we call intelligence, or the *rajas* quality. Some animals, elephants, house-dogs etc., have a spark of intelligence, but most of them have a form of dullness, stupidity, inertia, inactivity, and darkness etc.

Sri Krishna says. "That pleasure which is felt at first and in the sequel deludes itself and proceeds from sleep, ignorance and heedlessness, that is called the lowest kind of pleasure or *tamasic*".[5] That which stupifies the brain like taking of a drug and becoming intoxicated by liquor, or some other drug like opium or morphine, or some kind of drug that puts you into sleep, is *tamas*. If anyone enjoys that state, that is a state

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[5] यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तं तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥१८।३९

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"अग्रे प्रथमारम्भे च यत् सुखमात्मनो मोहकरं, निद्रालस्ये प्रसिद्धे, प्रमादः कर्तव्यार्थावधानमन्तरेण मनोराज्यमात्रं तेभ्य एवोत्तिष्ठति न तु सात्त्विकमिव बुद्धिप्रसादजं, न वा राजसमिव बिषयेन्द्रियसंयोगजं, तन्निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तामसं सुखमुदाहृतम् ॥"

of *tamas*. There are lots of people who are habituated to that kind of intoxication and sleep, and they think it is just like heaven. I have seen a number of opium-eaters in India who eat opium simply to see those wonderful visions, angels come to them, and talk to them as if they were communing with the celestial beings The experiences which you might have read of in Swedenborg's books are similar to the state of reverie from a drug. They see visions described by Dante. Some people enjoy that state which is *tamas*, and that is not desirable, but when true knowledge comes, that is different. True knowledge does not put the brain into hypnotic sleep, or stupidity, or dullness, but it brings spiritual enlightenment, and makes one understand things as they are in reality. And those people who are self-deluded, do not know the cause of self-delusion, so they take care of their material bodies, or their furniture, with such intense passion that they do not know what they are doing. They think they will possess those things forever, but that is not possible. So deluded are they, they do not see things as they are. They cannot understand the difference between the reality and the unreality.

So these three qualities, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, which fill these three kinds of pleasure and intellect, three kinds of fortitude, and three classes of work and activity etc, can be regarded as three states which are universal. All human beings on this earth love pleasure. In other planets also, the beings are possessed of these three qualities. These three grades as classified, can be known as universal. Even the gods and angels can be divided into three classes. Some of them are better and more intelligent than others. We must not think that all angels are perfect, but there are angels catalogued into various kinds and grades. They have limitation. So, to be an angelic being, does not mean perfection, according to Vedanta. The strict logic of Vedanta is that who transcends the limitation of time, space, and causation, which are known as *maya*, attain perfection or *mukti*. Some who do not know the laws, think erroneously that when they get out of their material bodies, they become angels and free, just as many of the spiritualists think that all departed spirits are angels and are free. I had a talk with some very experienced spiritualistic mediums who materialized the spirits, and they think they are enjoying

the company of the free angels, who come from God, and I explained to them that they were deluding and cheating themselves, because those departed spirits were not angels, and even if the angels did come down, they were not the free and perfect beings, but they had limitations. They might be more perfect than we are under certain conditions, but they did not come directly from God, perhaps they could reach God.

"Upon this earth or among the gods in heaven, there is no (animate or inanimate) being that can be free from these three qualities born of nature or *Prakriti*".[6] Whenever we take a body, physical or mental or spiritual, that must be within nature. In nature we include mind, mental functions, intellectual functions, and even understanding. So if we have a mental body, it is only of finer matter; if we have a psychic body, it is also of finer forces, and they are all in nature. Then where would we go? It is not simply physical nature or mental nature, but if we have a spiritual body, as in a dream state, that equally is in nature or *Prakriti*. But the spiritual body is higher and of the *sattvic* quality, which is better and can reflect more quickly, but still it is in nature. But nature is the mother of all forces. It is the mother of all vibrations, and all activities proceed from her. So, even pleasures are also included in nature. When we have a body, we have limitations, and are finite. So we understand that even in the heaven a man is not free from the worldly limitations. But the difference would be that the pleasure which we would get in the heavens, would last for a longer duration than that which we would get here in this phenomenal world, and the body we get, would last perhaps thousands of years, or throughout the cycle.

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुणः ।
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥१८।४०

Sankara said that the whole *samsara* or world, manifested as action, instruments of action, and results, is made up of the *gunas, sattva, rajas,* and *tamas,* and set up by *avidya,* and the evil of *samsara* has been thus described as well as its roots. It has been figuratively represented as a tree in the verse XV. 1. It has also been said that after having cut the tree of *samsara* asunder with the strong sword of non-attachment, 'then that final goal should be sought after' (XV. 3, 4). From this it may follow that, as everything is made up of the three *gunas,* a cessation of the cause of *samsara* cannot be brought about.

The earthly cycle of our life would be one hundred years, or one hundred and twenty. The cycle of the celestial life may be one hundred thousand years, and that would be the difference, because, it is finer. We would have a more etherial body than this gross physical form. The grosser the form the quicker is its dissolution. If we go to the finer state, that would last longer. We go to the energy, that is eternal. Finer than that is the Absolute, the unchangeable and eternal Substance. The Absolute is no longer subject to any change. But the grossest form of a material object has a very short duration, because it comes under certain conditions of vibration, and when the vibration goes slower, the light varies. Sometimes it becomes very fine, but there is no regularity. In the same way, the grosser the manifestation the shorter is the duration. If we examine our own minds, bodies, acts, tendencies, and desires, then we can divide them into these three classes. When the *sattva* quality pervades, then we like to be spiritual, and learn about God, and sit in meditation. At other times we are inactive, and feel sleepy. So we find these qualities constantly producing their effect on body and mind, and this is universal truth. As it is applied here, so it was applied two thousand years ago in India, and they discovered the same truth. According to their different tendencies, different people can be divided into different classes. These different classes are known by different names.

Now what do you understand by caste? Here, in this *Gita,* you will find the philosophical origin of caste distinction. The duties of Brahman as, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras have evolved according to their natural tendences. The Lord says: "Of Brahmanas and Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, and also of Sudras, O Paratapa, the duties are divided according to the qualities born of nature".[7] The Lord, Sri Krishna has said "स्वभावप्रभवै र् गै:' i.e. qualities (*gunas*) were born of nature or *Prakriti*'.[8] Nature

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[7] ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणाञ्च परन्तप !
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभावैर्गुणैः ॥१८।४१

[8] Sankara said in the Commentary.

"स्वभाव ईश्वरस्य प्रकृतिस्त्रिगुणात्मिका माया सा प्रभवो येषां गुणानां ते स्वभावप्रभवाः तै ।"

Consult here the glossary of Anandagiri.

or *svabhava* is the Isvara's *Prakriti* or *maya* made up of three *gunas*. It is in accordance with the qualities of the primordial energy that duties (*karmas*) are assigned to the Brahmanas and other castes respectively. Now this class distiction relates to the Brahmins, the priestly class; Kshatriya, the warrior caste, Vaishya, the merchant caste, and Sudras the servant caste. These are the four classes, and they exist everywhere. All human beings can be divided into four classes according to their tendencies and qualities and abilities. Some can perform certain acts perfectly, others cannot, and it is a fact. Some will learn more quickly than others, and there are those again who will never learn in this incarnation, and they will have to be born again in order to learn certain things too difficult for them, and that we see every day in our lifetime, you cannot deny it. So these qualities must be recognized, and, consequently, their distinction must be observed. These three qualities possess infinite varieties with their combinations and differentiations. In some, you will find that the *sattva* quality is most predominant, and, in others, it is not so much. If the *rajas* quality is very strong, they cannot sit still even for five minutes, they are restless, and are full of energy, and they will do anything. Others again are idiotic, and if they sit down, they cannot move. Do you ever think of the cause of that? You may say they are idiots from their birth. But what is the cause? You say they have inherited it, and have inherited certain qualities from their parents. Why did they inherit those qualities? You cannot say. But why do you not go down to the bottom or core of things and say that these natural qualities proceed from the natural tendencies and then trace the cause to what produced these tendencies, and then you will understand why certain people inherit certain qualities. Like attracts like and, therefore, they seem to inherit. They do not actually inherit those qualities of different types, but it is the attractions of the conditions that bring about certain qualities.

So these qualities which different people possess, are the results of their own nature. What is that nature? I have explained it before the word nature or individual nature and how does that individual nature come. We are born with certain qualities, and another is born with other qualities and tendencies.

But why is this difference and what is the cause of these inequalities and diversities? The commentator explains, it is because of the previous impressions and ideas with which the individual is born, and these previous impressions and ideas are the results of their previous works. And, in this life, when we perform certain acts, these produce certain impressions on our mind, and these modify our tendencies and our acting in a certain direction. We gain a certain experience that those in whom we have trusted, have deceived us, and certain people in whom we have trusted, want to ruin us. It suddenly comes like a revelation, and then we sit down, put our hand against our head, and say "I have had a certain experience, what shall I do now?" That will last as long as we live, and it will carry that impression with us even after our death, as long as our mind or our being will exist. In future we will be born with that impression and modified tendency. That is the way we live in this world. We gain experience after experience. First, we try to go this way, and get a blow. Then we modify our course, and take a medium course. Then we get another blow from that side. We are going backward and forward in order to adjust the conditions etc. So these experiences are teaching us all the time, and these experiences which we gather in one life, are not to be lost. We cannot lose them, but they will modify our tendencies and ideals and everything. Even our condition of birth, ambition, and everything will be modified.

These are facts. Other latent qualities will begin to manifest themselves. For instance, if anyone who has not done any work of any kind, is placed by circumstances where he cannot earn his living in any way, all friends have left him alone, and he will have to fight his way out. That person may not have any experience of the world, and he may think of the world and may think of himself as worthless, but latent powers will become manifest, and in a few years he will see that he has become so competent as no one could have dreamed of finding such results from him. These latent powers were brought out by circumstances, and also by change of conditions. These powers we do not acquire from the outside, but they exist in our own being, and these are qualities of nature or *Prakriti*. All powers are results or forces of nature, and in the infinite store-

house of all powers, are the qualities and tendencies. Each individual soul is the infinite storehouse of possibilities. We do not know what we can do tomorrow. If we try, we can do anything. We can attain to perfection in this life, because we are a child of God, or of the Omnipotent, the difference is that only we cannot manifest our omnipotence. God manifests all powers at the same time, but we cannot. We manifest different powers at different times by taking different forms, still we are a child of God with the tendencies and *karma* along with the impressions of a previous incarnation; and those tendencies which are ready to produce these results soon, are latent, others are later to be manifested. These will bring the results more quickly, and will subdue those which are latent. Then, after producing their results, other tendencies will supercede, and others will come and produce their results. That is the way we are living. So now we understand why an individual has a certain kind of life and another has another kind. But all these qualities and manifestations can be classified under these three heads. Then we will be able to classify also the tendencies of different individuals.

First, the *Gita* describes the qualities of the Brahmin. The word Brahman or Brahmin does not mean only name of the Hindu nation or race, it can be applied to any nationlity under any conditions at any time in any country. Whenever we find these qualities we can call him a Brahmin. Sri Krishna says: "Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forgiveness, fortitude, knowledge, spiritual perfection, fine convictions regarding the existence of the soul after death, and the infinite reality of the universe, are the natural qualities of a Brahmin".[9] Brahmins are born with these natural qualities. They do not have to ask any instruction. These qualities we will find in many individuals at certain times, but they cannot be called the characteristics of the individual. At certain times they come out, but they are not natural, they belong to the *sattva* state.[10] These qualities proceed from *sattva* or good-

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[9] शमो दमस्तपः शौचं शान्तिरार्जवमेव च ।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥१८।४२

[10] Regarding the qualities and specific duties of the four classes, Brahmin and others, Vashistha, Manu, Gautama and other Samhitakaras, have

ness, and one can possess these qualities at a certain time and under certain conditions. They possess certain virtues, but at other times they are different. But a Brahmin is born with such qualities, and they must predominate and manifest through their actions, and these are the virtuous. When we try to lead a spiritual life, we would have to practise these in order to manifest these qualities and actions in our own self. A person is called spiritual who practises these things. Therefore a Brahmin is one who is born as spiritual naturally, who has come under a self-control, who is austere in his habits, who is forgiving, who has charity, who has knowledge, intellectual and spiritual perception, who has faith, and who understands the nature of the soul and its relation to God. Is there anything in this which is not the ideal of all nations? Christianity holds this as the ideal of all spiritual persons. Christ can be said to be a Brahmin, because he manifested these qualities, and communed with God.

First is kindness, or kind consideration towards all. Consideration is that feeling which makes one treat another equally friendly, whether a friend or an enemy, and that feeling tries to help and protect them in time of distress or need. If we try to help and sympathise with another, whether that other is a relative or a friend or an enemy, that would be the feeling called fortitude, and that includes that we should love our enemies, neighbours, and countrymen etc. That is sometimes included in the sayings of Christ. If we can hold that feeling of help and protection and sympathy with others, whether they are relatives, friends, and neighbours or enemies, that would be our consideration, and that would be one of the virtues, and if that be natural, it would be the qualification of a Brahmin.

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given descriptions and have said that those qualities evolve from the three *gunas* which are inherent in the *Prakriti*. And some of the Samhitakaras and Smartas have emphatically said that the real definition of the word Brahmin is that he who knows or realizes the absolute Reality or Brahman, is Brahmin 'ब्रह्म जानातीति ब्राह्मणः'।

According to them, a Brahmin is a Self-realized liberated wise man, and, therefore, a man being born in the family of the Brahmin caste cannot claim that he is the Brahmin. But generally the word Brahmin connotes the idea of the priestly class possessed of good qualities.

What is forgiveness, either physically or mentally? When a hurt is produced by another, if he does not get angry and does not try to take revenge and to injure in return, that is forgiveness. What is the expression of love? He who possesses love, does not injure anyone by words, nor criticizes another. When we find another's fault, we keep silent, and do not jump to correct another of his mistakes by saying, 'judge not, that we not be judged', then we are entitled to be possessed of the quality of love. But when we see the fault of another and do not speak of it, that may kill or ruin another. Therefore do not gossip about other people's nature or character. Where there is gossip, there is no feeling of love, as it proceeds from antagonism and lack of consideration and sympathy; and it is the result of hatred, pride, vanity, and self-conceit. Whenever a person criticizes another, he takes the attitude of being perfect, and thinks that others are all imperfect and he is superior to the person criticized. When we do not have to make any effort to avoid it and when it is natural, that would be the Brahmin quality which is purity. Proper food is that which is healthy and nourishing, and does not injure another, nor kill or injure another. Eating that which injures another, is not pure, and it must be avoided. When we live and perform our duties faithfully, without committing anything that is wrong or wicked, that would be also pure living. The duties must be simple duties. Now what is moderation? Moderation is that which hurts or injures another's body or mind, therefore we must not do it. Righteousness is that which would make us feel for others, and make us universal instead of bearing narrowness, whether towards an individual or towards a religion. That narrowness is not right, because narrowness is the symbol of ignorance (*avidya*), shortsightedness, and limitedness. So we must avoid it. That which makes universal and breaks down all limitations, that can be said righteousness, because righteousness means those actions, which bring us in close communion with the Universal Reality which is unlimited, and when we become unlimited, anything that restraints or limits us, will make us divine. Licentiousness is not meant by it, because that is only the wrong understanding of that which is universal, so that should also be avoided. Instead of making one universal, licentiousness would make one more limited and sel-

fish. So do not seek self-pleasure at the expense of others, but try to remove the pain and tears of others, and that would be universal, and would be righteousness and holiness.

To be charitable means to give whatever you can do for a good cause. When you give anything to anyone, do not hold the feeling that you are giving him this by depriving yourself of certain things. Give with pleasure and satisfaction, and if you do sacrifice, do it with satisfaction and sincerity at heart, then it would be a virtue, otherwise there is no virtue and value. Many people become charitable, but they do it with so much grumbling, discontent and unwillingness, so that it is not holy and worth-having. But giving or distributing anything with joy and without thinking or expecting any return would be real charity, which makes you broad. Anything that would make you forget yourself and feel unlimited, is uplifting, and that is virtue, and that is the natural quality of a Brahmin. A Brahmin is naturally charitable. When he is going to eat any food if a beggar comes, he would give his own food to him saying, "Friend, thy necessity is greater than mine, eat it" There are hundreds who live this way of life in India even today in this age of materialism and selfishness.

Those qualities, when begin to manifest and you practise them, the whole world appears to be different and your vision will entirely be changed. Now you have a certain ideal of what is right, and you try to live up to it. Thus you know what is right and what is not right, and there your judgement is produced by clear understanding everything. Then you are not groping in the darkness. These are not merely theories, they are based upon the truth which is called a virtue, not because it is written in the book. I could give you the key that opens up what is endless and universal. Apply that key to any virtue in any age, and it will open the way It is not a mere geometrical thing. Nobody has said these things, but they have come down from time immemorial. I have already explained Vedanta means endless wisdom which has come down to human beings. From eternity to eternity the ideas are hidden in infinite space, and whenever your souls are receptive, you control them. That is inspiration. In the infinite mind, these ideas are lying like jewels from eternity to eternity. That is revelation, not because any particular person has spoken it,

we do not care for that. Who taught that man as inspired four thousand years ago? Who was his teacher? It is the eternal mind. The eternal mind is the cosmic mind of God, and you trace all knowledge to that eternal mind of which your minds are parts. Think of the worthlessness of modern geometry. If you study that every day what good would it do. Would it bring you nearer to the Infinite, and make you closer to the universal One?

Another virtue is non-covetuousness. Whatever you acquire by your own efforts, be contented with that. Do not try to covet other people's things, but what you can gain by honest means, be contented with that, and that is a virtue. That you will find in India, in spiritual India. It is not that the Indians are foolish, but they hate to covet, and practise non-covetuousness. Therefore, they do not go out into other countries to rob other people of their wealth and take possession of their properties. They never do that, although they have strength enough to do it.

So these eight qualities proceed from *sattva*, and when they are natural, the person is called a Brahmin, a spiritual man or woman in any country. The other class is the Kshatrya, the warrior class. Shri Krishna says: "Bravery, boldness, fortitude, generosity and not flying from the battle-field—these are the characteristics of a Kshatriya".[11] A brave soldier will never turn his back to the enemy. A Kshatriya has what is called a spirit of lordliness. These are the qualities of a king, or an emperor, or a Kshatriya, or a warrior who protects the nation. These are the natural qualities. "The natural qualities of the third class, the merchants" says the Lord, "are cattle-bearing and taking care of the animals, carrying on trade etc." These are the duties of the merchant class, and they are inspired by the natural tendencies. "The servant class are those who perform the services, whose duty is to help and do work for others".[12] Each attains to perfection being devoted to his own

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11 शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥१८।४३

12 कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥१८।४४

duty. All these various duties described are just and good. When we perform them and fulfil them properly they will lead to the higher spiritual evolution gradually and, in the end, to perfection.

CHAPTER LXI

HUMAN BEINGS WITH DIFFERENT TENDENCIES

Human beings are by nature born with different tendencies and different qualifications. Some belong to one class, others belong to others. We have divided human beings into different classes according to their nature and characteristics. Some like to perform certain works, others dislike them etc. The question arises as to whether we should follow our nature or imitate other people's qualities and try to do things which we are not naturally inclined to. Whether it is the proper method to follow the examples of others or to follow the natural course, is to be understood first. For instance, in India, there are different classes, like Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, and in every country among different nationalities there are some naturally spiritual, others vicious, and others worldly etc.

Should those, who are naturally spiritual, give up their natural tendencies and become worldly and follow the vicious instinct, if they are born with such tendencies? In a country like America each one follows his own law or ideas. There is no standard, no law about it, and no rule. How can there be any rule? Suppose a spiritual man gives up his spiritual life and takes to the life of a soldier; now would he gain then or lose; would he be able to perform other people's work so thoroughly, as he would if he had followed his own natural inclination?

Here Sri Krishna discusses the question, saying that each attains to perfection, being devoted to his own duty. He attains success being engaged in his own work—"स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते" or "स्वकर्मनिरतं सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति"। According to the teachings of Vedanta, there are different gradations or stages of evolution of the human soul. In each stage, certain tendencies are manifested, and men have different experiences, inequalities, and diversities amongst themselves. Why does one person born with certain tendencies and naturally like certain things and dislike others? Some may

say heredity has a great deal to do with it. Heredity has something considerable to do with it no doubt, but still heredity alone will not explain this problem, unless we admit the existence of an entity which is called the soul which is intelligent. The soul brings with it certain tendencies, and is born with certain qualities and qualifications which are manifested through the agency of heredity or conditions of the parents. Circumstances relating to birth of the individual affect a great deal and modify these tendencies to a certain extent, but the germs of these tendencies are not inherited by the soul which he possesses only a predisposition to inherit such qualities. It is a fact of nature that if we inherit anything we must have a predisposition to inherit. Why do we not inherit all the qualities of the parents and grand-parents? Because we only inherit those to which we are predisposed. If we knew these laws, we could explain many difficulties in our own lives in this world. In performing the duties, one will generally rise above, and outgrow a certain stage of development, and here we must not forget the law of *karma*, i.e. law of action and reaction. Whatever we do with our body and mind we reap the results thereof either in this life, or even after death. Nothing is lost and after reaping the results of our own thoughts and deeds after death, the residual *karma* or action leaves a certain impression on the mind, and the residual impression will be left over. All actions do not produce results at the same time, and other actions will wait for a favourable opportunity. As a seed that falls on the ground in the autumn, will wait until the spring comes and then it will sprout, so in the latent state, desire and impressions and their reaction we generally look at, and say "why did we reap these results?" If we can trace them in our previous actions performed in our previous lives, then we can easily understand the relation and the causes. Our knowledge is very limited, and we cannot go beyond a certain time. Even when we try to understand the causes of things, our understanding fails, as we have no foresight, and under these circumstances we cannot expect to have perfect explanations of every thing that we see or hear or feel. The residual *karma* will produce birth in a particular place and time. It will be governed by the law of *karma*, and the residual actions will bring reactions

which will be decided by the law itself, and like the force of gravitation, the individual soul will gravitate toward certain conditions, and be born of certain parents. These conditions may be social conditions, or intellectual, moral, and spiritual conditions of the parents that will modify that of the family. It is like a natural selection, but this selection is produced in an unconscious way. The soul is not conscious of these things, but it gravitates unconsciously. It is attracted, but why it does, it does not know. Some souls do know whose intellect and understanding are well-developed, others go unconsciously. Whether the families be righteous or unrighteous that would be decided by the actions and tendencies of the soul. When a certain child would be born of unrighteous or sinful parents, another child would not be born of such parents. God is not responsible for these details, but these are working out of action and reaction.

How long is the span of life? The learning, conduct, wealth, happiness, intellect, and all these things we possess, enjoy, and suffer are determined by our own *karmas* or actions. By this we must not think that we have to believe in predestination, or no one predestines for us, or for our nature, but our own acts produce results, and we are bound to reap results, because the law of action and reaction is inevitable. No one predestines for us, but we suffer or enjoy, because we have made the cause, and we cannot help but reap results. If you sow wheat, you cannot expect others, but you must have wheat, that is the law.[1] But the sowing part is dependent upon our

[1] Here the Swami (Abhedananda) says, that the law of *karma*, or law of cause and sequence, is the designer of nature or character or life of a man, and it is not true that predestination or destiny (*adrista* or *daiva*) is the prime-mover of all activities of life of a man. There is a room for self-effort or *purushakara* in one's life. The general meaning of 'predestination' is God's foreordaining of all that comes to pass in one's life, and that means a fixed foreordaining principle or power like destiny or fate. But that is not correct. The Swami emphasises that the law of *karma* or cause and effect (*karya-karana-sambandha*) which determines everything in this world of phenomena, and so he (the Swami) says that everything is determined by one's own *karma*, i.e. *karmas* and their results are responsible for man's happiness or suffering. Predestination or destiny is *daiva* or *prarabdha* i.e. the works which were done in one's previous life, and their results are hoarded or accumulated in

own common will, and that common will again will be limited by our conditions and by our knowledge of the law. If we are ignorant, we will make mistakes, and these will produce their results just in the same way as the right, act. Mistakes are actions also, and they will make us suffer. The law of compensation will be fulfilled also. Then let us think about intellect. One is born intellectual, another is not, and why is it? It is because we get what we deserve. It shows that we are not intellectually developed, or that we have not gone through the intellectual evolution. Some have not any moral evolution. It has not yet begun so, although we are human beings outwardly, and inwardly each one is different from the other. There are many men and women in this world, but each one differs from the other, just in the same manner as a woman would differ from a man in qualities and tendencies etc. If we remember all these things, we would be able to understand how one by performing the duties and fulfilling the natural tendencies, will rise quicker and advance more rapidly than by suppressing these tendencies. The idea of suppression of tendencies has not been very strongly advocated by the Scriptures. Though Patanjali in his *Yogadarshana* suggests: 'योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः' i.e. the modifications of the mind can be suppressed (*nirodha*) by the practice of Yoga, yet it is not possible to reduce the modifications (*vrittis*) of the mind into nil until and unless the mind is brought into its real form, the pure consciousness. We cannot kill the mind by force, but we can transform it, or translate it (the mind) into consciousness, and this transformation of the mind or mental *vrittis* is called purification of the mind. So a man can purify his habit or tendency not by forcibly suppressing it, but by transforming it through the process of concentration and meditation. The lives of the Hindu people are different according to their different tendencies, and the whole social conditions are such as to

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the bed of the subconscious or unconscious mind A man can minimise that act or force of *adrista* by *purushakara* or self-effort. He can minimise or even destroy the habit by creating counter-habit by *purushakara*. However, a man can go beyond the results of *karmas* of the previous life by *karmas* of the present life, as the law of *karma* is applicable in all fields of life.

give free scope to the growth and development or evolution of every individual soul through religions and spiritual practices

The great sages and religious leaders of ancient India did not limit the individual souls as spiritual beings and they understood that the soul-life was eternal. Really our life on this earth is only a fragment of the soul-life. Having these ideas and realizations as the foundation they built up the system which is unique, and which you will find nowhere in the world. Therefore, the Hindus are proud of their own system. Their civilization is greater, morally and spiritually, than that of any nation in the world, and this is true of the nation. There may be individuals of other nations who have reached high spiritual perfection or realization, but as a nation, and as a social structure, you will find that India alone still holds a particular ideal before the world, and the world will learn a great deal from the Hindu ideals in that respect.

According to the Hindu view of life, life is divided into various stages. The life of an individual in each stage is previous to a higher stage, and the ultimate goal of human evolution is considered to be the attainment of perfection and absolute spiritual freedom in India. Each individual stage of life in India is running towards that end. Holding that ideal before the spiritual eyes each individual Hindu must follow and march onward, and strive hard to attain that goal in this life. If there are other lives, they must not despair. They are not sorry if they do not achieve perfection in this life. They will have other chances, and are perfectly happy. This simple idea will make our life worth-living, otherwise, if we stick to the one-birth theory and believe that this is the first and last chance, we will have a terrible anxiety and disappointment. We will find in our own life, knowing we have been sent by some almighty Being to this world to take our chances, and if there we have failed and are going to be punished, we will get no further chance to correct our mistakes. This world would be a place of punishment, if such be the law and no one could ever imagine a more horrible place than this world.

Now Sri Krishna describes the method by which one can reach perfection. A man who is born a soldier, born of parents who are warlike and has enlisted himself as a soldier and is

fighting, if he works out that tendency, he will gain experience, and that experience will be the greatest teacher that he can have. We learn it by gaining experiences, and this is why the soldier would have learned the minute working out of his own tendencies. Latent powers will begin to manifest, and produce their results. The soul possesses infinite possibilities and potentialities. Today we are living like this, but after a certain length of time, latent powers and other ideas will come, and enlarge our nature, and we shall appear as entirely different being.

Man attains perfection by reverentially worshipping Him from whom comes the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded. Now you see how the worship of the Lord becomes a natural thing. No other nation has been able to make the worship of the Lord a natural thing. Simply by performing the duties of life, you worship Him. You do this simply by fulfilling your duties. Following your own tendencies and by being true to yourself, go on with your own tendencies, and work out the scheme of existence. There is eternal truth before you, and you will march onward to the goal. "Man attains perfection by worshipping, through his proper duties, Him from whom is the evolution of all beings," said Sri Krishna. All individual souls have evolved out of that divine body. We rest in His body, because He dwells everywhere, He pervades our beings, and we are but manifestations of that infinite Spirit. The higher and better tendencies should be considered and not the evil ones. By this we mean that we should not injure another with our worldly tendencies. We must first of all understand that by performing our duties we would be able to worship the Lord. These acts of our daily lives would be acts of worship, whether we sit separately in thought or in meditation or not, but the very acts would be His worship.

First of all, you will have to understand your natural tendencies, and then use your common sense and see whether it is worth-having There is the law of action and reaction, or law of cause and sequence. What you sow, you must reap. So find out what your tendencies are, and then you will do certain things, not through fear of punishment, but because you will have to reap the results on account of the law of

action and reaction. Then you try to better yourself, and to keep the ideal of perfection before your mind, and perform your duties. You will see your whole life will be different. All the daily routine works pervaded with so much discontent and dissatisfaction are a waste of time, energy, and hard work. You will find a current of happiness underneath all these disagreeable tasks, and you will feel perfectly happy. That is the secret understood by very few. And those who understand that, are always happy. Never commit anything wrong, and never indulge in doing which will bring results in the form of misery, sorrow, and disease. They perform all these duties with a feeling that they are of the Lord. That act by which you would have that feeling, cannot be a wicked act, cannot be an evil act, and it would be impossible.

The life is divided into different stages. There are different kinds of life, such as student life, the life of the householder, the life of retirement, and the life of absolute freedom. I have already discussed before that in these different stages, there are different duties to be performed, and these duties are described here. When one faithfully follows these duties and holds the idea of that, by performing these duties, he is worshipping God, and then gradually he reaches perfection. The idea of evolution from the eternal Being is very strong in Vedanta. We always think of the evolution of the body. Modern scientists do not bother their heads about the evolution of the soul, but they think of the evolution of the body. Then there is the evolution of the soul without which one cannot come into existence. Without the soul the body could not have existed. The soul made this body, so without the soul the body could not be there. The soul is the thinker, designer, and worker. When you eat some food that food is the material which is transformed into forces. Material, physical, and organic powers are made a part of the living substance of your own body. By whom is it made? Not by the body itself. What gives the life in the body? That which gives life, makes it active, and makes it feel and move, is the soul. The evolution of the soul is the first thing that we should learn, and all other things will be understood by ourselves afterwards. This soul is more eternal and immortal than the body. Although we are living with bodies, it would

be a hard thing to say that. Here are these bodies, we take so much care of, but they do not belong to us. These are like houses in which the soul dwells for a certain length of time to fulfil certain purposes, and then it goes out to manufacture other forms to suit itself.

By our performing work in this manner the heart will be purified. All the *rajas* qualities would be removed when the heart is purified, and then right knowledge will come. Right knowledge means knowledge of the eternal substance. Knowledge of ordinary relative objects is considered to be relative knowledge. Any one can attain to that. The knowledge of relative substance is only a fragment of right knowledge. Right knowledge is the knowledge of our eternal being. If we have not known that, we have not attained to right knowledge. We may be very learned discoverers, or inventors, or scientific men, but still that knowledge would be very poor compared with right knowledge i.e. knowledge of the soul or spirit, the eternal part. That knowledge is worth-having, and other knowledge is included in the domain of ignorance. Knowledge which leads us to the source of the body, is the highest kind of knowledge. The knowledge of the one Being out of which all these varieties of souls have been born, is right knowledge Then we would be able to know ourselves, and know our brother, know other beings, our nature, our qualities, our tendencies, and our past and future Therefore, the great Saviours are worshipped by humanity, because they are possessed of higher knowledge. Any one possessing that knowledge will be revered and honoured by others. It is natural, because this knowledge comes instinctively. That person understands the past and future and the eternal substance We must attain to it, because that is the goal of knowledge, and Vedanta deals with the goal of knowledge and not with fragments of relative knowledge. But when the heart is purified, pure knowledge comes.

"Better is one's duty though defective than that of another well-performed." No one attains evil through performing the duties ordained by nature. He has to follow his own nature. Then there will be no difficulty and no evil. Follow the natural tendencies, and then make mistakes, and then learn through those mistakes. As I have said, these mistakes can

not be easily avoided even though we are trying to follow out our own nature when we perform our duties. If these duties in a certain stage of life appear to be defective, still we should follow, and should continue to do them. For instance, a man and a woman married should continue to fulfil the duties of a householder. The man has no right to leave his wife and to go away from that bondage. If he feels it is a bondage, he has no right to shirk his duty. If he finds the bachelor life better, he cannot leave this life. He must fulfil all duties he has taken upon himself. It may be, perhaps, a mistake he has made by getting married, but still he must fulfil those duties as long as he is in that state, then gradually outgrow the defects and make the conditions of life more perfect even in this state, by fulfilling the duties. If he thinks he is really worshipping the ideal, then he will attain to perfection. In India, life is divided to perform works systematically. So a student would live for so many years with his spiritual teacher, or professor of learning, and he would learn all the various sciences, and get ideas about the highest ideals and, then according to his tendency, he would come to the world, and get married, if he has such a desire, and become a householder, and live with his wife, and have children, and train them. After that, when the children are old enough to take care of themselves, they would be supported by the children, and the children would perform the duties. One of the duties is to support the parents as long as they live. By supporting the parents and serving them, they think they are serving God. Parents are considered as living deities by their children, and that is the only idea and way by which you can have any real rest in your own life. You simply idealize and spiritualize these hard matter-of-fact matters of every day life by making the highest ideal identical with the things nearest to us. Then the parents will have time to rest, and will retire and live quietly, and devote their time and energy to thinking of the highest ideals, in performing the duties in that stage of life, called the life of retirement. There are a great many duties in that state also. After living in this way for some time, then the husband and wife would live as brother and sister, and all earthly relations will be merged into soul relations. The ideal life will come to them as they live in

the ideal, and not like other people. They are always respected and honoured by the world. After that, if the husband attains to higher realization or unity, he rises above all duties. Then all duties drop from him, and he is absolutely free. If the wife rises to that plane, her duties drop from her. She is free, and she no longer considers any human relations, but thinks of herself as a child of the infinite Being, and communes with that infinite Being. That is the ideal, and that is the way by which life is divided in India. But, of course, that is a different ideal altogether from that you have here. Still it is better to hear of such things, because it may suggest certain truths to your mind, and you may find something that will appeal to your souls. Therefore, he says: "Better is one's own duty though defective."

Now Sri Krishna says. "Learn from Me in truth how he who has attained perfection by the performance of his duties, reached the Brahman, the Absolute, the supreme consummation of absolute knowledge (18.45). Him from whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded,—by worshipping Him with his proper duty, man attains perfection (18.46). Better is one's own duty (though) destitute of merits, than the duty of another well-performed. Doing the duty ordained according to nature, one incurs no sin (18.47). The duty, born with oneself, O son of Kunti, though faulty, one ought not to abandon, for all understandings are surrounded with evil, as fire with smoke (18.48).[2]

A man should not jump from one stage into another. After performing all the duties, one should not leave suddenly one's duty and take up another duty, although they may

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[2] स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥
यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥
श्रेयान् स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात् स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥
सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥१८।४५-४८

appear to be very perfect. No one attains evil by performing the duties ordained by nature. If we follow the natural tendency, we are not to be blamed. We do not gather evil through that, and the commentator gives an illustration here. Just as a poisonous substance does not injure a worm born in it, so it is in the relation of ourselves with nature. A worm born of poisonous substance, lives in it, because it is its nature, and it is the natural condition. If the conditions under which we are living, are absolutely in harmony with our nature, then we may follow them. If not, we must understand the conditions most favourable where we can live and follow our natural tendencies. One should not abandon the work to which one is born, though it be faulty. As fire is surrounded by smoke, so all undertakings are covered with evil. Here you will notice that this is absolutely true that all our works are relative. They produce many results which are mixed, nothing brings absolute happiness or good, or absolute unhappiness or evil. All works are mixed with evil more or less. You cannot find any work which does not produce any evil anywhere, there is no such good work. Even if you analyse the best, you can think of, you will find it does some evil in some form, either mentally or physically. When you consider that this whole world is a unit, then if you perform any action, it will go on and produce waves, and these waves will act and react upon every corner of the world, and if you watch the results, that will be produced by these waves. They will become certain currents, and these being strong, will break up one part, or become a burden upon another. The law of compensation is absolutely true in this world. As the wave recedes, there must be a hollow somewhere. So if you examine all your undertakings and see it from the standpoint of the unit or whole world, in that you should include the mental, moral and spiritual nature. Then you will be able to see that, as fire is covered by its own smoke, so your own good works are covered by the short-comings. You can imagine that your own sense-powers are defective, your eyes deceive you too many times, your ears will deceive you, your hands are imperfect, and your sense of touch is imperfect. How can you then expect to do any work perfectly when all the powers you possess are imperfect. Therefore, what is the use of

leaving one particular work and taking up another? Some may think, 'I am doing this work and this is not good, I will try something better,' and then he tries different things, and finds no satisfaction. Like a man who wants to dig a well, he digs at a certain spot, and finds a rock. He has no tools suitable, and he leaves that place. But if he had continued in one place from the beginning, if he had patience and perseverance, he would not have wasted time and energy, and would have found water. We are so foolish that we fritter away our time and energy, and do not get results. All works are defective; no work is perfect. So we should remain contented, and make best use of our time and opportunity.

In this connection, Sankara in his commentary has raised question whether entire renunciation of action is possible or not. He has said that no one ought to renounce one's own nature-born duty or it is, because some sin (or *pratyavaya*) accrues from the abandoning of the duty born with oneself.

Now it can be asked, he says, as to what good will be produced from enquiry? In the first place, it can be answered. If the duty born with oneself ought not to be abandoned (merely) because of the impossibility of renouncing action entirely, then it would follow that there can be nothing but merit in renouncing it entirely.

Now there were objections from the viewpoints of the Sankhya, Buddhist and Vaishesika. Is the soul (*Purusha*) always mobile like the *gunas* of the Sankhya? Or, is action itself the actor (soul) like the five *skandhas* of the Buddhists, undergoing destruction every moment? But Sankara says that in either case, an entire renunciation of action is impossible. Sankara has thus reputed the theory of transformation (*parinamavada*) of the Sankhya, and the nihilistic theory of the Buddhists, and he says that action is the property or attribute of the *gunas*, be they regarded as real things, or as things set up by nescience. The *gunas* or attributes are ascribed to the Self or *Atman* through nescience (*avidya*), and it has, therefore, been said that no ignorant man can renounce action entirely even for a moment. On the other hand, he who knows the Self or *Atman*, is able to renounce action entirely, inasmuch as nescience or *avidya* has been expelled by knowledge or *vidya*; for, there can be no residue left of what is ascribed

by nescience (*avidya*). Indeed, no residue is left of the second moon (*dvichandra*) created by the false vision of the darkness-affected eye, even after the removal of darkness. Such being the case, the statements of the Lord (Sri Krishna) in the verses XVIII, 45 and 46 are quite reasonable.[3]

Sri Krishna further says. "He whose reason is not attached anywhere, whose self is subdued, from whom desire has fled, by renunciation attains the supreme state of freedom from action (18.49)."[4]

Now, money comes and goes. Food had been created before we were born. If you wish to experiment, you will find that it is absolutely true that our food comes from some source, and nature is holding our nourishment for us, even from the time before we were born, and you simply collect and take the things that suit you. I used to make experiments in that line. For many years I travelled in India without taking anything with me, without taking money or food, just going from place to place without anything but a blanket. I used to go from village to village, and wait until the food came to me. I had a meal in twenty-four hours, and that was quite enough. I was strong and healthy, and could walk twenty-five or thirty miles a day. I was in perfect health. So I found in my own experience that it was a mistake to merely think of food and clothes, and I could live comfortably otherwise. Of course, the conditions in this country (America) are very different. The inhabitants have made these conditions, and we are to blame if they are not good. We make our own conditions, just as the silk-worm builds its own cocoon. It is buried in and then tries to get out. We make our own graves, then try to get out of them. So, if we depend entirely upon Divine will which is providing nourishment and supplying us with everything, we find we need not worry about food and clothes If our needs are simple, we will get enough to keep body and soul together.

So material or sense-pleasures are not the ideals of life.

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[3] Vide Sankara's Commentary.

[4] असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा बिगतस्पृहः ।
नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां सन्न्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥१८।४९

but the ideals of life would be higher, and they are to reach perfection and to attain to that highest knowledge of absolute freedom. Knowledge and freedom will certainly come when we reach the highest end. If we hold these ideals, what should we work for? Money is not the highest end and aim of life. Suppose you are a millionaire today, and tomorrow you die, what good have you obtained? Would you be able to carry one cent with you? Dollars may bring some changes, and some things you could buy and amuse yourself, but that is all. But suppose you have no desire to amuse yourself, do you care to help others? You can help others by different means.

There is a peculiar attraction about wealth. You get it, and you will try to keep it. You think if you had it, you could do so much, but when you have it, you want to keep it. This is a peculiar attraction. The wise man does not try to help by money, but simply by mental help he tries to get things for others which cannot be bought by money. The highest help is the attaining to spirituality. That knowledge does not cost anything, and it is the best knowledge, and that is the best help one can give. First open your own spiritual eyes, learn something, and make your own stock full There are thousands and thousands of people ready to help others, but they do not know what they are going to give, but they have nothing to give. So first fill your own stock of wisdom, then try to help others.

One should not abandon the work to which one is born. As fire is covered with smoke, so all undertakings are covered with evil. Good and evil are like the obverse and reverse sides of a coin. So it is with happiness and unhappiness. If you are happy today, tomorrow you will be unhappy. This is the world, and so you cannot blame anybody. If you are very happy for a long time, be ready for a long unhappiness It is not a curse or punishment, and this is the world. You cannot expect anything else. Then why should you be sorry for it? If you cannot face it, rise above it. If you cannot look on one side, look on the other side These ideas are very helpful in our daily life.

He whose understanding is unattached anywhere, whose self is subdued, who is free from earthly desires and gains,

attains by renunciation, the supreme state of absolute freedom from action. That man rises above all actions, as well as above law of action and reaction. Such a man has risen above all duties. He has no duty to perform, but all duties are fulfilled and in that state one becomes the master of himself. In that state, all these passions and desires do not rise, because they are fulfilled. This state comes when the right knowledge i.e. the knowledge of the eternal, comes, or the knowledge of the permanent something comes. Then you will see the difference. Then you possess that which will last forever. How can you expect to be happy with those things which last for a few seconds? You possess the permanent thing, and the moment you know this, other things, which are not permanent, will appear before your eyes like trash. Therefore, the wise men leave everything. They do not possess anything, because they have nothing to possess, or have possessed the best and the highest. They do not care for those things valued by those living on the plane of relativity. A man may put a great value upon his dog, or a child may feel badly if he cannot have a doll, but a wise man would not consider a doll as a part of his life. So all the things to which the worldly people are attached, would appear to a wise woman as valueless and senseless as dolls. Why is it? Because the highest pleasure has been attained then. Then other things would appear as transitory and ephemeral. Consequently they renounce things just in the same manner as the grown up man or woman renounces the dolls fit for babes. If you understand that, you will understand that a wise man has no need for these toys, wealth, and social position etc. This is the difference between the wise man and the one living in the darkness of ignorance. A grown up man or woman has gained all the experiences of life. The man of the world would consider the wise man to be a fool, just as a babe would consider a grown up man or woman a fool, because they do not play with dolls, which gives so much pleasure to them.

Renunciation comes by itself. When passions are subdued, then objects of passion lose their charm and attraction. He whose understanding is untouched to the sense plane, reaches the supreme state of absolute freedom from all actions which are covered with imperfections, and that is the only

way. If we get rid of imperfections or defects of our acts, we rise above all activities, and reach the state which is permanent and eternal. Let us stay there, and do not come down, then perfection will be our property.

CHAPTER LXII

SERENE SPIRIT IS UNDISTURBED BY EVERYTHING

Through the performance of our duties of daily life we can reach the highest goal of perfection, if, of course, the results of such actions be duely offered to God, and the perfection comes through the grace of God, the Blessedness. That is, if we please God through the acts of worship of our daily life, then those acts will be the means of attaining perfection, and the grace of God will descend upon us. So Sri Krishna says: "Learn from me the truth how he, who has attained perfection by the performance of his duties, reached God, the Brahman, the supreme consummation of knowledge".[1] Really perfection

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[1] सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे ।
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥१८।५०

Sankara elaborately threw light upon this verse (VIII. 50) Here he first explained that which is consummation of knowledge (*jnana-nistha*). "निष्ठा पर्यवसानं परिसमाप्तिरित्येतत् । क्रस्य ? ब्रह्मज्ञानस्य—या परा परिसमाप्ति ।कीदृशी सा ? यादृशमात्मज्ञानम् । कीदृक् तत् ? यादृश आत्मा । कीदृशोऽसौ ? यादृशो भगवता उक्तः, उपनिषद्वाक्यैश्च न्यायतश्च ।"

Then Sankara discussed about different opinions about the *Atman* as subscribed by the Lokayatika—Charvakas, Vijnanvadin Bauddists, and others. The Lokayatikas hold that the *Atman* or consciousness is the product of matter, because they (*Lokayatikas*) are the materialists, and matter is their prime principle. They argue that consciousness is a property of the physical body and the Purusha or Soul is also identical with the gross physical body endued with consciousness. Similarly, others argue that consciousness is a property of the senses (*indriyas*), and others also say that consciousness is a property of intellect (*buddhi*). But *buddhi* is known as *avyakta* (the unmanifested) or *avyakrita* (the undifferentiated), which is no other than the form of nescience or *avidya.*

Again the Vijnanavadins or idealist Buddhists hold that there in nothing real except ideas, and that these ideas require no external evidence (to prove their existence), inasmuch as it is admitted that they are self-cognized.

Therefore we have only to eliminate what is falsely ascribed to the Brahman by nescience or *avidya*, and, so we have to make no

he (devotee) has already attained which consists in the body and the senses being prepared for devotion to knowledge, as a result of grace of the Lord worshipped through his daily duties. The way to the attainment of consumation of knowledge (*jnana-nistha*), means perfection, the highest stage and achievement of human life,[2] and it is a fact that without consumation of knowledge (*jnana-nistha*) perfection is not attained.

Here two things are given—perfection and Brahman. After reaching perfection through the performance of duties of daily lives, we reach the Brahman as the consummation. The Brahman stans for absolute Truth2 and the supreme consummation. First, we will have to find the secret, and make all the works of our daily lives as acts of worship, and gradually the heart will be purified. That purification of the heart is a condition under which the grace of the Lord descends. *The grace and purification of the heart are one and the same thing. When the heart is purified, the grace is there.* So in order to attain that grace a Bhakta or devotee thinks of the purification of the heart, and that condition comes through the divine will. But a Jnani, or a Karmi, tries to purify his heart, and *he knows that the grace of the Lord and the purification of the heart are simultaneous.*

What is purification? By this world it is meant that state of purified mind attains to devotion to knowledge i.e. the highest knowledge. That is another condition of the attain-

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more effort to acquire knowledge of the *Atman* or Brahman, as the Brahman is self-evident. . . .

However Sankara refuted all the views of the opponents and concluded that it is for knowledge of the Brahman or Self no effort is needed, but it is needed only to prevent us from regarding the not-self as the Self. Therefore, devotion to knowledge (*jnana-nistha*) is easily attainable.

"तस्माज्ज्ञाने यत्नो न कर्तव्यः, किन्तु अनात्मबुद्धिनिवृत्तावेव। तस्माज्ज्ञाननिष्ठा सुसम्पाद्या।"

Really the knowledge of the *Atman* or Brahman is a well-established fact. It is already there, and our spiritual effort or *sadhana* is necessary only to remove ignorance or *avidya* which covers the self-effulgent light of the Brahman.

ment of perfection, or devotion to the highest knowledge. The purification of the heart produces that devotion. Ordinarily we are devoted to different things and different conditions of our daily existence, and we consider them as more important than our devotion to God. This is the result of our impure and imperfect heart, but when the heart is purified, this devotion to earthly conditions and flesh and blood is entirely controlled. Why? Because this devotion which we have today, is not a permanent devotion. It lasts only so long as we think of ourselves as one with the body and flesh and blood. We are devoted to flesh and blood and also to everything that concerns ourselves, but when we have risen above this condition of ignorance or imperfection, we begin to get a glimpse of the highest truth, and these objects of devotion which we have at present, begin to appear as transitory or ephemeral. We do not see that now on account of our own imperfection, just as we do not see that the body is constantly dying, or is subject to birth and death. Still as flesh and blood we try to live forever. That desire rises through ignorance. A man wishes to live for five hundred years. He does not see that to live for five hundred years, when compared to eternity, is transitory, and the soul-life also appears like a flash of lightening. We see how days pass away quickly, and if we are attached to these things and conditions which are within time space, we delude ourselves, and do not see the right thing which is eternal and permanent. Therefore, it is said that devotion to earthly things is not the highest devotion, but devotion to the highest wisdom is worth-having. But that devotion will not come to those whose hearts are not purified. Therefore, purification of the heart is the first thing, and that purification of the heart can be acquired through the performance of the duties of our daily lives, and by offering the fruits of these duties to the Supreme. For instance, if we do anything, either in business life, or in daily life, or if we start anything, we do not think we are going to enjoy that result, but think that the result we are offering to the Lord, then that will be the best thing we can give to the Lord. Therefore let us make the purification of the heart, and we should be devoted to the Lord.

Who the Lord is, and how He dwells in the universe, and what relation have we to the Lord, we must learn first. At

present let us understand that a man attains perfection through the performance of his duties living even in the body and senses, being prepared for devotion and knowledge as the result of the grace of the Lord, worshipped through his duty. That is that preparatory state in which devotion to knowledge has come in the same way as the purification of the heart. These are one and the same state, and that state is preparatory to the devotion to knowledge of the supreme wisdom.

Then, what is meant by the supreme consummation of true wisdom? Supreme consummation of true wisdom is the knowledge of the Absolute. All wisdom or knowledge ends in the knowledge of the Absolute, and if you have known the Absolute, the Supreme Reality of the universe, then you have reached the supreme consummation of wisdom. Here you may ask this *question*, 'where is that supreme consummation of knowledge? How can you get it?' That knowledge of the Absolute in the first place will appear to be very far from us. How will you get it? What kind of knowledge is that? That knowledge of the Absolute is the same as divine knowledge. Sri Krishna brings that home to us by answering that question. The Absolute is not far from our true being, and our true being is the same as the Absolute. Then the *question* may arise, Of what nature is the self-knowledge? Is the knowledge of the absolute Being your self-knowledge? What is self-knowledge?' It is the same as your true self. Self-knowledge and the true self are identical. Then comes the *question*, 'What is the true Self? Pure knowledge and the true Self are identical, because the nature of the true Self, or *Atman* is pure, knowledge. Then the *question* may be asked: 'Has Self any form, any colour, any shape, or any attributes, and what kind of thing is that true Self?' Here Sri Krishna answers how that true Self is known and described in Vedanta. Vedanta includes the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Gita*, which we are now studying, and other aphorisms of the philosophy, and in these we find many passages which describe the *Atman*, or the true Self. In some passages, it is described as the pure Self, whose nature is like the self-effulgent light etc[3]

Here another question arises that knowledge and object of

[3] Vide the Commentary of Sankara

knowledge cannot be one, because when we know a thing, the object of knowledge is not the same as the subject. Knowledge of a thing must be separate from the object of knowledge, and if that be the case, in the *Upanishad* and in Vedanta, there are passages which describe it. The true Self or *Atman* is like the self-effulgent sun, or the self-luminous light. There are many such passages which give an impression that the true Self assumes a form and a name. To this it can be said, no, these passages do not give any impression that the true Self has any form, but simply add the illustration which differentiates the nature of the Self from that of the not-self. The true Self is all-knowing, and knowledge is its property or nature, and when we describe knowledge, we can only describe it by giving some illustration like light. Light is the best example, because ignorance is compared to darkness. Now what would be the opposite of darkness? It is light which disperses the darkness. Therefore, when the *Atman* or true Self is described in the *Upanishad,* it is compared to light i.e. light which dispels darkness. It is not an artificial light, but it is self-effulgent and self-luminous. This is like the light of the sun. The light of the sun proceeds from the sun, and illumines everything. Therefore, we must not consider that the true Self has a form like light of the sun, or any earthly light, but when we try to analyse the nature of the true Self, we find that it is not a material thing which does not possess that self-luminosity which is described as the attribute or nature of the true Self.[4]

The body itself is not self-conscious, and does not possess the source of consciousness. The senses do not illumine other objects, nor they possess self-consciousness. But there is one sun which we differentiate as the *Atman*, or the true Self. All these mental objects, or the forces of the will, we consider as distinct from all objects of senses. They belong to the external nature, and not only external nature but mind, intellect, and sense-powers belong also to nature. In studying Vedanta, we will find that the mind is not our true Self, and even intellect and understanding are not our true Self, but the true Self is much higher. When the intellect stops, when the mind is inactive,

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[4] In a similar way, Sankara also discussed this matter in connection with the verse XVIII. 50.

there shines the true Self, or the real Spirit. We are discussing about the true Self, and that may be known as the divine spark. That true Self does not stand as an object of senses. It cannot be seen by the eye, and cannot be perceived by any sense-powers, but it is beyond sound, beyond touch, and beyond time and space. These are in the realm of mind, but the true Self is beyond mind and intellect.

Now, if knowledge of an object takes the shape of the object, then the knowledge of the *Atman*, or the true Self, must take the shape of the true Self, if it has any shape. But, as it is, it has not any shape or form, it is inseparable from the Self. Now, those who hold that cognition (*jnana*) is formless and is not known by immediate perception, must admit that, since an object of knowledge is apprehended through cognition, cognition is quite as immediately known as pleasure or the like. Moreover, it cannot be maintained that cognition is a thing which one seeks to know. If cognition were unknown, it would be a thing which has to be sought after just an object of cognition is sought after. Just as, for example, a man seeks to reach by cognition the cognisable object, such as a pot, so also we seek to reach cognition by means of another cognition. But the fact is otherwise. Wherefore cognition is self-revealed, therefore, also the cogniser is self-revealed. And further it is to be remembered that the *Atman* or Brahman is not a mere knowledge or cognition, but it is self-revealed and self-realized cognition, and so it is not known as an object of knowledge of cognition. The true Self or *Atman* is pure and clear and saintly. It is beyond intellect, beyond mind, and is the source of consciousness. It is not the same as consciousness, but it is the source of consciousness Consciousness is a reflected light or a borrowed light, and the source of consciousness is higher and deeper. At present, the consciousness of our waking state is only a fragment of the entire field of consciousness The consciousness of the dream state is another state. Consciousness of things which are beyond sense perception, is another phase of consciousness. A seer goes into a trance condition or a clairvoyant state and sees certain things which do not exist on the physical plane, but on the psychic plane. That is a different consciousness. There is super-consciousness, subliminal consciousness, and super-normal con-

sciousness. The higher consciousness is not the same as the phenomenal consciousness which is limited by the sense powers and external objects of mind and intellect, but when these limiting conjuncts are in abeyance, there shines consciousness also, and that is deeper and higher though it seems like the condition of our present consciousness.[5] So, when we understand the different phases of consciousness, we will know that this is only a borrowed light or the partial manifestation of the consciousness of our true Being. The true Being is more conscious, and the field of its consciousness is universal. To the true Being nothing is unknown, but to the ego everything is unknown, except a very limited centre of which we are conscious.

We are to learn this *Atman*. I do not know the mechanism of the action. What muscle is moving, what nerve is operating, how the cells are working through them, we are not conscious. We eat food and digest it, but are not conscious of the process. We hear a sound, but do not know the physiological conditions how the sound or the sensation of the sound is produced. We do not know it, but we feel the result. So see how narrow, limited, and imperfect is our consciousness at present, and if this be all, we cannot expect to know more. But the range of consciousness increases when we remove these limitations. When all the senses and sense-powers do not limit our consciousness, we have more knowledge. Then we can see at a distance. Then time and space do not limit us, we rise above it, and come in direct touch with the cosmic consciousness which is universal. But the moment it is limited by individual minds and bodies and physical forms, though it does not lose its true nature and consciousness, it becomes limited in matter. For instance, the light of the sun illumines the whole earth, the reflected sun in a mirror would illumine only a small spot, and as it falls on the ceiling, it illumines only a small spot, but the true sun is very large. The sun is much larger than our earth, and a small mirror cannot reflect the image of such a big body. So our

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[5] Vide Swami Abhedananda's discussion on consciousness in the first chapter of his *True Psychology*, where he has scientifically and psychologically analysed consciousness, and has given the real manifestation of higher consciousness.

true Self is behind all these mental conditions and sense-powers, which simply limit and do not produce perfect images

What is the mirror that reflects? That understanding of intellect (*buddhi*) shows a light constantly shining from our true Self, and holds and reflects it, and that reflection is this consciousness which we are using now. By that we are conscious of all external objects i.e. objects of senses etc. This consciousness is a symbol of the self-revealing consciousness just as the ray of light reflected from the mirror, possesses the same power of illuminating other substances and dispelling darkness in however small a manner it may do it. Still it is the symbol of the light of the sun. Similarly the reflected consciousness is the symbol of consciousness of the true Self. Then the mind and other mental faculties reflect also It is, therefore, the reflection of the reflection The sense-organs reflect also, and the physical body reflects this Therefore, we think that the physical body itself is self-consciousness, and sense-organs are self-conscious, and mind and intellect also are self-conscious, because the substances have some reflection. If you can imagine them as different strata of the organs, you will see the intellect, then the mind, then the sense-powers and sense-faculties, then this gross physical consciousness, and then being conscious of the external things, as if the light of consciousness falls through these different strata. Therefore, ignorant people think that this body itself is self-consciousness, and do not differenatiate the source of consciousness from the gross physical form. Similarly through ignorance our body appears as self-conscious. If you touch any part of your body, it responds and appears as self-conscious entity, but this body itself is like dead matter. It only shows that self-consciousness, because it has borrowed that light from the source of all consciousness

Take an inllustration of an iron bar. It does not possess any light or heat. Put it on a furnace, and get it red-hot, and it will burn something, and appear to radiate heat. It has borrowed heat and light and burning power from the furnace. Therefore, it will burn other things also. That is a borrowed thing or power. The bar itself does not possess that. So this body, although it does not possess self-consciousness on account of its borrowed light, it appears as self-conscious. Those who are materialists, and have no knowledge of consciousness, think

that this consciousness is the property of the material body. but it is not so. Then there are other thinkers who are scientific, and believe that the sense-organs possess consciousness, and that this is a property of our senses. Others again think that the mind is the source of our consciousness, but, in reality, the mind is also the vibration of finer matter, and does not possess the source of consciousness or any intellect. So these different thinkers delude themselves, because they do not know the absolute Truth. The absolute Truth is beyond mind, intellect, and sense-powers, and when we have learned this truth through the study of Vedanta in order to trace the real source of knowledge consciousness and intellect, then we have known our true Self, and have acquired Self-knowledge. It is not necessary that we should think of our true Self as light, or having a form, or without a form. These are absolutely unnecessary. The Self-knowledge can be acquired simply by discriminating that this body cannot be the source of consciousness, because it is material. The dead body does not possess the source of consciousness, nor the sense-organs, nor the mental faculties, because they are objects of consciousness. When we have illuminated everything that belongs to the material, or phenomenal nature, or objective world, then we find the true Self, then illumination will show the true Self. Another thing should be considered that this true Self does not require any further proof for its existence, it is self-evident that we possess consciousness. The sun does not require the light of a lamp to be seen, as the sun is self-shining, if the world says you are not conscious of yourself, you do not believe it, as it is a self-evident fact. The thing that is necessary for you to know it what it is and how it exists, are you one with the body, or separate from it, are you the same as mind or sense powers, or separate from them? That is all you will have to find out, and you will have to get yourself. Other people's knowledge does not benefit you, unless you have experienced it yourself. So self-experience is necessary.

There are different opinions of different faiths. Some say that the external world does not exist, and anything outside of our ideas or mental conditions, does not exist. Some of the Buddhist philosophers also deny the existence of the external world. They hold matter does not exist, and nothing exists

but ideas, and they say that ideas or *vijana* only exists and other things of the world are mere reflections.[6] There are the opinions of other faiths, materialistic and agnostic. Some think that energy, mental and physical, is the source of consciousness, but that is not true. Time and space are not also the source of consciousness, but the source of consciousness is our true Self. If I ask you to get consciousness, you cannot do it, because it is already there within you. You cannot get rid of it as an external object outside yourself, because the moment you try to get rid of it, you would use your own consciousness in order to do so. So the consciousness we possess is neither physical, nor mental, and if such a consciousness of the true Self does not exist, then what is the use of taking care of the body and seeking all these pleasures? Who will enjoy them? It is not the unconscious one. The physical body does not enjoy anything, and the mind without consciousness is nothing, and the brain does not enjoy anything. If a person goes into the trance condition, leaving the body, brain, and nervous system, then consciousness is dissected from the body, brain, and nervous system, and, therefore, they do not feel anything. You have seen people in the hgypnotic sleep, and there is no feeling, and no consciousness. If the body could enjoy, that is the proper time for enjoying, but there is no concern and no knowledge. So, if the true Self does not exist, do you seek pleasure simply for pleasure's sake, or for yourself? Do you try to avoid pain for pain's sake? No, you will do every thing for your sake. Some, therefore, try to deduce everything from absolute consciousness. There is a book, *Philosophy of the Unconsciousness*, by Edward von Hartmann, but the unconsciousness referred to in the book is not the foundation of the universe.[7] The foundation is the consciousness, or the source of consciousness, and the first manifestation of that source of consciousness is also consciousness.

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[6] They are the Vijnanavadi Buddhists.

[7] *Philosophy of the Unconscious* by Endward von Hartmann, deals with speculative results according to the inductive method of physical science Prof C K Ogden, the editor, writes that the original of the present work first appeared in November 1868, when its author, who died in 1906, was in his twenty-seventh year Hartmann's first edition appears ten years after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*

Now we understand what self-knowledge is, and how it can be obtained. Self-knowledge is the knowledge of the true Self. It can be obtained, not by thinking of the soul, or by thinking of the true Self as the object of knowledge, but by eliminating all the fictitious of untrue sources of consciousness which, through our mistakes, appear as the true sources like material body, sense-powers, mind, intellect and state of energy, of which we are conscious at the time of deep sleep. It is only the state where we do not know anything. That state covers the whole universe. There was no consciousness, because the intellect was absorbed or latent in that state. There was nothing to reflect the light of consciousness, and when that elimination is effected, devotion to true Self has begun. Then we get a glimpse of the source of consciousness behind intellect, beyond time and space. Then we will know that our heart is purified. Then we know what God is, what our divine and immortal spark is, and how it will continue as formless, birthless, and deathless. Then Sri Krishna describes what would be the condition under which this knowledge comes, and how we ought to live. "It is not meant for all, but I will explain it for your benefit", said the Lord.

The Lord further says: "Endued with a pure reason, controlling the self with firmness, abandoning sound and other objects, and lying aside love and hatred (18. 51); Restoring to a lonely place, eating but little, speech and body and mind subdued, always engaged in concentration and meditation, endued with dispassion (18. 52); Having abandoned egotism, strength, arrogance, desire, enmity, property, free from the notion or idea of 'mine', and peaceful, he is fit for becoming the Brahman (18. 53). Becoming the Brahman, of serene self, he neither grieves nor desires, treating all beings alike, he attains supreme devotion to Me (18. 54). By devotion he knows Me truth, what and who I am; then knowing Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me (18. 55). Doing continually all actions whatsoever, taking refuge in Me,—by grace he reaches the eternal undecaying immortal abode (18. 56)".[8]

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[8] बुद्ध्या बिशुद्धया युक्तो धृत्यात्मनं नियमा च।
शब्दादीन् बिषतांस्तमक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ वुदस्य च॥

This Sri Krishna has said about performance of actions without asking the results, self-control, concentration and meditation, Yogas like Jnana, Raja and Bhakti, etc. for attaining the state of the Brahman. In the verse XVIII. 54, He teaches that attaining to serene Self, one goes beyond all desires and sorrows and attains devotion or *bhakti*. Further when the Lord has said that 'he neither grieves nor desires', He means that he who realizes the Brahman, can have no longing or desire for any object unattained. Or it can be said that the Self-realized superman regards the pleasure and pain of all creatures equally with his own, and not that he sees identity of the *Atman* in all creatures, as this idea has clearly been said in the next verse, and this is also the contention of Sankara, which has been depicted in his Commentary. In the verse XVIII. 55, Sri Krishna has clearly said that by *bhakti* or devotion to knowledge, one knows 'Me' the supreme Self, the Brahman.

Now some objects to the statement of the Lord 'भक्त्या मामभिजानाति' i.e. 'by supreme devotion of knowledge he (devotee) knows 'Me', the supreme Self', which, as if, involves contradiction. Now it is asked as to how the contradiction arises? To this the objectioners say that when knowledge of a certain object arises in the knower, then and then alone the knower knows the object, and, therefore, no devotion to that knowledge, or no repetition of knowledge, is necessary. To this it can be said that this objection is untainable here, as the word 'devotion' or *nistha* means knowledge aided by all the

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बिबिक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः ।
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं बैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥
अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।
बिमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥
ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।
समः सर्बेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥
भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान् यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा बिशते तदन्तरम् ॥
सर्बकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥१८।५१-५६

favourable conditions of its rise and development and freed from obstacles, culminates in a firm conviction by one's own experience (*atma-pratyaya*). When the knowledge of the unity of the individual self (*Kshetrajna*) and the absolute Self (*Paramatman*) culminates in a firm conviction by one's own experience, then the knowledge is said to have attained supreme consummation which means *jnana-nistha* or devotion to knowledge. When this *jnana-nstha* or devotion to knowledge arises in the aspirant, he at once knows the Lord, the Supreme Self as He is, and immediately afterwards all consciousness of difference between *Isvara* and the *Kshetrajna* disappear altogether. Thus there is no contradiction involved in the statement of the Lord: 'भक्त्या मामभिजानाति' i.e. 'by devotion of knowledge (the devotee knows Me, the Supreme Self'). But renunciation along with devotion of knowledge is necessary, because the Lord has said, 'who will attain the realization of the Self or *Atman*? Can an ordinary person whose mind and body are attached to the external conditions, realize it? No, it is impossible for him, but one who acquires the state of calm, serene, peaceful and unattached mind (to the world), attains the Self-realization'.[9]

Only few can realize that state of supreme realization. And Sri Krishna has also admitted: "Among thousands of men, one perchance strives for perfection; even among those who strive and are perfect, only perchance knows Me (the Supreme Soul in truth"). So those who are endowed with super-understanding, whose understanding is purified, who restrain the self in calmness, exercise self-control, who are not easily disturbed by external conditions, who abandon sense-objects, like objects of sight etc., and who, in one word, do

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[9] Madhusudana Sarasvati said that the line 'ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा बिशते तदनन्तम्' (XVIII. 55) suggests the states of both Jivanmukti and Videhamukti. He said "ततो मामेवं तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा अहमस्मग्खण्डानन्दाद्वितीयं ब्रह्मेति साक्षात्कृत्य बिशते अज्ञानतत्कार्यंग्निवृत्तौ सर्वोपाधिशून्यतया मद्रुंप एव भवति (=जीबन्मुक्तः)। तदनन्तरं बलबत्प्रारब्धकर्मभोगेण देहपातानन्तरं, न तु ज्ञानानन्तरेब, तत्त्वाप्रत्ययेनैव तल्लाभे तदनन्तरमित्यस्स बैयर्थग्रापातात्।"

Chitsukhacharya and Vidyaranya-muni suggest here Jivanmukti instead of Videhamukti 8. VII. 8.

not care for all these things can also realize the true Self. They have seen enough, and heard enough, and are tired. The true knowledge comes like flashes, and attracts the senses producing a tingling sensation and being controlled. These things do not bring absolute happiness, but bring only temporary happiness which lasts only for a short time. There is abandonment of the sense-objects, like sounds etc., love, and hatred, etc. Ordinarily what we call love, is opposite to hatred. When we do not hate, that is love, and love and hatred are dual in the ordinary sense. Love would be a part of our being, but love opposite to hatred is attachment. Covering all these dual things, heat and cold, pleasure and pain, rising above all activities, and resorting to a secluded spot where there is no disturbance, live quietly by yourself, do not be disturbed, and live with moderation in food. In that case, you do not have to do so much physical or mental labour, and nervous energy would not be wasted. Subdue and check the speech, body, and mind, and do not talk at all, or utter very few words, and those absolutely necessary for preparing the ground for attaining to God-realization.

Be engaed in concentration and meditation, endued with dispassion for earthly objects, which are transitory. This feeling that nothing belongs to me in this world, will naturally come to one who seeks the knowledge of the Absolute. Anything on this plane really does not belong to us, it belongs to our true Self, and the true Self is on a higher plane. We may enjoy ourselves at present for a short time, as long as we are with the body, but when we are away from the body, all these things will remain in this phenomenal world. Having attained such realization, we must naturally have the feelings of dispassion and detachment.

Having abandoned self-conceit, mixed with desire for earthly things, arrogance, lust, anger, property, and possessions etc. how can you possess these things as a true Self, or as a part of the Divine? How can you possess little things like these which do not belong to you? Be free from the notion that all these things belong to me Even the body itself does not belong to you. Be tranquil at heart, because such a man is fitted to become one with the Brahman, or the Absolute. This idea should be kept before the mind of one who wishes to

analyse the Absolute. That realization comes to such souls as are sincere and earnest, and try to live this way. What will become of the world? I have already said everybody is not a seeker after Truth, but there are very few, and they can be found very seldom. Others will remain on the plane of relativity, enjoy, and suffer, and do the works and reap the results until the longing for the knowledge of the reality of the universe comes and dawns upon our souls. That is bound to come. What does Christianity teach? It teaches the same thing. Christ lived in the same way as described here. He was endued with pure understanding. He restrained the mind, abandoned sense-objects, and subdued the speech. He did not possess anything, and had neither self-conceit, nor desire, nor lust or anger. He was free from these notions, and was made tranquil at heart. There are many such ideals, and this had been said in India fourteen hundred years before Christ was born. This is the condition under which one attains to the absolute knowledge, and becomes one with the Father in heaven, which is the Absolute. Then one can say "I and my Father are one". After living this kind of life, it is for this reason that, in India, so many young men and women renounce the world, leave their home and hearth, go into the forests, or live in caves. They do not consider that business is the only ideal of life. They have finished that in other lives. They retire, and become Sanyasins, and this gave rise to the monastic system on monks and nuns. They wanted to live that life purely and to become absolutely one with the Supreme.

In India, although the monastic system had been in existence centuries before Christ and Buddha were born, still they have no organized monastic life. The organized life is a miserable thing, because it brings artificial conditions, and these never produce any good results. It is forced, as we will find it amongst different sects in different countries. In India, religion is not forced on a person, he is absolutely free, he follows his own inclinations, and is not dictated to by anyone. That means a great deal. The Sanyasins and the Swamis enjoy absolute independence. Therefore, the true spirituality is to be found among those who are not tied down by organization, such as is found amongst the Roman Catholics.

After attaining to this state of realization of the

absolute Truth, you will not have to go through anything else, but if you desire to attain to perfection and live in a secluded spot for a short time, you will get wonderful results; and after attaining to such knowledge, you can come and live in the world, and will be setting a good example. Even one who cannot live for many years, ought to live for a few days following these ideals. It is not necessary that you must devote your life in that way, but do it only for a short time. If you are living in the world, take a vacation, go away, and live away for a few months, stay alone, do not see anybody, live quietly, and follow these ideals. Even if you have a vacation for two weeks, you will find good results, you will return with fresh energy, and understand things better. You do not have to give any explanation. Where there is a will, there is a way. The opportunity comes to those who are ready for it. What will happen to those who attain to such realization? He who has become one with the Absolute, neither gives, nor desires anything of the world. Not because his desires are fulfilled, but because he has realized the Reality.

The serene spirit is always undisturbed in his business. If everybody is dead and gone, he is disturbed, and his strength is the Absolute. He has plenty of affection, but he realizes the transitoriness of the world, and this will be realized by every seeker after Truth, because the world itself is transitory. This world is not our permanent abode, the permanent abode is high above space and time. When he attains supreme love for man and God, then comes true love. Love is God, it comes to those who have attained the Absolute. Love is God and God is love. Through love he then knows the light in truth, "What and who I am". Now you are standing in the dark. Reading books will never bring God to you, but it is through the gate of Self-knowledge that you will gain wisdom, and realize God.

"Having known Me in truth and realized the nature of the Divinity, he enters into the being of the Almighty, and becomes one with it", said the Lord. He will retain his individuality, yet it will be in direct communion with the eternal Truth. After discriminately enjoying pleasures of the world, the next thing is to have that eternal happiness and divine communion which is the prime aim of the human life.

CHAPTER LXIII

LORD SAID SURRENDER UNTO HIM

We have learned that perfection can be attained through the performance of the daily duties, if, of course, these works are performed through *bhakti* or devotion to the Lord; that is, if we offer the results to the Lord all, these acts of our daily life *will be a means for attaining to perfection*. The same acts which we are performing in ignorance, not knowing God, and not knowing our true Self, will help us, if we perform them through right knowledge. That is, if we do so by knowing our true relation to God, who God is,[1] and what our devotion to Him, will lead to perfection. This performance of duties in this way as devotional acts, will gradually purify the heart, and will prepare our souls to gain that knowledge or wisdom which reveals to us the true nature of things, and when that knowledge comes, the desire for the highest becomes extremely strong, and all other desires will seem to be unimportant. But one desire is there, and that is to know the Eternal, the Permanent, or the Infinite. Ordinarily our minds are scattered and modifications are divergent. We do not have that longing for the Eternal, but we have strong desires for earthly objects, because we consider this earth as our permanent home, which is really not. We want the physical sense-comforts and not the eternal soul-life. If we examine our daily life, we will find that ninety percent of our daily acts are performed for earthly causes or reasons, and not for higher results, but when the awakening of the soul comes, we do not spend so much time in looking after earthly things which are transitory. At present we do not know that they are transitory, but we consider them as eternal and permanent that we are going to enjoy these things forever, and that we will live on this plane of the senses all the time, and

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[1] Here 'God' means God the Absolute, or the absolute Brahman, and it is also true that God (*Isvara*), the Second Principle, is non-different from the First Principle (*Turiya*) in essence.

will try to enrich ourselves for the worldly pleasures. This happens only for delusion.

This is the general tendency of the world to miss the real, but this tendency will cease when the higher wisdom will come. Therefore, devotion to the Lord is absolutely necessary for such souls as are tired of these earthly conditions. But those who are not tired, but only care for them to a great extent, will find that such a devotion to the Lord is unnecessary, as we find amongst the majority of people in every country. That is the reason why so few are spiritually advanced, who love God and, care for the eternal and unchangeable. The masses take religion as a pleasing secondary thing, and the primary thing with them is the earthly results and prosperity. In every country, we will find that this is the condition, and such is the delusive power of that energy which has produced this world. We are all self-deluded, and do not know it. We, therefore, forget the eternal, and take care of the non-eternal, and this is the result. Those who have come out of this condition, are fortunate, but their number is very small. Those who are thoroughly spiritual, are very few. The majority are groping in the darkness of ignorance, and they do not know what is right or wrong. They follow like sheep. If one goes in any direction, the others follow him. They have no reason of their own. Do you not see how they run after different things in a bunch? If a person goes in one direction, others follow, because they have nothing else to do, and they do not know anything better. If you stand at the street corner and look upward, nothing is happening there. Just look, others will do the same, and you will soon see hundreds will be looking upward, as though something important were going to happen, as if the roof or the sky were going to fall. Such is the condition of ordinary people, and if you follow them, you will go where they go, and all will fall into the ditch. If they do not follow the masses, they do not care for the opinion of the public. They know the public is going in one direction, and they themselves want to go in the opposite direction. They never follow those ignorant ones who are groping in the darkness of ignorance, and enjoy the blunders which they are making, and try to cover them with flowers, and think they are very clear.

"But he who performs all actions, having taken refuge in Me", says the Lord, the Supreme Being, "reach, by My grace, the undecaying and everlasting abode." This phenomenal world is not our everlasting abode. We are here, just as we go to a hotel during the summer term. We travel and stay there for three or four days or a month, then go somewhere else. Our sojourning is not eternal, and any abode we have on this earth, is subject to decay. This body is not our abode. Where is that undecaying abode? Those who search, try to attain to it, others do not care for it. If you talk to them about that undecaying abode, they will redicule you, because they do not care for it. But there are awakened souls who care for nothing else, but care for that one undecaying and everlasting abode. Where is it, where to get it, and how? They seek the grace of the Lord, they have faith in the Lord, and they are not sceptical. Doubts arise from ignorance, but when true knowledge comes, all doubts cease. Why do we doubt? Because, we do not know things exactly, but that knowledge will come to one who performs all actions and duties of life, after having taken refuge in the Lord, and also being guided and directed by Him.

Here we make a great mistake. Instead of first taking refuge in the Lord we take refuge in mortal and transitory things. We depend upon these things, and this is the first blunder we commit, then we commit and afterwards a series of blunders are piled one upon another. If we first try to take refuge in the Lord, then the other things of our condition will be helped, but we are not ready for that.

How will we take refuge in the Lord? We can do so by centring or concentrating our whole heart and soul upon the Supreme. If we can centre our thoughts, our minds, or our hearts upon the Lord, instead of centring them upon human beings and earthly things, then we have taken refuge in the Lord, and not until then. An ordinary person living in the world has centred his or her thoughts upon human beings and upon the pleasures and comforts of life. These are the most prominent things, but with a soul awakened from the sleep of ignorance, it is different. That soul enters the whole heart upon the Eternal, and not upon transitory objects, and the result is the attainment of the Eternal. The knowledge

of the Eternal should be the first, and that knowledge will bring peace and happiness along with it. It is for this reason taking refuge in the Lord is considered to be one of the best things that we can do. It is the best form of worship in taking refuge in the Supreme, and people do not question who it is and where it is. It is with us, it is the soul of our soul, and it is the centre of our being. So long as we have faith in ourselves, we cannot deny the existence of the Lord, who is the background of ourselves. And the moment we have succeeded in centring our thoughts on the Supreme, that very moment His grace decends upon the soul. Grace comes as the result of taking refuge in Him, not until then. Just struggle to take refuge in Him and as the result, come wisdom, peace, and happiness, which are the outward expressions of grace.

The Lord has said: "To Me mentally raising all these, holding Me as the supreme goal, and resorting to mental concentration and devotion of wisdom, do thou always fix thy heart in Me."[2] We will have to first resign all the results of our deeds, which are performed as daily duties, to Him. What will we do with the results? We never think of what gain will it be to us, if we get all the results of our works. So long as we are thinking of ourselves as one with the body and are forgetting our soul life, we may think we are gaining very much, because we can use these results for our benefits. We should consider that we would continue to live even when these results are dead and gone and when this body is dead and gone. What would be the use of having these results? It is much better that we should offer them to the Lord, because through that offering, will come the higher knowledge and His grace, and eventually we will enter into that undecaying and everlasting blissful abode.

So much is granted, but if we do not offer the results to the Lord and take them upon ourselves, then we gain only transitory results, and remain in the darkness of ignorance, and become selfish. That would be the outcome. Which is the better? Whatever we choose we can expect. Wise ones

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2 चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥१८।५७

choose that which would bring eternal results, and the ignorant choose that which will bring immediate results and last for a short time, that is the difference. Therefore, the Lord said "To Me mentally resigning all deeds." You do not have to resign outwardly, because the results may come in future right after the performance of your duties. Mentally i.e. with discriminative faith resign all visible and invisible results to the Lord, every day make an offering that the result of these works may go to Him, the Lord, and offer that devotion and love, then you will find that your heart and soul will be purified, and will be ready for that highest wisdom. "And regarding Me as the supreme goal" i.e. all-pervading Vasudeva—this we must learn. The goal of our life is not this earth, not a material condition, and not earthly pleasure, but the Supreme Being, and that is our real abode. Sooner or later we are bound to go back to that infinite Being, consciously or unconsciously, because that is the end of the universe. Death is not the end, and dissolution is not the end, but the infinite Being is the end or final goal. One body may come, and another, and another, and still more. The planet may be destroyed, and another may come, and so it will continue. So destruction is not the goal, but the goal is the real source of all creatures, all forces, and all powers, which are pervading.

After holding that as the supreme goal and resorting to the devotion of wisdom and using discrimination, not relying upon the standard, we hold at present, but the standard that will be in harmony with the eternal standard. Our present standard is a transitory and limited standard, because we do not think of our soul life but, when we find a more permanent standard, then our discrimination will be perfect. At present, if we discriminate, it will be the thinking of what will bring comfort to our body and what will not. But when we have a better standard, we will not do so, but will think what will bring comfort and happiness to the soul-life, and not merely to the physical life, which will bring unhappiness, misery, suffering, and ignorance to the soul-life. After such discrimination we fix our mind, heart, and soul upon that which is eternal, absolute, and permanent. Then we gain the everlasting abode, unbounded peace, and eternal happiness. Ordinarily our minds are fixed upon senses, sense-pleasures, and

material objects. We should withdraw our mind from these objects, and fix it upon that which is eternal, and this we should practise. That may be very bitter at first. As long as we have attachments to earthly objects, we cannot do this. It is very difficult, but when we have received blows after blows and learned by experience that this world is not worth-having with all its pleasures, then we withdraw our minds from these objects, and fix them upon the Supreme which will never change, and will remain always the same and perfect.

"Fixing thy heart on Me," says the Lord, "thou shalt by My grace, cross over all difficulties that will come in your way, but if from egotism those wilt not hear (Me), thou shalt perish."[3] You will overcome and cross over the abyss of misery and suffering, if you have your mind, and soul fixed upon the Lord, but if you have your minds fixed upon ordinary mortals, then the pain, sorrow, and suffering will be so great that it will soon be unbearable. There is no way of getting out of it; it will be just suffering.

"Fixing thy heart on Me, therefore, thou shalt by My grace cross over all perils", says the Lord. This grace is not like the grace which Christianity or dualistic religions give. This grace is universal. It does not mean any predestination that God has created some people to suffer, and others He has created to receive the grace. That idea we do not encourage, because it is not true. That idea of grace is never accepted in Vedanta. This grace is universal. Any one, even the greatest sinner who lives and acts in this way, will receive His grace. Grace is that state of relaxation, and that comes under certain conditions. It is described as grace, because all our powers proceed from the Lord, or the infinite Being. Anything that is spiritually uplifting, and anything that brings right knowledge to the soul, proceeds from that infinite source, and

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मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात् तरिष्यसि ।

अथ चेत् त्वमहङ्कारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्क्ष्यसि ॥१८।५८

Sankara said that the impassable obstacles arising from nescience or *avidya*, is the cause of worldliness or *samsara* So men should go beyond egotism and take refuge in God, otherwise they will be ruined

that is grace. So here we must not mistake this grace for the Christian ideal of grace, which is entirely different. The Christian ideal of grace is limited, while this grace of the *Bhagavad Gita* and Vedanta is universal for all living creatures, and no one is destined to suffer forever. That idea of eternal suffering for certain souls is not to be found in Vedanta, because Vedanta teaches that we are all children of God, and by our birthright we possess that grace of God. But when we live in ignorance we do not care for grace of that kind, we seek grace on the material plane in the form of material prosperity and success in business, and we also get them, and when we seek spiritual grace, we get it, because it is ours.

"But if, through self-conceit thou shalt not resign to Me, thou shalt perish," the Lord says. The Lord is Sri Krishna, the divine Incarnation, who is worshipped in India as Christ in Christendom. But the Lord does not mean any particular manifestation. By the word 'Lord' is meant, therefore, the source of all divine Incarnations and manifestations.

By fixing our heart and soul on the Supreme, we cross over all perils and difficulties, and then we reach the Supreme Being, who is the goal of our life; but if through egotism we do not resign and do not accomplish the highest spiritual ideal of life, then we are perished. Therefore it is not very helpful or uplifting to the soul, and it is like going downward and going away from our eternal abode, and, therefore, the Lord said that you perish if you follow your own egotistical opinions. If you doubt this, you will perish. The word 'perish' does not mean destruction or annihilation, but it means becoming unable to reach the highest goal or Reality. The teacher tells these things as the concluding remarks after explaining the various methods and ideals of life. In conclusion, he says: "If, indulging egotism, thou thinkest 'I will not fight', vain is this, thy resolve, nature will constrain thee."[4] The Lord says, 'nature will constrain thee' and again in the verse III.27, the Lord has said: Actions are wrought in all

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[4] यदहङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्ये इति मन्यसे ।
मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥१८।५९

cases by the energies of nature. He whose mind is deluded by egoism, thinks 'I am doer' (*'prakriteh kriyamanani'*, etc.). So we are dependent upon the nature, or upon our natural tendencies. You know there are certain people born with certain tendncies, and if, through ignorance or self-conceit, they think that they are independent and not subject to these tendencies, they can do anything that they wish, and make mistakes, because their tendencies would be stronger than their will-power, or they will do things against their will-power If you would examine your own life, you will find how many times you have acted against your will, simply being forced by an internal tendency i.e. a strong tendency of your own nature that you could not resist, and that Sri Krishna explains here.

You know Arjuna was the commander-in-chief on the battle-field. How unique were the conditions under which these teachings were given. These were given on the battle-field while Arjuna, the commander-in-chief, did not want to lead his army to fight. His mind was confused, and he did not know what step to take. Under these conditions, Sri Krishna, as the charioteer of Arjuna, was leading him, along with the right line to perform his duty. He says: "If inspired with egotism thou thinkest thou will not fight firm in this resolve, nature will propel thee." Because Arjuna was born as a warrior, and was the greatest general of that time. His natural tendency was to fight a righteous battle, and forced by that tendency he gathered his army, and went to the battle-field, but his mind was confused, and he did not know what step to take. He said, he would not fight. At that time they used to fight with bows and arrows, nearly fourteen hundred years before Christ was born. He dropped his bow upon the chariot, and would not fight.

Therefore, Sri Krishna, after giving him these instructions, has said: "If inspired with egotism thou thinkest I will not fight, I would rather retire, and be like a beggar, or take some other profession, or live in some other way, and having this resolve you would not be able to do it, nature will propel thee." The natural tendency of a soldier will constrain him to fight although against his will. The Lord also says: "Bound by that tendency thou shalt be forced to do that

which, through delusion, thou likest not to do."[5] We are all bound by our natural tendencies. Here the battle should be considered as the battle-field of the world, and each individual soul is the commander, and the Lord is the charioteer. The chariot is the body. By the power of the Lord we move and live on this battle-field of the world, and we follow our own natural tendencies with which we are born. While one person is born with one tendency and another with another, the parents are not to be blamed for this. Our parents only modify these conditions under which the manifestation of the tendencies of the soul is possible, but the natural tendencies are the outcome of the powers of the soul itself. We get these tendencies as the result of our own desires and works of previous existence. If we deny our previous existence, we cannot explain anything about all the tendencies of this life, and all the desires we try to fulfil. All the experiences we receive in this life will be the means of moulding our future tendencies, with which we shall be born in another incarnation, either on this plane, or on some other, and this tendency is so strong that we cannot resist it. When we find that some one is born with artistic tendencies, no matter where he goes, or where he lives, he will be an artist. One who is a farmer, may be born under most unfavourable conditions, but he will come out as a farmer. One who is born passionate, with ambition and other qualifications, will follow these tendencies, and eventually will become great in that line. So, we are bound by our nature and tendencies. We have become bound by our own condition, or by the causes, we feel the results, and we are not free. Sometimes the results are very unpleasant and sometimes pleasant, but the causes are not outside of us, but we in our previous condition were the cause, and now we are reaping the results. If you desire anything very strongly, you may not get the object right away, but

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स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा ।
कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात् करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥१८६०

That is, "O son of Kunti, bound by thy own nature-born act, that which from delusion thou likest not to do, thou shalt do through against thy will". 'Against thy will' means in subjection to some external force.

perhaps tomorrow or in a week or a year, or perhaps in several years, you will get the results. At that time, perhaps, you will forget that you wanted such a thing, and the result will be a surprise. You would not know why such a thing would come to you, and forget that you were the cause of it We forget our past, and do not remember what we desire during our lifetime. What you desired ten or twenty years ago, you now get, or, perhaps, you will get it tomorrow. If you do not get the results in this lifetime, you will get them, in future incarnations perhaps. Such is the power of our desires. All these present desires bind us, and we feel unhappy How then can we be absolutely free? We are longing for freedom, but we do not know how to get it. Each soul is trying to be free and to enjoy freedom, and in that attempt to get freedom we have discovered all these methods by which we get that freedom.

Vedanta holds freedom as the ideal. Other religions teach one method, but Vedanta teaches all kinds of method. There are innumerable methods. Christianity gives one, Mahommedanism gives one, Buddhists give one method through Buddha, but Vedanta gives all methods of attaining to freedom. These methods are known as religions by which the soul attains to freedom. Why are you worshipping God? You worship God to attain to that freedom. Why do you pray to God? You may pray for immediate results, but eventually you will learn to pray for that absolute freedom These results which were not satisfactory, will not make you happy. So these tendencies which bind us today, will be severed, and the individual souls will gradually become free from all tendencies So we should remember that perfection means freedom from all desires and tendencies.

God has no desires i.e. selfish desires, therefore, He is perfect. Tendencies mean imperfection, and desires mean limitation. The things you possess you do not desire, but what you want and cannot possess, you have a desire for. If God had any desire, He would be imperfect, and then we would call Him an imperfect Being. Then He would be lacking in something. Every desire means limitations and bondage. So God would not be free, if He had any desires, and He would be like an ordinary mortal Therefore, the state

of perfection is the fulfilment of all desires and tendencies, and that is also freedom. "Bound by that natural born tendency thou shalt be forced to do that, which from delusion thou likest not to do. At present that which thou doest not like to do, thou shalt be forced to do because of that tendency."[6]

Having described the bondage by nature, the Lord describes how God dwells in the human beings. Sri Krishna says: "O Arjuna, *Isvara* dwells in the hearts of all beings whirled by the delusive power of *maya*, as creatures mounted on a machine."[7] God dwells in the hearts of all, and makes us do all these things by His delusive power, His charm, His fascination, which are *maya*, as if we were like wooden dolls sitting on a revolving machine. We do not know where we are going. This is the world of relativity. This earth is moving from the west toward the east at a speed of 25,000 miles in 24 hours. Can you stop it? No, the earth will rotate round the sun to complete the orbit of the sun.

Mentally you say you are going to do certain things, you are forced to do certain things, and you are not free from desires entirely. Why should you do this and that, you perhaps know you will not get the thing you want, still you do it. Why, you do not know. This inscrutable power which forces us to do these things is called *maya*. It is the charm

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[6] The *Gita*, XVIII 60.

[7] ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
भ्रामयन् सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढ़ानि मायया ॥१८।६१

In the *Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad* (317/3/23), it has also been said:

"यः पृथिव्यां तिष्ठन्, पृथिव्या अन्तरो, यं पृथिवी न वेद, यस्य पृथिवी शरीरम्, य पृथिवीमन्रो यमयत्येष, ते आत्मान्तर्याम्यमृतः" ।

The commentary, *Subodhini*, on the Vedantasara of Sadananda-Yogindra, says:

"तथा सर्वेषां जबानां (ईशितृत्वेन) कर्मानुरूपफलदातृत्वेन ईश्वर उच्यते । तथा सर्वेषां जीबानां अन्तर्हृदये स्थित्वा बुद्धिनियामकत्वेन अन्तर्यामी उच्यते ।"

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"स्वभाबाधीनतामुक्तेश्वराधीनतां बिवृणोति ईश्वर इति । ईश्वर ईशनशीलो नारायणः सर्वान्तर्यामी ।"

and the juggler. It comes, and makes us do exactly what it wants us to do. It is the hypnotic power. It can do and undo everything in this world (*aghatana-ghatana-patiyasi maya*). We are at present hypnotized. Therefore, we feel attached to things that do not belong to us. We will have to de-hypnotize ourselves, and get out of this state, and then we will see what really belongs to us, and what does not, what things we ought to possess. We cannot see the Truth so long as we are in the realm of this charm of *maya*. You may say, "why does God do these things?" His power is of this nature, otherwise this creation would not exist and would not be meaningful. Evolution means this charm, or the product of charm. One thing produces so many things. That power is called *maya*. Creation, projection, differentiation, evolution, reincarnation, birth, growth, death, decay, and change—these are all in the realm of that inscrutable power that makes one forget many things, remain attached to certain desires, and accomplish certain results. Then, in the end, we find that all are worthless, and all are meaningless. We are born, we live to do something, we are building our own houses, we are building castles in the air, and we are doing this and that, but everything goes wrong and everything goes without value. Then we laugh at our own foolishness, and think that all these things are of no use. But they do this much good, they bring experiences to the souls, and therein lies the value, outside of that there is none. We see lots of people going through all these experiences they do not care for, and they are absolutely indifferent. Some who do not like others, are crazy for, because they need that experience. These experiences ultimately teach us by what power we are forced to do these things. It is like a magic power, and is something inscrutable. We are just like wooden dolls, moved by the wires which are held by some being dwelling within our hearts. Why the brain thinks, eyes see, and ears hear? They do these because of that inscrutable power, and that power is not independent of the Being whom we worship as the Lord[8] This power passes through Him, and proceeds from Him. That which is described as natural-born tendency is the manifesta-

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[8] दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।—७।१४

tion of that inscrutable power of the Lord.[9] This energy contains the seed of all manifestation, the source of all powers of nature, and is within us. It is the divine spark within us. But He Himself is free from that charm. As a juggler is not charmed like the audience, because the power proceeds from him, and he knows that. In a like manner, the Lord of the universe is the source of the power, but He Himself is never subject to it. And we, being differentiated from that source, or being far away from the presence of that power, we become subject to that power called *maya.* The more distant we are from the centre, the Divinity, the more we are subject to that power. The nearer we approach the centre, the freer we become from that power of *maya.* Therefore, if we wish to attain to perfect freedom, we will have to go toward the centre, and not toward the circumference. The power of attraction, of fascination, of delusion, or of charm, toward the circumference, is very strong. Therefore, Sri Krishna says to Arjuna: "O Bharata, take refuge in the centre of that soul, unto Him fly for refuge with all thy heart, by His grace shalt thou attain the highest bliss and everlasting rest and peace."[10] That refuge is our home. If we know how to take refuge in Him, or in that centre, then we arise from the circumference as quickly as we can, and get out of that charm, and then we will see the light by which we will understand that delusive power. Then His grace will come. We cannot feel the spiritual grace of the Lord, as long as we are far away from Him, and as long as we do not take refuge in Him. We think that He has forsaken us. But that is not correct. The moment we forget Him and become attached to the world, that is the time when we pray, "O Lord, why hast thou forsaken me," and if our prayers are sincere, the Lord bless us with His grace. Then by His grace we attain the highest peace. We have no idea at present what peace and bliss are, but at rare moments we get a glimpse of it. The highest bliss is that

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9 "देवात्मशक्तिं स्वगुणैः निगूढ़ाम् (श्वे उं १।३)—देवस्य ईश्वरस्य आत्मशक्तिम्।"

10 त्वमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत।
तत्प्रसादात् परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥१८।६२

state of freedom, and it is dwelling in that everlasting rest and silence, which are our real home and abode, and in that abode or home of the soul, we live like a child of God.

Sri Krishna then says: "This have I declared, even that wisdom more secret than that which is secret." Now you see how He appeals to his disciple. He says, "I have said what I had to say, now if you like it, follow it, if not, do not follow it."[11]

The freed souls or Mahatmas do not fear to tell us the Truth, and show the way, and then let us choose. They open the ways always. They never force us to follow, because they know that, if we do not follow, we are not ready, we need further experiences. Spiritual awakening has not come to us, and in time it will come, so they learn to wait.

"Thus have I declared that wisdom more secret than all that is secret", says the Lord. It is the secret of all religions. How God dwells in us, how we are bound by tendencies, how we can attain to that freedom—all these are the secret. If we reflect upon these secrets and devote our time and energy to understanding them, then we will find the right path, and after finding the right path, we may do as we please.

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[11] इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद् गुह्यतरं मया।
विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥१८।६३

Madhusudana Saraswati said: "सर्वगीतार्थमुपसंहरन्नाह इतीति। * * ततो भगवदेकशरणतया विविक्तसेवादि ज्ञानसाधनाभ्यासाच्छ्रवण-मनन-निदिध्यासनैरात्मसाक्षात्-कारोत्पत्ता मोक्ष इति।"

Anandagiri said "ज्ञानं करणव्युत्पत्त्या गीताशास्त्रम्। यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु, ज्ञानं कर्म वा यदिष्टं तदनुतिष्ठेत्यर्थः।"

CHAPTER LXIV

DOUBTS OF ARJUNA WERE REMOVED

The central truth of Vedanta was expressed in the first place in the *mahavakya*: 'Thou Art That'. This is the central truth in Vedanta. Thou art divine, thou art eternal, and thou art immortal, unchangeable, and absolute. This appears to be very simple, but to realize it is a very difficult thing. Truth is very simple, but we know how difficult it is to get at it. Where is the truth? We can talk about truth, hear of it, speak of it, but do not know where it is. We think it is far away from us, and sometimes we feel that but we can never reach it, Vedanta tells us that Truth is your real Self—'Thou art the Truth'.

In the *Katha Upanishad* (I.2.23), it has been said that "this Truth or Self cannot be known through much study, nor through the intellect, nor through much hearing. It can be known through the Self alone that the devotees or aspirants pray to; this Truth or Self of that seeker reveals its true nature". Again it has been said in the same *Upanishad* (II.3.12): "It cannot be attained through speech, nor through mind, nor through eye. How can it be known to any one apart from him who speaks of it as existing?" And in the next verse (II.3.13), it has been said: "The Truth or Self (first) to be known or realized as existing, and (then) as it really is".[1] Now, the substances or essences of the two verses are the same, because

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[1] (क) नायमात्मा प्रबचनेन लभ्यो
न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तसैष
आत्मा बिवृणुते तनुं स्वाम् ॥

(ख) नैष बाचा न मनसा प्राप्तं शक्ये न चक्षुषा ।
अस्तीति ब्रबतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥

(ग) अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धस्तत्त्वभावेन चोभयोः ।
अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धस्य तत्त्ववोधः प्रसीदति ॥

Truth or Self is known through Truth or Self alone, and this knowledge is the super-rational divine realization.

Thus we see, no other religion has given this wonderful message to the world, "Thou art That". That eternal Being whom we worship in ignorance as God, living in heaven away from us, is, in reality, not very far from us; He is the Soul of our souls and is in us. 'Thou art That',—*Tat Tvam Asi.*[2]

The Truth has been explained by great Seers, Prophets and spiritual leaders in India from time immemorial, and this forms an explanation of all efficiency, all spirituality, and all religion, science, philosophy, and knowledge. The moment we realize the true meaning of "Thou art That", that very moment we have attained salvation, or freedom, or Divine illumination, or Godconsciousness. Volumes after volumes Scriptures have been written to explain this one single passage. All the rituals, ceremonials, forms of worship and devotion, are performed and practised simply for realizing the meaning of this one verse, 'Thou Art That'. And the whole philosophy of Vedanta deals with its meaning from different standpoints. The *Upanishads* and other Vedantic writings, which are the earliest works of Vedanta, and the commentaries of great philosophers, and the *Sutras*, which are the Aphorisms, make up the principal books of Vedanta. When we think of the works of Vedanta, we will have to consider the *Upanishad*, the *Vedanta-sutras*, and the *Bhagavad Gita.*[3]

We have learned that our true nature is immortal. It is beyond birth and death. It is eternal, unchangeable, immutable beginningless, and endless, and cannot be created by any being. God Himself cannot create our true nature, if He could, He would have to create Himself. If it were possible

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[2] *Tat* means the Brahman or *Atman, tvam* means the individual soul (*jiva*), and *asi* means 'are already that' i.e you are already the Brahman.

[3] The *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, and the *Vedanta-sutras* or *Brahmasutra* are called the *Prasthanatraya*, because these three sacred books or Scriptures impart the knowledge of the ultimate goal of all human beings. The real meaning of the word *prasthana* is that by which one is established on *tattva* or real truth The *Upanishads* are called *Shruti-prasthana*, the *Bhagavad Gita* is known as *Smriti-prasthana*, and the *Brahmasutras* (the aphorisms of Badarayana) are called *Nyaya-prasthana*. On these three *Prasthanas* Sankara and others have written Commentaries.

for Him to create Himself, then He could create us as individual souls, but if He exists from eternity, so also do we. We do exist from the beginningless past, and shall continue throughout eternity. If we do not exist, God cannot exist. If we are changeable and are subject to birth and death, God Himself will also be subject to birth and death.

That is the point which we are required to understand. Very few can realize it. It is a truth, beyond which no other truth can be greater. It is the highest truth, because it is most difficult to grasp and to understand. At present we feel that we are children of mortals; we have come into existence, stay a little while, have a little attachment to phenomenal forms, and that is the end of it. Our ways are narrow, and we cannot see where we now walk. To our soul-life we are dead and are blind, therefore, we suffer, and are miserable and unhappy. We go from this corner to that, and from this place to another. We search after God, but we never search within, and that is the whole trouble. The moment we realize that this body is the temple of God, and upon the altar of the heart the divine spirit as our true Self is seated, then we do not need any further worship, will not need to go to any church, but will consider the Divinity in our heart.

To such a soul who has realized it, God or the Absolute appears as only true. But those who are groping in the darkness of ignorance, who have no grasp of their true self, who do not understand the true nature of their own being, will wonder from place to place, and remain in darkness and suffer on account of ignorance. Where there is ignorance, there is suffering and misery, and where there is divine knowledge, there is eternal peace and happiness (*sanatana-satya*). Again where there is knowledge, the light of knowledge dispels the darkness of ignorance and reveals our true Self, as well as reveals the universal Being, and makes us realize the absolute unity which exists between the individual souls and the divine Being, from eternity to eternity.

Sri Krishna, the great Teacher of this *Bhagavad Gita*, did not say anything new, nor did he claim to have said anything new, but he came to preach the old truth, to give a new life to it, and to infuse a new spirit. Whatever he expressed in this beautiful dialogue between him and Arjuna standing on the battle-

field of Kurukshetra which represents the battle-field of the world, is a dialogue between the Divine Self and the individual soul. The individual soul is represented by Arjuna, the commander-in-chief, and the soldiers are the sense-powers and mental activities. And Sri Krishna, the divine Self, is teaching the Truth, and opening the eye of the ego, Arjuna, who is standing in the battle-field of the world. Sri Krishna, however, never said anything that had not been expressed in the *Upanishads*, and in the Vedas, long before His advent. He simply emphasized the Truth as did all the great teachers of the world who are worshipped as Incarnations and Saviours of mankind. They never gave anything new, but they gave or infused new life to old truths. How could they give anything new, when there is nothing new except the eternal Truth? But we can give a new expression to the same thing, express it differently, and impress it upon the minds of others to appeal to them, and that is all we can do, but Truth is eternal. It is the most ancient Truth and, at the same time, when we hear it, when we speak of it, it appears as new, it comes like a thunder-bolt as well as a flash of lighting, and that flash destroys all imperfections in the atmosphere of our individual souls, purifies the heart and intellect, and cleanses throughout. Then we are no longer deluded. The self-effulgent sun of divine wisdom rises, and appears to us as shining in his own glory (*sve-mahimni*) above the clouds. The clouds can never conceive of the glory of the infinite Being. Here Sri Krishna says in conclusion: "Listen to the most secret of all My words, because thou art extremely beloved to Me, so I will tell thee what is good"—"इतिते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद गुह्यतरं मया * * यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु"[4]

We must live, therefore, in such a way as to be beloved to the Lord, because that is the condition upon which we shall receive the absolute Truth. A receptive mind we must have, and that receptive mind will attract the Lord and His Truth[5]

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[4] Vide the *Gita*, XVIII. 63.

[5] The Lord and His Truth are one and the same, because the Lord, *Isvara*, or Brahman, manifests Himself or Itself as Divine knowledge which is absolutely devoid of the knower, the known (object), and the

At present when we are egotistic and have a self-sufficient soul, the self cannot obtain the Truth. Throw away your egotism, vanity, self-conceit, and attachment to this and that, never thinking of yourself as great, and be receptive. Do not think that without you the whole world will go to pieces, and remember that nothing will go to pieces. Simply by that kind of thought, you yourself are going to pieces; but the moment you give up such thoughts, you will come to true life and gain vitality, and new spiritual life will come to you. When we as the beloved ones of the Lord are ready to listen to His instructions, then only we can follow Him, and live according to His instructions. Here Sri Krishna, the Divine manifestation, says: "Fix thy mind upon Me"—"मन्माना भव मद्भक्तः"। When the Divine manifestation comes He speaks with authority, and He says. "Follow Me, worship and bow down to Me"—"मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु"। It is not vanity or egotism. It is the knowledge or spiritual realization that makes the message great, and makes them feel one with the Supreme. They do not give any argument, and at the same time they do not require to give any argument. They are not bound to this world, and are not forced to show their strength. Their words are like bombs and come with tremendous force, and, therefore, they have the power to convince everyone, and make everyone believe their blissful words.

"Fix thy mind on Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, and Me shalt thou reach. Truly did I promise unto thee, for thou art dear to Me"—"मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे"। This is the promise He makes. The promise, if you follow Him and worship Him, you will reach Him in the end, and His word is as good as Truth itself. This is the way. Christ said the same way. Christ spoke with same authority. Remember that this message of the *Gita* had been said fourteen hundred years before Christ was born. The same force, the same grandeur, and same realization were behind every word they (all the Saviours) uttered. Again the Lord has said: "Giving up all formalities of reigion, take refuge in Me alone, I will liberate thee from all sins, grieve not. With His strength he promises to liberate

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knowledge (knowing process), the tripartite functions, known as adjuncts or *maya*. *Isvara* or the Absolute is the embodiment of Truth and Divine knowledge.

the individual soul from all sins".[6] Christ promised in the same way, "Come unto me all thou who are heavy laden". These are the same spirit and the same idea.

What about the formalities of religion? What good will they do? Standing up three times, and kneeling down three times, it will never bring realization. Holding the candles this way or that, putting on a new robe every time—this will never bring realization. It is all an outward show and all these are unnecessary if there be no sincerity, hunger for true knowledge, and real desire for God-realization. There is a certain class of minds which must go through all this without true significance. Rituals, ceremonials, symbols, have their values, but they cannot reveal the absolute Truth. It is by taking refuge in God, or in the Truth, that we can get it, and that is the hardest thing to do and to take refuge in the Truth, and not be distracted by these things. We need certain things, and we rouse a little feeling of devotion within us, but what does that devotional feeling amount to? It comes like a flash, and passes away. If it cannot be revealed and bring us nearer to the eternal Truth, it cannot make us feel one with the eternal Being, and what good has He done! So the formalities of religion we will have to give up sooner or later. Vedanta tells us that the sooner you give up the formatlities, the better it will be for you. It is nice to have devotional exercises, but what will they do? 'Take refuge in Truth and Truth alone, and Truth will liberate thee from all sins, grieve not'.

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[6] सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥१८।६६

Madhusudana Sarasvati said:

"केचिद्वर्णधर्माः केचिदाश्रमधर्माः केचित् सामान्यधर्मा इत्येवं सर्वानपि धर्मान् परित्यज्य विद्यमानानविद्यमानान् वा शरणत्वेनानादृत्य मामीश्वरमेवमद्वितीयं सर्वधर्माणामधिष्ठातारं फलदातारं च शरणं व्रज । * * परमानन्दघनमूर्तिमनन्तं श्रीवासुदेवमेव भगवन्तमनुक्षणभावनया भजस्व, इदमेव परमं तत्त्वं नातोऽधिकमस्तीति विचारपूर्वकेण प्रेमप्रकर्षेण सर्वात्मचिन्ताशून्यया मनोवृत्त्या तैलधारावदविच्छिन्नया सततं चिन्तयेत्यर्थः ।"

Here, in this verse, Sri Krishna instructs Arjuna to completely surrender himself to the will of the Almighty, and this surrender should be without any condition.

The Truth here is that which is unchangeable and eternal as well as the source of our existence, intelligence, bliss, and perfection. That is the Truth. It is nameless and formless It may take any name and form, and we may call it Buddha, Krishna, or Allah. Call it by any name or form that appeals to us, it will be good for us. But the question should be asked, as to which appeals to you? If any name or form appeals to you, give that name and form to the Truth, and worship it. If you like to see the Truth in a human form, all right. If you like to give twenty, or one thousand hands to it, all right, but what difference does it make? Truth has neither two hands, nor two thousand hands. One is just as good as another, it is only relative. It may be good for one who likes to have it and to whom it appeals, but if one does not care for any form, let that person worship the Truth as formless. Call it nameless and it does not matter. Simply send your thought without uttering any word, and send your thought towards the eternal Truth. Always feel the presence, and take refuge in God, or in the Absolute, and that will help you. Truth manifests itself through any form, because it is universal. Truth manifests itself through the spiritual Master, or through the divine Incarnations. Truth manifests itself through all the things that we love, whether human, or animal, or inanimate. Truth is all-pervading, but, after all, we must love the Truth, and not that which is changeable, and is subject to birth and death, and that we must not love. Some people may think, what a terrible thing it is that we cannot love that which appeals to us. Well, it is natural to an ordinary mind in ignorance, and anything that is changeable, will appeal to an ordinary mind, but we must outgrow that state, and try to love the Truth, and not to love the form and name. Because name and form are the categories of nescience or *maya*, that changes all the time. Therefore, that which is unchangeable, we must love, and that which is changeable, we must reject. And when we have taken refuge in the Absolute, the eternal unchangeable and permanent something, then we have no fear. Then sins will be pardoned, then mistakes will be corrected, then sorrow will cease, and unbounded happiness will remain.

After declaring this secret Sri Krishna says: "This Truth is never to be taught by Me to one who is devoid of austerities,

nor to one who is not devoted, nor to one who does not serve God, or the spiritual master, or humanity, or to one who speaks ill of Me, but this should be given to those who are austere, devoted and full of service to the Lord, to humanity, and to the great ones, and who always speak that which is good".[7]

In India, these teachings will not be preached among the masses, because when the masses were ready, they would go to the master, and find him out for themselves. The preaching in India is different from that in this country (in the West). Here the preacher preaches, but only a few listen. But, in India, the preacher does not preach, and when the disciples become seekers after Truth, they have that intense longing, they go and ask, and find out first the spiritual teachers. They ask the questions, follow their instructions, and through faithful practice, they attain to the goal. There is no waste of time, no waste of energy, and everything comes in due time. Here (in the West) the preacher may stand in the corner, and preach, and may have his voice heard, but that does not do so much good. That was the reason they never adopted that method in India, and that was not the way to preach the Truth in India. The teacher in India does not go in search after the students, but the students find out where the Truth is. Set an example, and others will come to you. Only spiritual advancement is necessary. No society is required for preaching the Truth. The Truth does not require any temple or church. When the sun rises, you do not require a torch-light in order to see it, and it is not necessary. Truth will remain, and have its own power over everybody. Wherever it goes, it will have a hold, and it cannot help it; and you must remember that nothing but Truth will appeal to your true nature, and nothing that is false and not a part of the Truth, will appeal to your soul.

Sri Krishna says: "Who for extreme love for Me will teach this Supreme Truth to My devotees, he shall ultimately

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7 इदं ते नाऽतपस्काय नाऽभक्ताय कदाचन ।
न चाऽशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥१८।६७

attain to the Eternal"[8], and it must be taught through extreme love. Love is the first thing. If we have no love for Truth in our hearts, we may talk and go on talking, and that will not appeal to anybody. Why cannot the preachers impress the hearers? Because they have no love in their hearts. They are all for ceremony, and they work for money. Where there is search after wealth and earthly prosperity, there cannot be love for Truth. This has been understood most heartily in India, therefore, if anyone preaches for money no one would listen to him. It is in the atmosphere that even the ordinary classes do not care for such a person. Therefore, a preacher of Truth must renounce everything, otherwise he cannot be a preacher in India. How narrow those ideas are? Perhaps, it may be so, but it is there. They are queer in India. If they think that idea is the best of all, they have some reason for it, because love of Truth requires no other reward or return. Where there is true love, there can be no search for a return. That is universal. Christ says the same thing to his disciples when he asked them to go and preach, he said: "Do not take scriptures in your pocket, nor two coats, just go and preach and work; do not have wages, work simply for the love of truth, seek no return". And when Truth is preached through that love, the preacher must attain to the Truth in the end. There is no doubt about it. Then hear: "There is none among men who can serve Me better, nor in this earth shall there be another dearer to Me than such a person".[9] Such a preacher of Truth is the nearest to the Lord. Therefore, he praises the teachers of Truth. The preacher of Truth has very seldom success or material prosperity. The world is not ready for him, and it does not want the Truth. When the world is groping in darkness, it does not want the light. They will sing, "Let us shut our ears and eyes and let us remain merged in it, we do not want to be told that we are not doing right". That is the reason, when a preacher of Truth comes, and speaks the Truth

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8 य इन्दं परमं गुह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः ॥१८।६८

9 न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।
भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥१८।६९

right out, he is never liked. They crucified Christ, and persecuted other great preachers of Truth. Such is the tendency of Truth. You cannot help it. Each one will have to work out his own salvation, that is all, and if you are strong enough to stand the tests and tribulations, you will be able to do something. If you are weak, you will be crushed, you will be tempted, and the world will laugh.

So he is the greatest preacher who preaches the eternal Truth, and one preaching this Truth, gives the greatest service to Truth and humanity. And this *Bhagavad Gita* contains that Truth. Then the Lord says the merit of teaching the *Gita*. "By him who shall study the sacred dialogue between us, I shall be worshipped by the sacrifice of wisdom—this is my conviction".[10] The Lord says, "I shall be worshipped by the sacrifice of wisdom, by one who studies this knowledge". So if you study what will happen? Your spiritual eye will be open, and you will get a glimpse of the eternal Truth. And that is the best way to serve, to worship God and get a glimpse of the eternal Truth through self-knowledge, and when that is done, then we have served the Truth rightly.

Here the Lord describes the merit of hearing the *Gita*. Those who hear attentively and listen to the teachings, what will happen to them? "That man who hears it with faith and without malice, being emancipated, shall attain to the blissful realm of the righteous".[11] If we constantly hear the central truth of Vedanta as given in the *Bhagavad Gita*, if we constantly read or hear it with faith, and without malice, without the feeling of fault-finding, we shall be emancipated from selfishness and other bondage, we shall be able to see that selfishness is not worth-having, and it proceeds from ignorance. We shall not

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10 अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥१८।७०

Sankara said that of the four kinds of sacrifice, such as *vidhi* or ritual, *japa* or a loud prayer (*vachika*), *upamsu* or a prayer uttered in a low voice, and *manasa or* prayer offered with mind. The *jnana-yajna* or wisdom-sacrifice comes under the head of *manasa*, and is, therefore, highest. Thus the *Gita-shastra* is extolled as a *jnana-yajna*

11 श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभाल्लोँकान् प्राप्नुयात् पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥१८।७१

commit any sin, because sin proceeds from ignorance of Truth. When we do not know the Truth, we commit acts which are wrong. And in the end, after death, we shall attain to the blissful realm of the righteous. There are different realms. The righteous perform good deeds, unselfish works, and philanthropic works, so go to still higher realms. Still higher go those who serve God with unselfish love, and there are realms higher than that. So there is not one heaven, there are many. Heaven is the common name of all these higher realms. It is like a generic name given by certain religions. But when we realize different degrees of happiness and peace that exist in these different heavens, we find they are only different realms of existence, and the highest of all realms is the absolute Truth, which very few can reach. Those only who have attained to the realization of spiritual oneness in the Supreme, and transcend all the realms of ancestors, saints, spirits, angels, and even of a personal God, become and remain as eternal Truth always. Then after describing all that the Lord asks Arjuna: "O Arjuna, has it been heard by thee with concentrated mind, and has the delusion of thy ignorance been dispelled? Hast thou heard with concentrated mind all that I have said; and thou become free from all delusion of ignorance? Hast thou understood the truth and what is thy duty?"[12] Then Arjuna answered: "O Krishna, the unchangeable Truth, by Thy grace my delusion is destroyed and I have gained recollection of duty, and I have become free from all doubts and will follow thy instruction".[13] When will the individual soul be able to answer in the same way to the divine Spirit which is constantly speaking within us in the same manner as Sri Krishna spoke to Arjuna, and when shall we be able to say that our doubts have ceased, we have become free from all doubts, we have gained recollection of our own being, and all our delusion is destroyed. When shall we be able to answer in the

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12 कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा ।
कच्चिदज्ञानसन्मोहः प्रणष्टस्ते धनञ्जय ॥१८।७२

13 अर्जुन उवाच—
नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥१८।७३

same way? Any moment when we shall be able to answer in the same way that we have gained self-knowledge, and the result would be the same. If you can say that all your doubts have disappeared, or vanished, your darkness of ignorance is dispersed, your delusion is destroyed, you have realized yourself, your relation to the eternal Spirit, and if you can say that from the bottom of your heart, you have then reached the ultimate goal. Find out what doubts you have, whether you are still in delusion, whether you still make mistake, and identify yourself with the changeable objects of this relative world, whether you think of yourself as an immortal Being and is free from death.

If you feel that way, it is all right. So Arjuna answered that question. You know how many questions arose in Arjuna's mind. He had many questions, many doubts arose in him, from time to time, which we find in these eighteen chapters. Now he says all his questions are answered, his delusion is gone, and he will obey the word of Truth. You will remember that the first chapter begins with a question "When these parties set on the battle-field, what will happen to them?" The speaker describes that at the beginning of the battle Arjuna left his bow and arrow, and said he could not fight. Then Sri Krishna tried to talk to him, and bring courage and strength to him. Then, incidentaly the whole *Gita* is described. These questions Arjuna asked of Sri Krishna, and He answered, and, then in the end, Sanjoy said to the blind monarch, Dhritarastra· "Thus have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Lord Krishna and the great soul Arjuna, which makes the hair stand on end".[14] Such a wonderful dialogue Sanjaya heard He was not present, still he heard it. Then he explains how he heard it. He said that he had heard it. "Through the grace of Vyasa, the one who divided the Vedas, I have heard this Supreme and most secret Yoga direct from Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, Himself declaring it"[15] The Vedas were heard inspira-

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14 इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भूतं रोमहर्षणम् ॥१८।७४

15 व्यासप्रसादाच्च श्रुतवानेनद् (तवानिमं वा) गुह्यमहं परम् ।
योगं योगेश्वरात् कृष्णात् साक्षात् कथयतः स्वयम् ॥१८।७५

tions, handed down from time immemorial, long before the art of writing was known. These had been handed down from memory, and then, after a long time, the great seer and poet, Vyasa, divided these Vedas into four different parts. At first these were one, and afterwards he classified them. He was the one who wrote the *Mahabharata* and many *Puranas*. The *Mahabharata* has one million verses. He repeated these, and this contains the whole history of these ancient monarchs and the mythologies. It is one thousand times greater than any other book. He was one who wrote commentaries on the different philosophies, and the Yogas, and he wrote the Aphorisms on the Vedanta philosophy. He was a great Yogi himself, and he attained to the highest realization. He had wonderful Yoga power.

"Through the grace of Vyasa I have heard this most great Yoga given by the Lord himself" says Sanjay. He received the power of divine ecstatic hearing, and so heard the whole dialogue in ecstasy. In ecstatic hearing, the hearing gradually rises to divine hearing, then it becomes one of the Yoga powers. The Yogis can hear anything, when any sound is uttered or made. So, through the grace of Vyasa Sanjay heard the most secret and supreme Yoga. The *Bhagavad Gita* explains all Yogas, and it is the compendium of all philosophies all sciences. It describes the truth, and tells how that truth can be obtained. The truth of the *Gita* comes direct from Sri Krishna, the Lord of Yoga. All the Yogis worship Him as Master and Lord. He possessed all the Yoga powers which the highest Yogi can possess, and while He was speaking to Arjuna, Sanjay heard, and remembered over and again the wonderful and holy dialogue between them. And remember again and again the most wonderful transformation he said: "O king, remembering every moment this wonderful and holy dialogue between Keshava and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again (18. 76). And remembering every moment the most wonderful form of Hari, great is my wonder, O king; and I rejoice again and again (18.77).[16] Sanjay not only possessed divine hearing, but he had

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16 राजन् संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य संवादमिममद्भुतम्।
केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥

divine vision. When Sri Krishna was transfigured and showed to Arjuna His divine greatness, that He was the Universal, Sanjay had a vision of it. This was the greatest transifiguration that has been described of any divine manifestation. This he say and heard and he mentioned: "Wherever dwell Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, and Arjuna the warrior, there power, prosperity, peace and plenty remain forever. Such is My will".[17]

तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः ।
बिस्मयो मे महान् राजन् हृष्यामि च पुणः पुणः ॥१८।७७
यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थ धनुर्धरः ।
तत्र श्रीर्बिजयो भूति ध्रुबानीति मतिर्मम ॥१८।७८

CHAPTER LXV

CONCLUSION

We have discussed about all the sublime teachings or messages of the *Bhagavad Gita* delivered by Sri Krishna, the Divine Incarnation of God as well as a Man of Realization. These teachings or messages are impregnated with spiritual thoughts and ideas and divine inspirations as they came out from the mouth of Him who is Himself the personified Truth or Divinity. These teachings of the *Gita* are not only meant for the men of realization, or for the godly men, but also for all classes of people of every walk of life. These messages are purely ethical, psychological, religious, and spiritual, and they animate and elevate the minds and levels of consciousness of all kinds of men, along with purification of the mind, or divine transformation of the human nature.

I have already said before that the sublime messages of the *Gita* were delivered in dialogue form between the two heroes, Sri Krishna and Arjuna in the battle-field of Kurukshetra, where the leaders and the soldiers of the two parties, Pandava and Kaurava, assembled. The battle of the Kurukshetra was a righteous battle, and it was the struggle or fight for the emancipation of the soul from the bondage of ignorance and worldliness, or it can be called the battle for the freedom of the soul.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is one of the most important works of Vedanta, because it contains the essence of all religions. It also contains extracts of all the *Upanishads* which impart highest spiritual knowledge or wisdom. You may think that so many various sects have been lately started some scriptures or teachings which contain some new truth, perhaps we would not find in the *Gita*, but if you study the *Bhagavad Gita* carefully and understand the central meaning of every word that was uttered by the Divine Manifestation in the form of Sri Krishna, you will find that He left out nothing, and His messages are all-inclusive. His messages have embraced all the sects and sectarian ideas, all philosophies and sciences, which have come into existence, or that may come in future.

His messages are like a vast ocean in which all the rivers of all religions, religious and spiritual ideas and thoughts with their different views and methods were mingled, and lost their separate entities. His messages have a spirit of amity and love, which remove all discords and disharmonies that lie in all religious sects and faiths. It is a fact that when we understand or realize the central truth of the *Bhagavad Gita*, we understand or realize also the truth that will be discovered in future, or was discovered in the past, because truth is one, and all discoveries of truth are only certain phases of the same eternal Truth.

We have studied the eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavad Gita*, and these eighteen chapters can be divided into three parts, containing six chapters in each, and these three parts correspond to the three parts of that sentence 'Thou art that' or तत् त्वम् असि i.e. 'the individual soul (*jiva*) is no other than the Brahman'.

Sri Krishna, the Divine Speaker, was also recognised as an expert and wise Man of politics, and His politics or political thoughts and ideas were not devoid of ethics or moral laws and values as well as religious fervour and so He delivered the divine messages of the *Gita* in the battle-field of Kurukshetra which was known as the sacred Dharmakshetra—"*dharmakshetre kurukshetre*". His messages cover the entire field of spiritual *sadhana* consisting of different methods like Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga, and Jnana Yoga. His messages are, therefore, living inspiration to them who live in this world of duties or actions making them above all kinds of selfish motive and desire of the delusive phenomena.

Sri Krishna was Himself a perfect Man of duties and actions and a great warrior, and so He never said anyone to remain inactive and passive in this world of action, but instructed all to do their duties towards all worldly men and creatures without asking any return or fruits of actions, or to do actions in the spirit of worship of God.

It is also the opinions of all the savants of the world that the *Bhagavad Gita* does not in any way inculcate the eradication of all desires, but it enjoins sublimation of selfish desires into altruistic desires. It has said about renunciation of desires and attachment (*sannyasa*), but does not enjoin a feelingless and desireless life of action. The *Gita* says that

renunciation of actions is not true kind of renunciation, as this kind of renunciation never leads men to perfection, or never promises them eternal freedom. The Lord says: "Not by abstaining from action does a man win actionlessness (*naiskarma*), nor by mere renunciation does he attain perfection" (III. 4). Dedication of fruits of actions to God is true renunciation, and performance of the specific duties without attachment and aversion and desire for fruits or results (of work) is the best of actions. So fruits of actions should be dedicated to God in the spirit of worship, and the *Gita* really enjoins a life of dedication of all actions to God, the Purushottama Whatever action is done, whatever is eaten or spoken, whatever is given in charity, whatever is offered in a sacrifice, and whatever penances or practices are undergone, should be selflessly dedicated to God, and then the active life will be a detached life, and should be a dedicated and sanctified life, which is known as *atmasamarpana-yoga*, and then a man lives, moves, and has his being in God, without feeling that he is the agent of any action. Then he lives for the rest of the world, and lives not for himself, and so his life is recognised as a life of dedication and sacrifice. Then his body and soul become the playground of the Almighty. This *naishkarma-karma-yoga* is a unique contribution to the world of ethics, and this example is not found anywhere except India. We know that Kant's ethics, or science of morals, or 'concept of right', teaches duty for duty's sake under the moral law or *categorical imperative*, but Kant's ethics of *naishkarma* or duty for duty's sake involves the concept of right and obligatory duty, whereas the *naishkarma-karma-yoga* as depicted in the *Bhagavad Gita*, involves the concept of good i.e. highest good superior to right. Further we must remember that Karma Yoga as taught by the *Gita*, does not involve the sense of duty only, but the sense of love also, and so *karmas* or actions ordained by the *Gita*, require no diction or obligation, but are performed as work for work's sake without any hope of return or result which creates no bondage, but helps to go beyond all bindings and delusion.

The messages of the *Bhagavad Gita* teach also philosophy and psychology of love. The messages of the *Gita* rather lay emphasis upon true kind of love which knows no condition or contract or selfish motive, but love for love's sake, or for love

for God. This kind of unselfish and causeless love is accompanied by absolute faith and devotion, and the *Gita* says that this love (*prema*) may be known as the precondition of the consummation of knowledge, known as *jnana-nistha*, which brings freedom to the soul and cuts asunder all knots of nescience or *maya*.

Some say that the *Gita* does teach the real tenet or doctrine of *bhakti* or devotion as the Pancharatra and Vaishnava literature teach. But that is not correct, because the *Gita* teaches *bhakti* which helps men to develop their faith upon God, as well as their love for God which make them surrender to the will of the Almighty so as to go beyond egoistic idea and selfishness. When a man goes beyond the sense of 'I', his small 'I' (*kancha-ami*) merges into the depth of greater 'I' (*pakka-ami*), and then his mind or heart is purified, and that purification brings consciousness of the eternal bliss and emancipated condition of the self, and he realizes the *Atman*, the ultimate goal.

The *Gita* admits grace which comes from God as a reward for pure and dedicated mind. The grace is universal, and does not mean predestination, as Christianity thinks. Grace is a state of relaxation, and it comes under certain conditions. Anything that is spiritually uplifting and ennobling,—anything that brings right knowledge to the soul, comes from that all-powerful infinite source, and that is grace. We are the children of God, and by our birthright we possess grace of God.

The *Gita* teaches also Raja Yoga, which helps a man for reducing his mind into pure consciousness or *chit* through the process of concentration and meditation so as to get the eternal light of the superconscious state or *samadhi*. In the superconscious state a man communes with the absolute Reality, and realizes that he is not the body, mind, nervous system, sense-organs, and intellect, but is the master of everything, and the supreme soul or *Paramatman*, and individual souls (*jivatman*) are the manifestations of that greater Soul or Divinity.

The *Bhagavad Gita* declares that Jnana Yoga is the highest path to reach the Absolute, because it teaches the method of knowledge that helps to discriminate the right from the wrong, the reality from the unreality, and light from darkness. The knowledge of unreality is known as ignorance or *maya* which binds men in the den of delution, and makes them forget their

real essence, the *Atman*, which shines all the time in the hearts of all beings. The path of knowledge or *Jnana Yoga*, teaches all to get rid of the limitations of time, space, and causation, which is known as the limiting adjuncts or *maya*. The path of knowledge or Jnana Yoga brings the idea of complete identity of the individual soul with the supreme Soul or the Brahman. Further Jnana Yoga, or the Sankhya Yoga, as has been taught by the *Gita*, teaches that the world of phenomena being changing, is deceitful and unreal, and the *Atman* is the only unchanging real substance amidst the changes of the phenomenal world. The *Gita* further teaches that the nature of the living beings and worldly things are made up of three *gunas*, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, which constitute the staff of the primordial Nature or *Prakriti*. The *Prakriti* is the product of nescience or *maya*, and is inert and so it creates the world and regulates the works of the world with the help of the *Purusha*, but it cannot take men to the alter of the Absolute. So those who aspire and strive hard to reach the Absolute, will have to go beyond the reign of *Prakriti* to realize the Absolute. The Absolute is not reached by mind or intellect, and reason, as it is super-sensible and super-rational transcendental substance, nay, it is the realization itself, and involves no tripartite functions of the knowledge, the knowable and the knower (*jnana*, *jneya* and *jnata*). In fact, says the *Gita*, these tripartite functions are included in the domain of nescience or *ajnana*, and they have no power to bring eternal bliss and knowledge of the transcendental Absolute.

The *Bhagavad Gita* teaches theism, but does not ignore monism. It regards God as the supreme and perfect Man or Purushottama, which is known as the trans-empirical supreme principle that transcends both *Kshara* and *Akshara*. The *Kshara* is the infinite mobile spirit which is manifested in the incorporate body of the conscious embodied souls, whereas the *Akshara* or *Akshara-Purusha* is the infinite immobile static Spirit which transcends the *Kshara* or infinite mobile Spirit. In fact, God as Purushottama, the Supreme Principle, goes beyond both, but is not an abstract universal principle, but is the concrete and determinate Spirit, the embodiment of consciousness, existence, and bliss.

Sometimes we find in the *Gita* both the personal and im-

personal—determinate and indeterminate—immanent and transcendent—aspects of the Supreme Principle, which is the cause and ground of the infinite immobile Spirit, the Purushottama and, in this respect, the *Gita* creates a bridge between the determinate (*saguna*) and the indeterminate (*nirguna*) Brahman, between dualism (or qualified non-dualism) and monism or non-dualism.

The *Gita* does not prescribe a rigid spiritual practice for all, and so it admits dualism, qualified non-dualism, and non-dualism in the field of spiritual progress of a man. Because the *Gita* admits the fact that taste and temperament of a man differ from those of others, and as the world is a composite body of manifoldness, so the tendency of mind and choice of different men vary or differ from one another There must, therefore, be different faiths, methods, and spiritual practices (*sadhana*) to reach their goal. The *Gita* holds, at the same time, that *isms* may differ, faiths and spiritual practices may differ, but the ultimate goal is one and the same. Different rivers may originate from different snowy mountains and may flow through different channels, but their ultimate goal is to reach one and the same ocean. Similarly, men of different tastes, temperaments, and choices may adopt different faiths and spiritual practices, but their ultimate goal is to reach God, or to the *Atman* or Brahman, which is the Soul of their souls, and the Essence of all faiths and religions. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, the Saviour of the nineteenth century, also realized and preached the same doctrine—*yata mata tata patha* i.e. religious faiths and practices are manifold, but the ultimate goal, the attainment of Godconsciousness is one and the same

Further the *Bhagavad Gita* holds an universal viewpoint and vision, because it says that all faiths, all religions and all religious sects, and spiritual practices (*sadhanas*) are true, because all offer the same guarantee for attaining emancipation of the soul, if there remains whole-hearted effort, sincerity, and love for freedom. So, Sri Krishna says in the *Gita*. "Whosoever comes to me through whatsoever path, he reaches Me, the Supreme Reality, and there is no doubt about it" (4.11). In this respect, the *Gita* condemns all kinds of dogmatic faith and sectarian religion which assert that men should follow only this or that path, and salvation will come through a speci-

fied and chosen creed and practice. It rather says that egoism, vanity, short-sightedness, and selfishness are the obstacles to the path of spiritual progress, so those obstacles should be avoided, and our minds or hearts should be expanded and opened to the blissful Light of the self-effulgent Reality, and then we shall be able to go beyond the relativity of time, space, and causation, and that means we shall transcend the limitation of delusion or *maya*, and reach our choosen goal, the *Atman* or Brahman.

The *Gita* being an extract or essence of all *Upanishads* or Vedanta, teaches the Atman-Brahman universal Principle, which unites both the individual and the universal (*vyasthi* and *samasthi*) and the immanent and the transcendent Reality. The unique doctrine of the *Bhagavad Gita*, therefore, teaches absolute faith and confidence upon one's ownself, and says that so long as a man does not believe himself as the divine spark or manifestation of the *Atman* or Brahman, and so long as he does not recognize himself as an immortal son of God the Absolute, he will not be able to enter into the kingdom of God. He will have to break the chain of delusion and shall have to dedicate his individual self upon the altar of the universal Self, and then he will realize his real existence and essence which is all-bliss, serene happiness, and unbounded peace.

OM TAT SAT

ERRATA

BHAGAVAD GITA, PART II

Page	Read	instead of
523	कर्तुमव्यम्	कर्तमव्यम्
525	मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि	...वर्त्मानि
530	तथा सर्बाणि	तथ सर्बाणि
530	मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय	मत्स्थनी...
532	gas	gass
534	स्वप्नदृगिव	स्वप्नद्गमिव
545	यज्ञः	यज्ञं
547	तपाम्यहमहं	तपम्येहमहं
549	त्रैविद्या	त्रैविद्य
549	स्वर्गलोकं	स्वर्गलाकं
551	मां ये	मां से
551	यजन्त्यबिधि	यजन्ताबिधि
559	द्वेष्योऽस्ति	व्देष्योऽस्ति
561	साधुरेव	साधुरेबं
565	मन्मना	मन्माना
565	माभेवैष्यसि	माभेवेष्यसि
567	महर्षीणाञ्च	महीणाञ्च
579	मेबानुकम्पर्थं	...नुकम्पार्थं
585	योगिंस्तां	योगिंस्तां
590	lila	lita
595	आयुधानामहं बज्रं धेनूनामस्मि क्रामधुक्। प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि बासुकिः।१०।२८	
596	disclosed	discosed
598	यथात्थ	यथत्थ
599	सृष्टिस्थिति (Anandagiri)	मृष्टिस्थिति
601	...मानेकधा	मानेकधा
601	Sloka No. 11.13	11.913
601	देबांस्तब	देबास्तब

Page	Read	instead of
603	दृष्टाऽद्भुतं	दृष्टाद्भुतं
603	महात्मन्	माहात्मम्
603	जगन्निबास	जगन्निबास
605	ग्रसमानः	ग्रममानाः
605	भवन्तमाद्यं	भवन्माद्यं
608	त्वमुत्तिष्ट	त्तमुत्तिष्ट
608	तथाऽन्यानपि	तथन्यानपि
611	रक्षांसि	रक्षांस
613	सर्वत एव सर्वे	एव सर्वे
613	प्रमादात्	प्रसादात्
613	तत्समक्षं	तत्मसक्षं
618	सततयुक्ता ये	...ते
620	संनियम्येन्द्रिय	संनियमेद्रिय
620	सर्वभूतहिते रताः	सवभूतहितेरतः
620	कूटस्थ (footnote)	कूनस्थं
629	समाधातुं	समाधातु
629	मामिच्छास्तु	माम्च्छास्तं
640	disturbing	disturbibng
647	धर्मामृतमिदं	धर्मातृतामिदं
651	Madhusudana Sarasvati (footnote)	
653	निरस्तसर्वोपाधिना	...पाधिना
668	सेबित्वमरतिर्जुन	त्वरतिर्जन
670	In old age,	In old ag.
675	सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम्	शिरामुखम्
675	Of Course	O course
675	sense relations	...relations
676	तदन्तरस्य	तदन्रस्य
677	drop 'these heads'	...
677	श्रोता, घ्राता	घ्राता
685	बिद्यनादी	बिद्यानादी
685	कार्यकरणकर्तत्वे	कार्यकारण

Page	Read	instead of
693	intelligent	intelligence
694	ego (*vishayi*)	... *vishaya*
694	*Madhyamikas*	*Madhyamikas*
697	The intelligence of the individual ego is the	..
697	आत्मानं आत्मनेति (footnote)	अत्मानं...
705	श्रुत्वाऽनेभ्य	श्रुत्वाऽनेम्य
709	स पश्यति	स पश्ति
709	न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं	हिनस्त्यात्मानं
713	in same way	same way
716	as much as	asmuchas
717	त्रकृत्यैब	प्रकृतैब
724	क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेबमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा । भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षञ्च ये बिदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥	
728	सर्वभूतानां सर्वकार्येभ्यः महत्तात् भरणाच्च सर्वबिकाराणां महद्ब्रह्मेति योनिरेव बिशिष्यते (footnote)	
728	गर्भं	गर्भ
731	When the spiritual influx and indestructible, then it is	
735	निर्मलत्वात्	निर्मलबात्
737	प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति	स्तान्निबध्नाति
738	रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय	श्चाभिभूयं
749	उदासीनबदासीनो	उदासीनबदासनो
754	crucifying	crusifying
756	बासुदेबमव्यभिचारेण	बासुगेबमव्य
757	द्वादशाध्यायोक्तेन	द्वादशाधयोक्तन
758	ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाऽममृतस्याव्ययस्य च । शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ।१४।२७	
763	स वेदबित्	स वेदावित्
766	अधश्चोर्ध्वं	अधश्चोर्ध्व (१५।२)
771	सुबिरूढ़मूल	सुबिरूचमूल

Page	Read	instead of
771	निवर्तन्ति भूयः	...मूयः
773	अध्यात्मनित्या	अध्यात्मनित्य
775	But since	Since
779	यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः	...क्रमतीश्वरः
781	रसनं	बसनं
781	मनश्चायं	मनश्चायः
782	पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः	चक्षुचक्षुषः
787	तत्तेजो	तत्ते
790	सर्वेरहमेब	सर्वेरहमेब
794	क्षरः	क्षर
797	बिभर्त्यव्यय...ईश्वरः	बिभर्तव्यय...ईश्वर
799	नारायणस्य	नरायणस्य
801	हीरचापलम्	हीरचापलम्
801	शौचमद्रोहो	नाद्रोहो
802	दम्भो	दत्भो
802	१६।५	मे ६५
810	कामहैतुकम्	कामदेतुकम्
810	प्रभबन्त्युग्रकर्माणः	...प्रकर्माणि
810	जगतोऽहिताः	जगतोपहिताः
810	काममाश्रित्य	काममाश्रित्यः
810	गृहीत्वाऽसद्ग्राहान्	गृहीत्वपसद्
	...प्रवर्तन्तेऽ	...प्रबर्पन्तेऽ
811	कामोपभोगपरमा	कामोपभोगपरमा
811	भोगार्थमन्यायेना	भोगार्थमिन्या
811	असौ मया	असो मया
811	कोऽन्योऽस्ति	कोऽनोऽस्ति
813	क्षिप्राम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेब योनिषु ।	
813	आसुरीं	असुरी
813	नरकस्येदं	नारकान्येदं
813	एतैर्बिमुक्तः	एतैर्बियुक्तः
815	...शास्त्रबिधिमुत्सृज्य	बिधिसुत्सृज्य

Page	Read	instead of
817	That faith is a blind faith	That religion is
817	science (line 36)	scince
825	सात्त्विका	सत्त्विका
835	स्वाध्यायाभ्यसनं	स्वाध्यायाभ्यासनं
836	मौनमात्मबिनिग्रहः	मारगबिनिग्रहः
841	असत्कृतमवज्ञातं	...कृतमज्ञातं
850	ब्रह्मणस्त्रिबिधः	स्त्रिबिध्वि
850	बिहिताः (१७।२३)	बिहिता
850	बिबिधाः (१७।२५)	बिबिधा
850	सच्छब्दः (१७।२६)	सच्चब्द्
851	तत् प्रेत्य	तं प्रेत्य
855	योगिनाम् (३।३)	योगिनाम् (२।३)
855	ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं	...नग्धकर्माणं
855	त्यक्तात्मशुद्धये	त्यत्त्वात्मशुद्धये
855	निरग्निर्न (६।१)	निग्निर्न
855	तं बिद्धि (६।२)	र्त बिद्धि
856	केशिनिषूदन	निषुदन
860	काम्यानां	कम्यानां
860	सकलकाम्य	...सकल
865	ज्ञाननिष्ठान्	ज्ञबिनिष्ठान्
867	कार्यमेव तत्	कार्थमेव तत्
870	फले सक्तो	सक्तो
870	and be prepared	and prepared
874	शक्यं (१८।११)	शक्थं
874	त्यभिधीयते (१८।११)	त्यभिधियते
884	प्रोक्तबान	प्रोत्तबान
884	रहस्यं	रहस्थं
885	सिद्धये	सिद्धये
897	ज्ञेयं	ज्ञेथं
906	अबिभक्तं	जबिभक्तं

Page	Read	instead of
907	रागी [१८।२७]	रोगी
907	गुणतस्त्रिबिधं	गुणतास्त्रिबिधं
907	कार्याकार्ये	कार्याकार्थे
908	कार्यञ्चाकार्यमेव	कार्थाञ्चाकार्थ
908	दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा	हुर्मधा सा
929	...प्रसादजम्	प्रसाद्रजम्
931	बिषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्	बिषयेन्द्रिप...
931	तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम्	तद्ग्र...
932	तत्त समन्वयात् (footnote)	तत्तसमन्वयात्
934	यदग्रे	यदग्ने
937	स्वभाबप्रभवैर्गुणैः	प्रभावैर्गुणैः
940	क्षान्ति...	शन्ति
944	...बाणिज्यं	बाणिज़्थं
972	धृत्यात्मानं	धृत्यात्यनं
972	बिषयांस्त्यत्त्वा	बिषयांस्त्यत्त्वा
973	ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा	ब्रह्ममूतः प्रसन्नत्मा
974	तदनन्तरम् (footnote)	तदनन्तम्
983	त्वमहण्डकारान्न	तमहण्डकारान्न
988	यन्त्रारूढ़ानि मायया	मायपा
988	सर्वेषां जनानां (footnote)	जबानां
991	ज्ञानमाख्यातं	माख्यार्त
995	इति ते	इतिते
999	न चाऽशुश्रूषबे	शुश्रूषबे
1000	य इदं	य इन्द्रं
1000	भक्तिमयि	भक्ति
1001	धर्म्य॑	धर्म॑
1001	पुण्यकर्माणाम्	पुण्यकर्माणाम्
1002	तत्प्रसादान्	तत्प्रमादान्

Page	Read	instead of
1004	संबादमिमबाद्भुतम्	...मद्भुतम्
1004	केशबार्जुनयोः	केशबार्जनयोः
1005	रूपमत्यद्भुतं	...मत्यद्भुतं
1005	भूतिर्ध्रुबा नीतिर्मतिर्मम	ध्रूबा