

## Newsletter on Bhagavad Gita by Dr. P.V. Nath

The following text is a compilation of the single issues of a regular newsletter by e-mail, composed by Dr. Pathikonda Viswambara Nath. It includes the original slokas of the Gita as well as the transliteration, translation and commentaries by Dr. Nath.

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**OM SAHA NAVAVATU SAHA NAU BHUNAKTU  
SAHA VEERYAM KARAVAVAHAI  
TEJASWI NAVADHEETAMASTU  
MAA VID VISHAVAHAI**

**May He protect us both (the teacher and the pupil)**

**May He cause us both to enjoy (the Supreme)**

**May we both exert together (to discover the true inner meaning of the scriptures)**

**May our studies be thorough and fruitful.**

**May we never misunderstand each other.**

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The Gita is in the form of dialogue between Krishna, the preceptor and the disciple Arjuna. Sanjaya, the narrator to King Dhritarashtra, intercepts now and then with a comment of his own. There are a total of 18 chapters with 701 verses (slokas.) Each of the chapters has a title and the title ends with the word "Yoga".

The word "**Yoga**" is derived from the word "Yuj" which means "Unite."

Study of every chapter assists the seeker to unite with the Lord and hence the use of the word "Yoga."

The seeker is he/she who is looking for attaining the union with the "Parabrahman" and experience the "Eternal Bliss." In Sanskrit the name for the word "seeker" is "Sadhaka". The efforts of the sadhaka is known as "Sadhana".

To undertake the task, the seeker must have "Faith" and "Devotion" in the subject, the teacher and "Parabrahman."

## Chapter 10: VIBHUTI YOGA

### INTRODUCTION

What is “Vibhuti”?

“The Sacred Ash” is the “Vibhuti”.

One may wonder as to what it really means.

The word “Vibhuti” has to be split into “Vibhu” and Bhuti”.

“Vibhu”:

Being everywhere

Extending far

Omnipresent.

“Bhuti”:

Thriving

Existence

Mighty power

Welfare

Being.

There are many meanings for the word “Vibhuti”:

Glory

Penetrating

Pervading

Plentiful

Abundant

Mighty powerful

Presiding over

Multiplication

Expansion.

This chapter deals with the glory of the Supreme Parabrahman and hence the title “Vibhuti Yoga”. To recognise His presence we need to understand His glory which is His presence in all beings and in all situations. This has to be from the highest instrument of perception which is “The Intellect.” Whatever impulses that are brought in by the senses to the mind have to be analysed by the intellectual capacity of reasoning. The perception of “Divinity” in all helps us to respond properly to the impulses received.

It is said that Lord Shiva loves the ash and smears His body with the ash. We need to analyse this belief and see its real significance.

Any object when burnt turns into ash. The object had a name, form, qualities attached to it before it was burnt. It had an individuality of its own. When burnt, the object loses its name, form and qualities.

The name, form and qualities in humans are indirectly responsible for development of “Ego”. The more qualities give the individual the “Balam” (strength). The strength makes the individual arrogant. Strength and arrogance make him/her to go for objects of desire (kama). As we have learnt before, this makes room for development of “Krodha” (anger). All of these make the “Ego” stronger.

In contrast, when burnt and turned into ash, there is no more individuality left. In a pile of ash one cannot recognise “the individual”.

Lord Shiva loves to smear vibhuti because it has no “ego” in it. The ash from the king and beggar are no different to each other.

In Shiva Puranam there is an episode where Kama Deva (the Lord of Love) once directed the arrow on to the chest of Lord Shiva so that He would wake up from His meditation, take notice of Parvathi and fall in love with Her. The intention was noble but it did get Shiva angry. He opened up His third eye and burnt Kama Deva to ashes. Just to cut the story short, Shiva on request by Rati (wife of Lord of Love) brings him back to life but with no eyes. There is a saying that love is blind and this episode highlights the same.

“Vibhuti Yoga” is the description of the glory of the Lord who resides inside all as the Atman.

So far through the nine chapters of the sacred text, we have been given an understanding of the “Power within” which keeps us all alive. The “Supreme” abides in all with no differences between rich and poor, between various groups of people irrespective of age, sex, creed, religion etc. This is the “secret” of Parabrahman which we learnt in chapter 9.

In reply to Arjuna’s question as how to see “The Power” within, where to find it and how to recognise it, we are now given a detailed teaching of the “Presence of Supreme” in all forms and types of life as the knowledge of His glory fosters devotion in the spiritual seeker. This chapter deals in great detail with the manifold forms of the Supreme Lord.

For the benefit of those who would like to know about the great names brought out in this chapter by the Lord, I have used this opportunity to research into the various mythological stories and legends concerning those names the Lord has brought out and included the same in my explanations.

Two quotes to end this introduction:

Sloka 6, nirvana shatkam, adi shankaracharya:

Aham Nirvi Kalpo Nirakara Roopaha,  
Vibhuthwascha Sarvathra Sarvendriyanaam,  
Na Cha Sangatham Naiva Mukthir Na Meya  
Chidananada Roopa Shivoham, Shivoham

I am formless and devoid of all dualities,  
I exist everywhere and pervade all senses,  
Always I am the same,  
I am neither free nor bonded,  
I am pure knowledge and supreme bliss, I am Shiva,  
I am all auspiciousness, I am Shiva.

Sri Ramakrishna:

“But be not conceited that your concept alone of Him as the finale. In the course of your sadhana you will come to know by His grace that His attributes and forms are inexhaustible.”

**Sloka 1**

**SRI BHAGAWAN UVACHA:  
BHOOYA EVA MAHABAHU SHRUNU ME’ PARAMAM VACHAHA  
YAT TEHAM PRIYAMANAYA VAKSHYAMI HITAKAMYAYA**

**The Lord said:**

**Once again, O mighty armed Arjuna, listen to My Supreme words. As you find delight in My words, I, wishing your welfare, will declare unto you all about it.**

Bhooyaha: again;

Eva: verily;

Shrunu: hear;

Me': My;

Vachaha: word;

Yat: which;

Te': to you;

Aham: I;

Priyamanaya: who is beloved;

Vakshyami: will declare;

Hitakamyaya: wishing welfare.

The sloka brings out the love and compassion of the guru to his disciple. Arjuna had requested the Lord to guide him on the right path and expel the ignorance. Sri Krishna accepted the request and took Arjuna as His disciple.

During the narration so far, Krishna must have observed the body language of His disciple. He was sure that Arjuna was keen to listen to the words of his master and found delight in listening to the same.

The next point to note is the words of compassion: "hitakamyaya." "Wishing your welfare I will teach you the means to overcome the ignorance" is the meaning behind these words. Indirectly, this is the message for all the sincere spiritual seekers who find delight in listening to the words of the master. Sri Krishna wants us to know that He wishes the welfare of all and would like to be the guide to lead us in the correct path of wisdom.

This should enhance the confidence we have in Him and we should faithfully follow His teaching so that we can implement His teaching in our life and be His instruments for Universal Welfare.

## **Sloka 2**

**NA ME' VIDUH SURAGANHA PRABHAVAM NA MAHARSHAYAHA  
AHAM ADIHI DEVANAAM MAHARSHEENAM CHA SARVASHAHA**

**Neither the hosts of devas, nor the great rishis know my origin. I am in every way, the source of all devas and rishis.**

Na me': not My;

Viduhu: know;

Sura ganaha: the hosts of Devas;

Prabhavan: origin;

Na: not;

Maharshayaha: the great rishis;

Adi: beginning;

Hi: for;

Devanaam: of the Devas;

Maharsheenaam: of the great rishis;

Ca: and;  
Sarvashah: in every way.

The Hindu believes that the Devas and rishis are the most ancient beings that existed on this earth. Bhagawan is saying that even they came after Him and came from Him, but they are also unaware of His origin.

Devas are said to be divine, illumined souls. They are also considered as deities and worshipped as such by the Hindus.

The rishis are ascetics, sages and inspired poets.  
Maharshis are great sages.

The origin of even the Devas and Maharshis is attributed to the “Supreme Parabrahman/the Divine Primordial Energy” with no name or form.

The Supreme is the father/mother of all the life on this Universe.

The Devas are said to have their abode in the worlds above the earth: bhuva, suva, maha, Janaha, Tapaha and Satya Lokas.

The Maharshis are on this earth but are said to have the power to visit the other lokas. (planes of existence)

It is important to remember the simple fact of life:

The son will not know the origin of father and the father does not know the origin of his father and so on and so forth.

The same logic applies to this sloka. As devas and maharshis arise from Him, He is their father/mother. Hence they also do not know of His birth.

The Lord is the source of all that was present yesterday, is present today and will be present tomorrow.

But the devas and Maharshis do understand and recognise the presence of the Supreme everywhere, His Leela and His maya whereas we are ignorant of this Truth and live in the web of “ego” created by our own selves.

### **Sloka 3**

**YO MAAM AJAM ANADIM CHA VETTI LOKA MAHESWARAM  
ASAMMUDAHA SA MARTYESHU SARVA PAPAHI PRAMUCHYATE**

**He, who knows Me as birth-less, without beginning, the Lord of all the worlds, he, among mortals is freed from all sins.**

Maam: Me;  
Ajam: birth-less;  
Anadim: without beginning;  
Vetti: knows;  
Loka maheswaram: Lord over all the lokas/worlds;  
Saha: he;  
Martyeshu: among mortals;  
Asammudaha: without delusion;  
Sarva papaihi: from all sins;  
Pramuchyate: freed.

Three attributes of the Lord are given in this sloka.

They are:

Ajam

Anadim

Loka Maheswaran

As a matter of fact, this has been stressed by Lord so many times already. This has been so because unless we understand these qualities we attribute to Him, we will not make any progress in our spiritual path.

What is sin?

Sin is an act contrary to the sastras. The result being “suffering” sooner or later for such acts. “Suffering” in turn brings pain/sorrow. Knowingly or unknowingly; the present moment or in the past (including past births) we would all have committed a number of mistakes.

There is a higher divine power that takes note of all our actions, both good and bad. We do enjoy the returns for good actions and suffer pain as a consequence of bad actions.

The results for the action conducted, we have discussed before do not come when we want to but when the Almighty decides it is the right time. It is possible that what we are experiencing now may be due to the actions many births ago and also true that the consequences of what we have done now may come many births later.

How do we get freed from the results of such “sins”?

In His Absolute state of “Sat, Chit, Ananda” “He” is unknown and un-knowable by the mortals. Hence we have to understand Him through these three qualities.

It is no use to remember them and repeat the same like a parrot.

We should know who He is, what His qualities are and what His power are.

Who is He?

He is “Ajah”: birth-less.

Every living entity in this world has a beginning and an end except the Almighty who is “Nirguna, Nirakara” (no qualities and no form). The designation given to Him by the seers is “Parabrahman”. The question: “which came first, the egg or the chicken?” does not apply to Parabrahman. The Primordial Energy with a desire to create and play with the creation “Leela” brought out the life into this world. In course of time so many different forms of life have come into this world. Some forms of life are extinct. “He”, “The Energy” remains constant at all times. It is true that He does incarnate by His free will for the protection of righteous, destruction of evil and to uphold dharma. He descends on to this world by His free will and returns back to His abode also by His free will. Because of this He is known as “Anadi”, without beginning.

Loka Maheswaran: “He” is therefore the Lord of all the worlds. We have to understand it as the “Lord over all the worlds of perception.” Whatever we see from the physical body, understand by the mind and analyse by the intellect becomes “Our Loka.” Each one of us lives in our own loka/world many a times. As a society, we have an agreed concept of the physical geographical world and the space and we accept it at an individual level and this is also included as our loka. As all of this is pervaded and alive because of the presence of “Energy”, hence the sastras declare “Him” as the “Loka Maheswara.”

There is another explanation for “Loka Maheswaran.”

There are three states of existence:

Jagrata - wakefulness  
Swapna - dream  
Sushupti - deep sleep

We live in any of the three worlds at any one time in a day.

There is a fourth state known as “Turiya”.

Jagrata, Swapna and Sushupti are possible only when we are alive. Each one of these states needs the “Life Force” to be present to function. “Life Force” is the common factor. It remains as a witness for each of these three states. The Parabrahman, who remains as the “Life Force” is therefore the Lord and “He” becomes the “Loka Maheswara.”

We should know Him with these three attributes. It is of no use just by knowing these facts but we need to understand it with a deep spiritual apprehension of the Reality. This is possible when we learn the art of constant meditation on the Truth and live the life of “Truth” at all times.

He who has purified his mind by this process is “sinless”.  
“Freed from all sins” says the Lord.

How?

We are living the life of delusion by getting attached to the physical body and the world around. By realising that we are limited by “space, time and causation” and the Lord is beyond these three we are able to be free of all delusions. Once the delusion is gone by His grace, we are freed of all sins. (Because there is no more body identification and no sense of “I” ness).

#### **Sloka 4 - 5**

**BUDDIR JNANAM ASAMMOHAHA KSHAMA SATYAM DAMAH SHAMAHA  
SUKHAM DUKHAM BHAVO BHAVO BHAYAM CHA ABHAYAMEVA CHA**

**AHIMSA SAMATA TUSHTIS TAPO DANAM YASHO YASHAHA  
BHAVANI BHAVA BHOOTANAM MATTA EVAM PRUTHAGVIDHAHA**

**Intelligence, wisdom, non-delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, self-restraint, calmness, happiness,  
pain, birth or death, fear or fearlessness**

**Non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame, ill-fame - these different kinds of  
qualities of beings arise from Me alone.**

Buddhir: intellect;  
jnanam: intelligence/wisdom;  
asammohaha: non-delusion;  
kshama: forgiveness;  
satyam: truth;  
damaha: self-restraint;  
samaha: calmness;  
sukham: happiness;  
dukham: pain;  
bhavaha: birth;  
abhavaha: death/non-existence;  
bhayam: fear;  
abhayam: fearlessness;

eva: even;  
cha: and.  
Ahimsa: non-injury;  
samata: equanimity;  
trupti: contentment;  
tapo: austerity;  
danam: charity;  
yashaha: fame;  
ayashaha: ill-fame;  
bhavanti: arise;  
bhavaha: qualities;  
bhootanaam: of beings;  
mattaha: from Me;  
eva: alone;  
pruthagvidhaha: different kinds.

Herein there is a summary of various qualities of the individuals, mention of birth into this world or death from this world and fame or ill-fame received from the act of expression of qualities.

There is one common factor amongst all of these: we have to be alive to express the qualities and to receive fame or ill-fame. This is possible only when there is life-force within. This is “Parabrahman.” The death of the physical body is due to the departure of the life-force within. Life expressed is due to the presence of the life-force and these are also due to Parabrahman. This is reinforced in these two slokas.

The Lord gives birth so that we can express our qualities. Unfoldment of human mind and its destiny is possible only in the presence of “The Atman” within. The Self within projects out as the ego which makes use of the instruments: mind, intellect and sense organs. Let us be clear again that the good and the bad qualities are of our own making due to the inherent vasanas and the Lord has nothing to do with individual qualities. He just gives us an opportunity to express those vasanas and in the process gives us a chance to burn out the existing vasanas. Unfortunately, due to attachment for the results of actions, we tend to accumulate more new vasanas.

“As the mind, is the man,” and the Lord is only the witness to all our actions.

## **Sloka 6**

### **MAHARSHAYAHA SAPTA POORVE CHATVARO MANAVASTHATHA MADBHAVA MAANASAA JAATA ESHAM LOKA IMAM PRAJAHA**

**The seven great rishis, the ancient four Devarshis, the fourteen Manus, possessed of powers like Me, were born of My nature from My mind - and from them have come forth all these creatures into this world.**

Maharshaya sapta: the seven ancient great rishis;  
Poorve: ancient;  
Chatvaro: the four Devarshis;  
Manavas: manus;  
Madhavaha: possessed of powers like Me;  
Manasaha: from mind;



Jaata: born;  
Esham: whose progeny;  
Imam prajaha: these beings;  
Loka: in the world;  
tatha: thus.

We are given a graphic picture of ancestry of life on earth. “Where do we all come from” is the question we come across fairly often.

The immediate ancestry of life on earth is given in the first half of this sloka. These ancestors were born from the mind of the Lord and all of them possessed powers like the Lord Himself.

We have three sets of ancestors mentioned here. They are:

The four Devarshis;  
The seven great rishis;  
Fourteen Manus.

The four Devarshis: these are Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumara, Sanatsujata.

Brahma created them out of His mind and He commanded them to produce the life on earth so that He, Brahma can fulfil the command of Lord Vishnu (who commanded Brahma to create). But, the four declined to carry on His command. They said that they did not want to enter into the worldly life and would rather keep their mind constantly on the thought of Brahman. In other word, they did not want to follow the path of “Pravritti” (forward path towards the worldly life) but decided to take the path of “Nivritti.” (path of withdrawal from worldly life towards the creator.) They preferred to remain as “Eternal youths”.

If so, how could one say “All life has come forth from these?”  
The answer is: These four are “The spiritual fathers” for the mankind.

Sanatkumara was said to have imparted the knowledge of “Brahma Vidya” to sage Narada. So, we have to look upon these four as “The Gurus” for mankind. The gurus are to be looked upon and treated as “Spiritual fathers”. The disciples of the gurus are to be considered as “the children of their wisdom.”

Whereas the seven rishis and the Manus are the creators of life, the four ancient Devarshis are the creators of spiritual life on this earth.

Some commentators do give a different interpretation for the word “Chatvara Manasaha”. They say that it refers to the four ancient Manus: Svarochisha, Svayambhu, Raivata and Uttama.

The seven great Rishis: different traditions in different parts of India have given different names for these seven.

Bhrigu, Marichi, Atri, Pulaha, Pulastya, Kratu and Angirasa.

Atri, Vasishta, Kashyapa, Viswamitra, Goutama, Jamadagni, Bharadwaja. (Northern tradition)

These ancestors of ours are to be looked upon as the highest devotees of the Supreme and perfect beings. They are the men of wisdom of the highest order.

The fourteen Manus are:

Svayambhu  
Svarochishta  
Autami  
Tamasa  
Raivata  
Chakshasha  
Vaiwasvatha

Savarni  
Daksha Savarni  
Brahma Savarni  
Dharma Savarni  
Rudra Savarni  
Deva Savarni  
Indra Savarni

The Manus taught the path of “Dharma”. They provided rules for the basis of orderly administration of the entire creation. They formulated the laws of behaviour for all that take into account family, community and national life.

Genetically speaking, we have inherited the wisdom from our ancestors and there is no question of the so called “Low caste”. Every individual has a birth right to belong to his/her ancestry and this can become true if the “Knowledge” is gained by the individual so that he/she can claim their ancestry. Every-one has a birth right to acquire that “Knowledge” which is “Brahma Jnana”.

The glory of the life on this earth is traced to the glorious past ancestry and this is traced to the glorious “Parabrahman” Himself.

### Sloka 7

**ETAM VIBHUTIM YOGAM CHA MAMA VETTI TATVATAHA  
SO`VIKAMPENA YOGENA YUJYATE NATRA SAMSHAYAHA**

**He, who knows in essence the manifold manifestation of Mine, and the yogic power of Mine, harmonised with unfaltering yoga, unites with Me. There is no doubt about this.**

Etam: these;  
Vibhutim: varied manifestations;  
Yogam cha: and the yogic power;  
Tatvataha: in essence;  
Vetti: knows;  
Saha: he;  
Avikampena yogena: unshakable yoga;  
Yujyate: united with Me;  
Atra: in this;  
Na samshayaha; is no doubt.

What is it we are expected to know, how we are expected to know so that we can succeed in our efforts (sadhana) is given in this sloka.

We are expected to know:  
Know in essence the manifold manifestations of Him.  
Know the Yogic power of Him.

What are His manifestations?

We have to understand that He is the support for all forms of life, moveable and immoveable, smallest to the largest in this universe we know of and that which we do not know of. Whatever forms of life that is seen at present and whatever forms of life that was present but has become extinct and whatever forms of life that will be there in future is only by the presence of the “Power of Life” within each of

those forms. The body made up of five gross elements comes to life by His blessings and departs from this world when He departs from that body.

This is the wonderful manifestation of the Lord's creative power.

It also means that nothing in the world is "real" in the truest sense. The true meaning of the word "real" used in this sense is: the object had to be present in the past, present now and should be present in future. We also know that all forms of life are limited by "space, time and causation theory". The only one who is not limited is "The Parabrahman".

Whatever power that is exhibited by any form of life, including us, the humans would not be evident if the form of life was not alive.

Tracing the origin and power of various forms of life will lead the seeker ultimately to understand the "presence and power of the Supreme in all and at all times."

Whatever we see within us and all round us is nothing but the manifold manifestation of the Parabrahman.

It is the Yogic Power of Him that has made all this possible.

We are asked to fix our mind on this truth, contemplate on this truth firmly. The word used is "avikampena yogena". It means with unshakeable yoga. Our beliefs and the actions that ensue from such belief should be so firm that our minds will not get agitated by the impulses received from the five sense organs at all times. The fruit of such unshakeable conviction is "Union with the Supreme"

The Jagadguru is saying: there is no doubt about this declaration. "Natra Samshayaha" He says.

## **Sloka 8**

**AHAM SARVASYA PRABHAVO MATTAHA SARVAM PRAVARTATE  
ITI MATYA BHAJANTE MAAM BUDHA BHAVA SAMANVITAHA**

**I am the source of all. From Me, everything evolves. Thus understanding, the wise worship Me with pure devotion.**

Aham: Me;  
Sarvasya: of all;  
Prabhavaha: origin;  
Mattaha: from Me;  
Sarvam: everything;  
Pravartate: evolves;  
Matva: knowing;  
Budhas: he wise;  
Bhava samnvitaha: endowed with deep devotion;  
Mam bhajante: worship Me.

The important word to understand in this sloka is:  
"Bhava samanvitaha".  
This is "The thought on the Lord with total devotion."

The repetition of a mantra or prayer, either verbally or mentally, accompanied by meditation on one's chosen deity is "Japa".

Japa and meditation are thoughts on the Lord of one's choice. There are many who sincerely repeat the name of the God of their choice and or sit down for meditation. If the same is carried out with pure devotion then the seeker is said to be "Bhava samanvita".

True, pure devotion can be expressed only when one has the true understanding of the glory of the Lord.

What is the glory we are expected to understand?

"He is the source of all. From Him everything evolves" is the understanding that is needed.

Those who conduct worship in this manner are "Budhaha", the wise, says the Lord.

Real understanding of the creative power of the Lord and His manifestation in various forms on this universe assists in developing strong faith in Him. Faith expresses devotion stronger. Deep felt, sincere and true devotion carries the seeker a long way towards uniting with the Lord.

Another important point to note is that the devotion expressed should not be on the basis of a business transaction. By this I mean that there should not be any conditions attached behind the worship. It is just "worship for the sake of worship" because of the love towards the Supreme.

This thought on the Lord is "Bhava". Bhava with pure devotion is "Bhava samanvayam" and the devotee is "bhava samnvitaha".

This feeling should be "Avikampena" (unflinching) as expressed in the last sloka. If we can understand the "Vibhuti Yoga" in this spirit we will find it easier to unite with Him.

To summarise:

Develop unshakeable faith in the Lord's creative power;

Express this understanding with feeling: "Bhava";

Blend the bhava with total devotion.

How do we develop devotion?

"Only by perfect understanding."

"Vibhuti Yoga" is the means to real understanding of the glory of the Lord.

This chapter is for this purpose and this understanding will lead one to experience the "Vishwaroopa" of the Lord which is the next chapter to follow.

## Sloka 9

**MACHITTA MADGATA PRANA BHODAYANTAHA PARASPARAHA  
KATHAYANTASCHA MAAM NITYAM TUSHYANTI CHA RAMANTI CHA**

**With their intellect wholly absorbed in Me, with their life absorbed in Me, enlightening one another and always speaking of Me, they are satisfied and delighted.**

Machitta: with the intellect wholly absorbed in Me;

Madgata prana: with their life totally absorbed in Me;

Bhodayantaha: enlightening;

Parasparaha: one another;

Kathayantachaha: speaking;

Maam: of Me;  
Nityam: always/constantly;  
Tushtanti: satisfied;  
Ramanti: delighted.

“Maam budha Bhava samanvitaha: the wise worship Me with pure devotion” is the last quarter of the last sloka.

“Budha”: the wise. The centre for wisdom is “The intellect”. It is the reasoning capacity or analytical capacity in the humans.

The intellect is said to be situated between the mind on one side and the Atman within. The impulses from the external world act as food for the mind. What is needed is to make sure we get the right food that does not harm us and reject the wrong food that is harmful.

Giving importance to the mind distracts the seeker from his spiritual path. The seeker, as he develops wisdom about the transient nature of the physical world and Eternal nature of the Parabrahman starts concentrating on the Atman within and the glory of the Atman all round. The intellect which is sandwiched between the Atman and the mind gets delight with the Atman within.

Is it not true that he who wants to get something which he likes most has to learn the art of fixing his mind on that? The seeker who has understood the Nature of the Lord first of all develops devotion to Him. For such a seeker nothing else in the world is dearer.

Madgata prana: Prana in this sense is the life’s activities.

Normally our life’s activities are directed to what one likes most. In the case of a devotee, his activities are directed towards realising his beloved Lord.

What happens next? Here is the difference between attachment to the world and attachment to the Lord.

In attachment to the objects of the world there is selfishness and in many instances individuals do not want to share that joy with others.

On the other hand, in the case of the seekers with true devotion to the Lord, there is a spirit of wanting to share the happiness/joy with others.

This is brought out in: bhodayanta parasparam: enlightening each other.

The seeker loves to share the enlightenment with others and is keen to listen to the experience of the others.

Understanding of the “Atman” gets improved by mutual discussion. Doubts get cleared away and a sense of inspiration sets in the minds. When they go away from such discussions they tend to work on the subject with more determination.

This we see in satsangs and in spiritual conferences. The delegates at a conference exchange their feelings and knowledge delightfully with others. Social differences are set aside at such times. The more they hear about the Lord, more is the delight they experience within. Greater will be the faith in the lord.

The result of such exchange of ideas is:

Kathayantascha maam nityam: “speak of Me always.”

The seekers start speaking of the lord at all times. If we take it as the talk, it gives a wrong understanding. Constantly talking gets one tired out. What we have to understand is that speaking means “expressing from the various sense organs and organs of action and not just by the tongue”. All his actions constitute speaking (an honest person does what he speaks). He shows divinity in all his action is the meaning of this statement.

His mind thinks of the Lord, his eyes see the Lord everywhere, his limbs do the work of the Lord, his ears hear the Lord and his reasoning understands the omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent nature of the Lord.

His entire life thus becomes an act of worship.

By such acts what is the outcome?

Tushyanti ramanti cha: contented and delighted.

The true seekers feel contented at the end of such discussions and exchange of knowledge. They go back home delighted.

On the contrary the energy one spends from indulging in the worldly pursuits makes them feel frustrated and exhausted.

### **Sloka 10**

**TESHAM SATATAM YUKTANAAM BHAJATAAM PREETIPOORVAKAM  
DADAMI BUDDHIYOGAM TAM ENA MAAM UPAYANTI TE’**

**To these, ever steadfast in worshipping Me with love, I give “Buddhi Yoga” by which they come to Me.**

Teshaam: to them;

satata yuktanaam: ever steadfast;

bhajataam; worshipping;

preeti poorvakam: with love;

dadami: I give;

buddhiyogam: yoga of discrimination;

tam: that;

ena: by which;

maam: to Me;

upayanti: come;

te’: they.

The reward granted by the Lord for those who are ever steadfast in the worship of the Lord is “Buddhi Yoga”.

What is “Buddhi Yoga”?

Yoga is “To unite”. To lose one’s physical identity, (drop ego) and merge with the Lord is yoga in the truest sense.

Buddhi is knowledge. “Knowledge of the Lord to help in the process of losing one’s ego”, ability to see the Lord everywhere and in every being (Vibhuti) is “Buddhi Yoga.”

How to get this gift from the Lord and what are the conditions to fulfil?

The condition to fulfil: worship Him with love.

How to get the gift?

By being steadfast in the act of worshipping Him.

“Worship with Love”: very important condition.

Worship could be in the form of prayers, meditation, conduct of rituals etc. In majority of cases this form of worship is conducted with a purpose behind such act of worship. This is resolve (samkalpa). We are all used to take “samkalpa” (resolve) before conducting the ritual. This involves statements like: “I will conduct such and such an act of worship for the sole purpose of obtaining/receiving the xxx benefits” by the grace of God.

Almost all the rituals/prayers have an ending which is known as “Phala Sruti”. These narrate the benefits of conducting the ritual.

This, we have stressed before is simply a “business transaction” and not really true worship.

How should we worship?

“With true love”: True love has to be unconditional. There should be no strings attached. This is real Bhakti.

When acts of worship are undertaken with true Bhakti the Lord reciprocates by giving “Buddhi”. With this grace from the Lord, the seeker will be able to ascertain the power of the intellect over the mind. Through the act of discrimination between what is real and un-real, what is eternal and non-eternal the mind gets to be under the control of the intellect and intellect under the control of the Atman within.

Thus the seeker will be able to enter into the Lord. “Maam upayanti te”.

The Parabrahman residing in each as the Atman is “Sat, Chit and Ananda.” The seeker will enter into the state of “Sat, Chit, Ananda.”

What is this state?

The state of eternal bliss - Ananda.

The reason behind any act conducted is to experience happiness. This is not “Ananda”. In the life’s journey, sooner or later one will realise that this happiness is transient. Act of “Bhakti” expressed this way will only result in transient happiness. Progressing from this stage of spiritual practice to experience the “Eternal happiness” is the task ahead for the seeker. “Eternal happiness” is the “Ananda”, “Paramananda - Supreme Happiness”.

This can happen only by true understanding of the “Eternal Truth - Sat” (Vibhuti of the Parabrahman).

Obtaining this Supreme Knowledge - “Cit” (Buddhi).

This is “Moksha.”

This is what is meant by the statement: “I give “Buddhi Yoga” by which they come to Me.”

This can happen only by: “ever steadfast in worshipping Me with love.”

The important word is “satatam”. We have 24hrs a day out of which we lose ourselves to the outside world in deep sleep states. Taking this period out, we then have the dream state of sleep and wakeful state.

We are engaged in innumerable varieties of activities when awake. We cannot just sit in meditation on the Lord all the time when we are awake. To survive in this world and to keep the body healthy we do have to conduct so many different tasks. We have to fulfil our obligations to the society. By leading a real Satvic/pure way of life we can reduce the time spent on “dream state”.

How can then we fulfil the requirement: “Satatam bhajati”?

Vibhuti yoga tells us that wherever we turn around there is Lord. By knowing the glory of the Lord (Vibhuti), by realising His presence in all, His power in all, (Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent), by repeating “Sree Krishnarpanamastu” at the end of each act, we can conduct constant worship.

This has to be with “Pure unselfish Love.”

Thus we see, Bhakti leads to Jnana and Jnana leads to further Bhakti and finally we receive His grace and attain “Moksha.”

When the seed sown by the farmer becomes a crop that sprouts forth is not in the hands of the farmer but in the Grace of the Lord. The farmer has no other choice than to conduct all the acts as needed in preparing the soil, sowing the seeds, taking care of the sown seeds etc. Lo and behold, by the grace of the Lord, in the course of time, the seeds sprouts forth.

Similarly, we should till the land (mind) by regular self-analysis, sow the seeds of divine qualities, be part of the society and one fine day the seeds of divinity sown will sprout forth as beautiful flowers and they in turn blossom. Our duty is to offer these blossoms at the Lotus feet of the Lord.

Thus karma, devotion, knowledge, greater devotion and Supreme knowledge will revolve round, each one leading to the next and ultimately, by His Grace, Liberation.

We should be very clear in understanding that at the end all the paths of “Karma, Bhakti, Jnana” are all equally important and no one path is superior to the others. This is true “Buddhi Yoga”.

### **Sloka 11**

**TESHAM EVANUKAMPARTHAM AHAM AJNANAJAM TAMAHA  
NASHAYAMI ATMA BHAVASTHA JNANA DEEPENA BHASVATA**

**Out of compassion for them, I, dwelling in their heart, destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the luminous light of knowledge.**

Tesham: for them;  
Anukampartham: out of compassion;  
Aham eva: I alone;  
Atma bhavasthaha: dwelling in their heart;  
Bhaswatha: luminous;  
Jnanadeepena: with the lamp of knowledge;  
Ajnanajam: born of ignorance;  
Tamaha: darkness;  
Nashayami: I destroy.

Herein we have yet another promise by the Lord.

What is the promise?

“I will destroy the darkness”.

How did the darkness come about?

It is born of ignorance.

How does “He” expel the ignorance?

By the luminous light of knowledge.



Why does He do so?  
“Out of compassion”.

From where He lets this happen?  
By dwelling in their hearts He lets this happen.

Why does He show compassion?

Because: (sloka 10 - first half):

“satatam yuktanaam preetipurvakam bhajataam - with steadfast love in their devotion to Me, worshipping Me with love.”

As a result of the steadfast love shown to the Lord with devotion and acts of worship with love, the lord is pleased. The seeker receives the Grace of the Lord.

Most importantly, indirectly, the Lord is saying that His grace cannot come by offering of worldly riches.

Through the “Buddhi Yoga” which is His Grace the self luminous light of knowledge shines forth. As soon as this light shines forth, no more darkness born of ignorance. The darkness born of ignorance is “Tamas” which is due to the power of “Maya”. The three gunas, Satva, Rajas and Tamas are the ways by which Maya shows its power over the jiva.

Satva is a thin veil, rajas is a curtain and tamoguna is a wooden door that block the vision of the Lord in the inner sanctum of the temple, which is the body of ours. Inside our physical body, the Atman resides constantly but the power of maya keeps it hidden. The power of maya is responsible for all the actions we conduct in relation to the life around us.

We can understand this clearly by looking at the traditional temples in India. The temples do have the deity of choice installed in the inner sanctum. This is surrounded by the rest of the architectural building of the temple. The inner sanctum where the deity is installed is kept dark with no external source of light coming in. Lamps are kept near the idol and the priest who enters the inner sanctum in the morning, lights the lamp inside. Lo and behold the idol is seen with all its glory by the public.

The priest is symbolic of the “Buddhi” - Pure Satvic.  
Lighting the lamp is symbolic of “Lighting the Light of Knowledge.”

The Lord who resides within each of us is not seen or made to be seen because of our ignorance and our total involvement with the world around because of our three gunas, especially the tamoguna.

To those who show steadfast love to the Lord, He bestows His Grace.  
What is the Grace?

This is “The Knowledge of the Supreme” which is “Brahmajnana”.

If we have a desire for an object, we will make efforts to find it. With faith and devotion the efforts become stronger.

The greatest gift we can wish for is “The Grace of the Lord.” The Lord will clear all our sorrows in one flash by giving us the knowledge of our real “Self” residing within.

Self-development is the effort and Self-realisation is the fruit of “Buddhi Yoga”.

Material possessions from the physical world are non-eternal. Either we depart from them or they depart from us in course of time. The seeker can carry on conducting japa, and tapa. The results for his

efforts are not in his hand but only in the hands of the Lord. Only by “His Grace” his efforts will be fruitful. So, let us be clear and not put a time limit to receive the Grace of the Lord.

## Sloka 12

### Arjuna Uvacha

**PARAM BRAHMA PARAM DHAMA PAVITRAM PARAMAM BHAVAN  
PURUSHAM SHASHVATAM DIVYAM ADIDEVAM AJAM**

## Sloka 13

**AHUS TVAAM RUSHAYAHA SARVE DEVARSHIR NARADAS TATHA  
ASITO DEVALO VYASAHA SVAYAM CHAIVA BRAVEESHI ME´**

### Arjuna said

**You are the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Abode, the Supreme Purifier, Eternal, Divine Purusha, the God of all Gods, Unborn and Omnipresent.**

**Thus all the rishis have declared thee, so also Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa. And now the same you, yourself say that (to me).**

Bhavaan: thou;  
Param Brahma: Supreme Brahman;  
Param Dhama: Supreme Abode;  
Paramam Pavitram: supreme Purifier;  
purusham: Purusha;  
Shasvatam: Eternal;  
Divyam: Divine;  
Adidevam: Primeval God;  
Ajam: unborn;  
Vibhum: omnipresent.

Ahuhu: declared;  
tvaam: thee;  
Sarve rishyaha: all the rishis;  
Devarshi Narada: Narada, the Deva rishi;  
asito: asita;  
devalo: devala;  
vyaso: vyasa;  
Svayam: and thou;  
eva: even;  
cha: and;  
Bravishi: say;  
Me´: to me.

Arjuna having heard from Sri Krishna, his friend in the past and the Guru in the battlefield has now developed a change in his perception of Krishna. He starts his praise for the divine with the word: Param Brahma bhavaan: thou, the Supreme Brahman.

We have to understand that the Supreme Brahman he is referring to is “Nirakara, Nirguna Brahma”, the omniscient God principle with no form and no qualities.

The way he is progressing in his spiritual path is brought about beautifully in these two verses.

The progress in the spiritual path for the seekers is:

Basic Jnana

Bhakti

Higher Jnana

Higher Bhakti

Supreme Jnana

Supreme Bhakti

For the progress there has to be an initial kindling of the light of knowledge.

This will assist in appreciating the divine and develop Bhakti.

This will assist in understanding the divine further.

As the understanding becomes clearer, Bhakti becomes more and more intense.

Thus as and when there is a proportionate increase in knowledge, the Bhakti expressed intensifies.

Finally there is development of Supreme Knowledge and with this expression of Parama Bhakti which brings about total annihilation of ego.

Along with these changes that are taking up in the intellectual blossoming of the seeker, the actions of the seeker also change. They gradually fit in with the concept of “Karmanenyevadhikarasthe.” (sloka 47, chapter 2)

We can understand this (progressing in the spiritual path) by looking at the example of a child.

The newborn child is ignorant of the surroundings and the needs of his/her own body. The mother of the child with love and affection cleans and feeds her baby as needed. She looks after the needs of the baby which the baby herself is ignorant of.

The feeling of satisfaction the baby feels on getting her needs attended to will ignite the first spark of knowledge: “Here is something that is making me feel better.” This is the first spark of knowledge that has sprouted in the mind of the newborn.

The result is: the first smile the baby gives to her mother. This is the “first seed of Bhakti expressed.”

The baby soon learns that this person who is attending to her is somebody special. This is the progress in knowledge about the carer.

As this progresses, the baby starts conducting actions to please her mother, get the reward and so on and so forth. Thus the knowledge progresses and the devotion increases. She will start doing things that will please her mother.

The greater the knowledge of the mother as the best carer increases the love expressed towards her mother. Love makes the child do actions that will please her mother.

This is what we can understand by these two slokas.

Arjuna realised that his friend Krishna was somebody special and what he had learnt in the gurukulam starts getting clearer. He was taught at the gurukulam about Nirakara, Nirguna Brahma and Sakara Saguna Brahma. He had heard that the Parabrahman was:

Param dhama: Supreme abode for all forms of life, moving and non-moving;

Param Pavitram: the Supreme Purifier;

Shasvatam: Eternal;

And all the qualities that are expressed in these two slokas.

His knowledge of who Sri Krishna is is getting more and more clearer and with increased knowledge his Bhakti also progressed in rapid bounds. He now realised the “Vibhuti”, the glory of the Lord.

Having heard with a keenness of mind and heart the discourse so far, he understood about the compassion of the Lord for His devotees who worship Him with faith and devotion and how He bestows knowledge on them by His Grace.

The upsurge in the Bhakti towards the Supreme takes up greater fervour. His love and worship of the lord attain the highest state and his joy reaches greatest peak.

Only such love gets the maximum reward and we will see soon that the Lord not only gives him a detailed description of His Vibhuti but also shows His Universal form.

Till he reached the battlefield he had only a theoretical knowledge of the Brahman but no experience yet of the Brahman.

The progress from jnana to Bhakti which we have studied so far started to clear the veil of ignorance in Arjuna. He starts making further observations like:

You are the Supreme Abode, the Supreme Purifier, Eternal, Divine Purusha, the God of all Gods, Unborn and Omnipresent.

Thus all the rishis have declared thee, so also Narada, Asita, Devala and Vyasa.

He had learnt these at the gurukula, the spiritual institution.

Herein is a brief information about the few great souls whose names Arjuna brings out in these verses:

Asita:

Said to be a priest during the period of Kauravas and Pandavas. He was one of the officiating priests during the Rajasuya yaga conducted by his eldest brother Yudhistira.

Narada:

He is a mythological seer and the mind-born son of Brahma. He is said to be blessed with the power to move about freely in all the three worlds. (the earth, the heaven and the nether-world.) He is the great Bhakta of Lord Vishnu and is spreading His glory in all the three worlds. By apparently bringing about an increase in hatred by the demons towards Lord Vishnu he makes the encounter between Vishnu and the demons possible and thereby annihilation of the demon by the Lord.

Devala:

Devala was one of the great rishis or sages. He is acknowledged to be a great authority like Narada and Vyasa.

Devala is considered to be the spokesman on the book of Laws (Dharmasastra). He was a disciple of Veda Vyasa. He is said to be the author of Devala-Smṛti. In it is said to be a provision for taking back those who get converted to an alien religion.

## **Sloka 14**

**SARVAM ETAD RITAM MANYE YAN MAAM VADASI KESAVA  
NA HI TE' BHAGAWAN VYAKTIM VIDUR DEVA NA DANAVAHA**

**O Kesava, I believe all this that you say to me is true. Verily, O Lord, neither the devas, nor the danavas know your manifestations indeed.**

Sarvam: all;  
Kesava: Krishna;  
Etad: that;  
Ritam: Truth;  
Manye: I think;  
Yan: what;  
Maam: to me;  
Vadasi: saying;  
na: not;  
hi: verily;  
te': thy;  
bhagawan: O Lord;  
Vyaktim: true personality (manifestations);  
vidur: know;  
deva: the devas;  
na: not;  
Danavan: asuras.

Bhagawan: he who shows the following six divine qualities/bhagas:  
Bala: omnipotent/all powerful;  
Dharma: righteousness;  
Aiswarya: Lordship;  
Sri: wealth and beauty;  
Jnana: knowledge;  
Vairagya: dispassion.

Kesava: it is another name of Sri Krishna. It is an epithet of Vishnu meaning “remover of sorrows”. It also means “long/luxuriant haired” and He who has beautiful and graceful locks of hair.

Mythologically speaking, Krishna killed the demon Kesi and hence got the title Kesava. Kesi was a demon sent by wicked uncle Kamsa to kill the child-Krishna.

The first confirmation of the faith Arjuna got in Krishna has been brought out in the first half of this sloka. He now is ready to believe that Krishna is the Supreme Parabrahman and all powerful and omnipresent. All the manifestations are only sparks of Him.

Devas: The illumined ones.

Whose abode is the higher lokas. They are the heavenly residents and sons of Aditi. They are the deification of natural forces.

Danavas:

The danavas are those who challenge the authority of the Lord and the devas and lead an un-divine life. They are sons of Danu one of the daughters of Diti. Danu is the wife of Kasyapa Muni.

Subjectively, devas are the nobler qualities and danavas are the un-divine qualities within us. Both the good and bad in us really do not comprehend the omnipresent nature of the Brahman.

## **Sloka 15**

**SVAYAM EVATMANATMANAM VETTHA TVAM PURUSHOTTAMA  
BHOOTABHAVANA BHOOTESHA DEVADEVA JAGATPATE**

**O Purushottama, You yourself know yourself by yourself. O source of all beings, God of all gods, ruler of the world.**

Svayam eva: verily only yourself;  
Atmanam: by Thyself;  
Vetta: know;  
Purushottama: The Supreme Purusha;  
Tvam: thou;  
Bhootabhavana: source of all forms of life;  
Bhootesha: Lord of all beings;  
Deva deva: God of all gods;  
Jagatpate: Lord of the Universe.

Arjuna is expressing the qualities of Supreme Brahman which he was taught and now associates it with Sri Krishna. He now considered that Krishna is no other than the Supreme Brahman. He admits also that no one is really capable of knowing the Supreme. The only one who really knows about the Brahman is Brahman Himself. For the rest of the life on earth He is mysterious and impossible to understand.

We know about the world around us following the principle of “Subject, object.” There has to be an object for the subject to know. We are the subjects and the world around is “objective world”. The objective world is what we can see and analyse from the impulses received from outside. The Supreme Brahman is without any form, He is not an object, He has no name and hence our sense equipments cannot perceive the same. We associate the Supreme with form and name and look at Him as an object which He is not. The only way to know about Him is merging in him by surrender/annihilation of the “ego”.

Purushottama: The Supreme Purusha.

Purusha is that which was before all creations. It can also mean “one who completes and fulfils the existence everywhere” (without which existence is impossible). The atman within each of us is only a spark of the Supreme and is within the nine-gated city called “Pura”. Hence the individuals are known as “Purushas”. There is no gender attached to the word “Purusha”. “Purushottama” is the best of all purushas. All forms of life have a birth and death but “He” is beyond birth and death.

Bhootabhavana: Source of all forms of life. Creates and multiplies all creatures. He is the cause for the birth and the growth of all living beings/forms.

## **Sloka 16**

**VAKTUM ARHASY ASESENA DIVYA HY ATMA VIBHOOTAYAHA  
YABHIR VIBHUTIBHIR LOKAN IMAMS TVAM VYAPYA TISHTASI**

**So, you should indeed tell me without reserve of Your divine glories, by which You exist, pervading all these worlds.**

Vaktum: to speak;  
Arhasi: are competent;  
Asheshena: without any trace/fully;  
Divya: divine;  
Hy: so;  
Atma vibhutayaha: thy glories;

Yabhih vibhutibhihi: by what sovereign glories;  
Tvam: thou;  
Imam lokan: these worlds;  
Vyapya: pervade;  
tishtasi: exists.

Please note that Arjuna is using the sentence “divine glories” and not “divine qualities”. Whatever that was there in the world around, whatever that is there now and whatever that is going to be in future is nothing but only an expression of His Glory. Arjuna wants to know about the past, present and future of His glories.

## Sloka 17

### **KATHAM VIDYAMAHAM YOGINS TVAM SADAA PARICHINTAYAN KESHU KESHU CHA BHAVESHU CHINTYOSI BHAGAVAN MAYA**

**O Yogi, how shall I ever know You? By meditation? In what various aspects are You to be thought of by me, O My Lord?**

Katham: how;  
Vidyam: can know;  
Aham: me;  
Yogin: Oh Yogi;  
Tvam: thee;  
Sadaa: always;  
Parichintayan: meditating, thinking;  
Keshu keshu bhaveshu cha: and in what and what aspects;  
Chintyaha: Thought of;  
Asi maya: thou art, by me.

This is a question for the sole purpose of clarification that should arise in the minds of all seekers and the same question has been put forward on behalf of all seekers through the medium of Arjuna by the sage poet Vyasa.

Yogi is he who is making attempts to unite with the Supreme. Lord Krishna is the Lord over all the yogis. He is Yogeswara. Krishna is addressed as “Yogin” by Arjuna.

To unite with Him, the Supreme, the seeker has to contemplate through the process of meditation. Meditating on the formless/quality-less (Nirakara, Nirguna) aspect of the Brahman is almost an impossible task for the common man. This is because our sense organs keep us constantly in contact with the objective world around.

If so how could one contemplate on Him?

It has been said in the Vedas that He permeates into all forms of life and supports them. Without His presence, birth, growth and death are impossible. There would be no world if He was not there to support the same. Unfortunately the world we live in has trillions and trillions of different forms of life in it and it is almost impossible to see the Lord in all forms that we cognise with our mind and the sense organs. It is true that He has to be cognised and worshipped in the life we perceive of.

Keshu keshu cha bhaveshu: In what and in what aspects of the nature we should be thinking of Him? (Chintaya) is the question by Arjuna.

For us, the children, the Lord has given various toys (representing the vast forms of life around) and through these forms He would want us to think of Him. It is up to us to select the images and symbols for the Lord of our choice from the vast representation of the Lord we have in this universe.

This is the “Vibhuti Yoga” and it gives us the means to know His glory and helps us to unite with Him.

## **Sloka 18**

**VISTARENATMANO YOGAM VIBHUTIM CHA JANARDHANA  
BHOUYAHA KATHAYA TRUPTIRHI SHRUNVATO NAASTI ME MRITAM.**

**O Janardhana, tell me again in detail of Your yogic power and glory, for I do not feel satisfied by hearing Your nectar like speech.**

Vistarena: in detail;  
Atmanaha: thy;  
Yogam: yoga;  
Vibhutim: glory;  
Janardhana: Sri Krishna;  
Bhooyaha: again;  
Kathaya: tell;  
Trupti: contentment;  
Hi: for/verily;  
Shrunvataha: hearin;  
Na Asti: is not;  
Me’: me;  
Amritam: nectar.

Janardhana: Giver of rewards.

The Supreme takes the form of the planets and gives the appropriate rewards to the life on earth for their actions. The planets are considered to determine the background of the world in which the individual develops. They are the divinities connected with the incarnations of the Lord. Those beings in whom the spiritual element predominates are the celestial wanderers: the planets. Those in whom the life element predominates are the living beings. Each of the planets is said to be having a presiding deity whom they obey.

Arjuna is addressing Krishna as “Janardhana” in the sense that He is the “giver of rewards.”

It is important to note the style of Arjuna’s approach to the Lord. The Lord is the guru for Arjuna and Jagadguru for the mankind in general.

What is the attitude of the seeker in search of knowledge? What is the knowledge for?

The knowledge is for “self development”. One of the more important characters required for self development is “The desire to know more”. This is known as “Jijnasa.”

Tell me more, more, the child says when her mother is telling stories.

When we go to the movies, we want to know “more and more” in respect of the play that is depicted on the screen.

Arjuna is showing such a trait by requesting to know more about “His Glory.”



What is Arjuna getting from such a narration?

Arjuna is developing a state of bliss on hearing about the glory of the Lord.

When we eat something we like we feel happy and satisfied. This is on the lower planes of scoring the marks for feeling happy. This is because, when we start eating more because we like it, we get tummy aches. This type of satisfaction on eating has a death to the feeling of satisfaction. This is “mritam” (death of something that is born).

In the case of “Trupti” experienced on listening to the Glory of the Lord, there is no death to the feeling, Arjuna is saying. He wants to have more and more of the same.

We, the spiritual seekers are expected to develop this “Amrita” in satisfaction in whatever we do to get the spiritual knowledge. We should be on the lookout for more and more of the knowledge. Finally, we will get the “Amrita” the nectar, by which we live in a state of “Eternal Bliss.”

The sacred text in question is on “Atma Jnana” which gives us “immortality.” The teachings by the Lord is “Amrita” and we should have the thirst “Trishna” to know more and more and learn to live in a state of “Bliss” on listening to the same.

## Sloka 19

**Sree Bhagawan Uvacha**

**The Lord said:**

**HANTA TE’ KATHAYISHYAMI DIVYAA HYATMA VIBHUTAYAHA  
PRADHANYATAHA KURUSHRESHTA NASYANTO VISTARASYA ME’**

**O Arjuna, best of the Kurus; I will declare to you My divine glories according to their prominence, for there is no end to My details.**

Hanta: very well;

Te’: to you;

Kathayishyami: will declare;

divya: divine;

Hy: indeed;

Atma vibhutayaha: My glories;

Pradhanyataha: most prominent ones;

Kurushreshta: best of the Kurus;

Na: not;

Asti: is;

Antaha: end;

Vistarayaha: of detail;

Me: of Me.

The Lord is now ready to oblige to Arjuna’s request to know in detail about His yogic power and glory. He makes it clear that there is no end to His divine glories and therefore He would enumerate the same highlighting the most prominent ones.

It is up to us to infer the glory of the divine from those excellent examples.

We are all familiar with the annual fruits and flowers show that are held in different parts of the world at different times of the year. Every exhibition of this kind will have the display of the best among the

fruits and flowers. Similarly, we are now going to get names of those manifestations that bring out the maximum Vibhuti/Glory of the Lord.

How can one try to explain the One who is Omnipresent?

A true and sincere devotee is he who has understood the universal presence of the Supreme and has managed to grasp the omnipotent nature of the divine.

I would like to make it clear that most of these glories are probably easier to understand for an average Hindu because he/she would be familiar with the stories concerning the divine. The Hindu epic and mythologies like Ramayana and Mahabharata are familiar to many Hindus and the reader is requested to refer to them if he wants more details.

## Sloka 20

**AHAM ATMA GUDAKESHA SARVA BHOOTASHAYASTHITAH  
AHAM ADISHCHA MADHYAM CHA BHOOTANAAM ANTA EVA CHA**

**O Gudakesha, I am the Self seated in the hearts of all beings. I am the origin, middle and the end of all beings.**

Aham: I;  
Atma: the Self;  
Gudakesha: Arjuna;  
Sarva bhootashayasthitaha: seated in the hearts of all beings;  
Aham: I;  
adischa: and the beginning;  
madhyam cha: and the middle;  
bhootanaam: all beings;  
anta: end;  
eva: even;  
Cha: and.

The first effort in describing His glory starts by asserting His universal presence. It is a generalised statement to stress that “He” is inside all forms of life, small or big, human or other forms of life, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jew etc, man/woman, child/adult.

If He is inside all, where inside us, is He residing?  
The postal address for the Lord is: inside the heart of each individual.

It is not the technical heart but the loving aspect of one’s own body. Just as the heart incessantly and with love works from the 1st second of birth of the body till the death, just like the heart that tenderly supplies the nutrients and oxygen to all parts of the body and assists in elimination of unwanted substances from the body, He, is taking care with love and affection all our needs and keeps us alive from the moment of birth till the last breath of life.

The Lord addresses Arjuna as Gudakesha, why?  
Gudakesha means “conqueror of sleep”. “Sleep” is considered to be “Tamasic” in nature. It is associated with “Ignorance.”

Arjuna was a “Kshatriya” and was passionate in his activities. This is “Rajasic” nature.

Involved in the daily association with the society and the world we live in, in general most of us do express “Rajasic” tendency.

There are a number who express “Tamas” (ignorance) in their activities too.

In the pursuit of “The Bliss” we need to develop “Satvic” (pure) tendency. The sacred text is to assist those with rajasic tendency who are in pursuit of “The Bliss”. Arjuna is the best student who received the sacred text directly from the Lord Himself. The Lord gave this knowledge to uplift Arjuna who was the conqueror of “Tamasic” tendency and hence the title “Gudakesha.”

Those who are studying the sacred text should be “Gudakeshas” and have conquered the tamas in them.

The Lord then goes on to say who He is. He says:  
I am the “origin, the middle and the end” of all.

We were all born “yesterday” and hence the word refers to “Past”. Not just the birth into this present life but of all the past births we have undergone. Each one of us has started/entered into this world as an expression of part of the Paramatma. He is the “Atman” within and He will remain with us all through the innumerable number of births.

So, He is the origin for all beings. Not just this, but He is also the origin for the nature which is there to support the life on earth.

“I am the middle”: we can now understand that this refers to the “Present”. The world that is evident now is the “Middle”. He is Middle (after the birth and before death), the nourisher and supporter of it.

“I am the end”:  
Technically speaking it is “Future”. He is there to support our future births.

Thus He is “The past, present and future” for all and for the world itself. “He” is therefore considered as birth-less and deathless. This is the understanding for “Eternal Truth and Immortal” nature of the Lord. He is the eternal substratum for the life on earth.

We can now understand this better if we look at the theory of cause and effect.

What is an effect?  
“Effect” is nothing but the cause expressed in another form.

“The effect”, which is life expressed is nothing but the “cause” which is “Parabrahman”. Parabrahman has expressed as the life on this universe. Every aspect of life irrespective of religion, race, creed, sex and all other forms of life is nothing but an expression of “Parabrahman”.

## **Sloka 21**

**ADITYANAM AHAM VISHNUR JYOTISHAM RAVIR AMSHUMAAN  
MARICHIR MARUTAM ASMI NAKSHATRANAAM AHAM SHASHEE**

**Among the Adityas I am the Vishnu; among the luminaries I am the radiant sun; among the Maruts I am Marichi; among the stars I am the Moon.**

Adityanaam: among Adityas;

Aham: I;  
Vishnu: Vishnu;  
Jyotishaam: among the Luminaries;  
ravih: the Sun;  
amshumaan: radiant;  
asmi: am;  
Marutaam: among Maruts;  
Nakshatranaam: among stars;  
Shashi: the Moon.

Aditi is the daughter of Daksha Prajapati and is considered as the goddess of space. Adityas are the sons of Aditi. They personify the various aspects of nature. Brahmana portion of the Vedas mention that there are 12 Adityas representing the 12 months of the year.

There are differences of opinion on the exact number of Adityas. Different schools give different numbers. On the whole the number of Adityas in record vary between 5-12.

In Vishnu Purana Vishnu is considered as the most powerful of the Adityas. It is important to note that the name of Vishnu comes in the latter period of Vedic literature. In the earlier portion of the Vedas there is no mention of Vishnu as the God.

The 12 Adityas are starting from the month of April; they are:  
Amsu, Dhata, Indra, Aryama, Vivasvan, Bhaga, Parjanya, Dvashta, Mitra, Vishnu, Varuna and Pusha. In the Adiparva of Mahabharata the following names are given for the 12 Adityas:  
Dhata, Mitra, Aryama, Sakra, Varuna, Amsu, Bhaga, Vivasvan, Pusha, Savita, Tvashta and Vishnu.

Maruts are the storm gods and friends of Indra. They represent the presiding deity of the storms, wind and the breeze. There is again some difference in the origin and number of Maruts as found in the literatures available.

Some attribute their origin to Rudra and Prusni.  
Others consider them as sons of Marutvati, wife of Dharma.  
Some others attribute their origin to Diti and Kashyapa muni.

There is an interesting story about this. Diti is the mother of asuras and sister of Aditi. Indra, son of Aditi, Lord of heaven, comes to know that Diti is pregnant and is frightened that they may take over the rule of the heaven and so wishes to kill the baby foetus in the womb of Diti. By his magical powers he manages to enter into the womb of Diti when she was asleep and starts to cut the foetus into pieces. The foetus starts crying. Not to disturb Diti in her sleep he cojouls the foetus and uses the word "maruta" meaning "do not cry". Hence the name "Maruts" to the offsprings born of Diti. Diti hears the cry of the baby and realises that Indra was inside her womb cutting the foetus to pieces. He had cut it already into 49 pieces. She requests him not to let them die and make them into a troupe (gana) of Gods who will be friends of the devas. He agreed and they are known as Marutganas. Marutganas are worshipped by those who pray for lasting strength and vigour. (Ojas)

The following are the names of the seven prominent Maruts:  
Avaha, Pravaha, Nivaha, Paravaha, Udvaaha, Samvaha and Parivaha (Marichi).  
Among the Maruts Marichi is said to be the chief.

Marichi: there is one more mention of the name of Marichi in the literature. According to it the word means "Ray of light." In post Vedic literature it is the name of Prajapati regarded as a son of Svayambhu and in other literature as one of the seven great rishis.

Luminary of the day is The Sun and of the night is Moon. Both are manifestations of the Parabrahman.

## Sloka 22

**VEDANAAM SAMA VEDOSMI DEVANAM ASMI VASAVAHA  
INDRIYANAAM MANAS CASMI BHOOTANAAM ASMI CHETANA**

**Among the Vedas, I am Sama Veda; among the Devas, I am Indra; among the senses, I am the mind; among the living beings, I am the intelligence. (principle conscience).**

Vadanaam: among the Vedas;  
sama vedosmi: am Sama Veda;  
Devanaam: among the Devas;  
Vasavaha: Indra;  
Indriyanaam: among the Indiryas (senses);  
manas: the mind;  
cha: and;  
asmi: am;  
Bhootanaam: of the beings;  
Chetasa: the intelligence.

As we know, there are four Vedas: Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana.  
Among these, the Lord says that Sama Veda is the best, why?

Sama Veda is considered to be the essence of Rig veda. It consists of hymns from Rig Veda arranged in a melodious tune. It is tranquil to listen to because of the melody. The most famous “Gayatri” is from Sama Veda.

The hymns in it consist of three or four musical intervals and these are the earliest examples of the Indian Musical scale.

Sri Krishna, the most melodious player of the flute enchants all and the musician considers that the melody in the Sama Veda is the best.

Indra is the chief of the Devas who resides in heaven. Another name for him is “Vasava.”

Even though it is said that we have five sense organs, the eyes, the nose, the ears, the tongue and the skin which come under the term “Panchendriyas” (five sense organs), the mind which receives impulses from them all is considered as the sixth sense organ. The other five just receive the impulses from the world around but the mind has the capacity to store them and to take action as needed by making use of the organs of action. It is the central station for all the senses. Indra is said to be the lord of the mind.

The power of cetana makes us the best amongst all forms of life on this earth. “Cetana” is the consciousness/intelligence in us. It is a common saying that he who does not use the intelligence is acting not as a human but as an animal. This instrument makes us develop the capacity to discriminate between what is good and what is not good. The pure consciousness gets equated with the God.

## Sloka 23

**RUDRANAAM SHANKARAS CASMI VITTESHO YAKSHA RAKSHASAAM  
VASUNAAM PAVAKAS CASMI MERUHU SHIKARINAM AHAM**

**Of the Rudras, I am Sankara; of the Yakshas and Rakshasas, I am Kubera; of the Vasus, I am Pavaka and of mountains, I am Meru.**

Rudranaam: among the Rudras;  
shankaras: sankara;  
ca: and;  
asmi: am;  
Vittesho: the Lord of wealth: Kubera;  
Yaksha rakshasaam: among Yakshas and rakshasa;  
Vasunaam: among the Vasus;  
Pavakaha: I am Pavaka;  
Meruhu: Meru;  
Shikharinaam: among the mountains.

Rudraha: rodayata iti rudraha  
Rudra is he who makes all people weep. At the time of death and pralaya he who makes all weep is Rudra. Rudra is considered as the deity of destruction. The Hindu mythology attributes Brahma with creation, Vishnu with acts of preservation/maintenance and Rudra with destruction.

There has to be the full cycle of birth, life and death for the smooth running of this universe. Birth and death have a balancing act on the resources available for life. The dead as a matter of fact make way for the living.

Among the Rudras (there is no consensus of opinion on the exact number and names of Rudras) Sankara is the Lord.

The Rudras mentioned in the scriptures are: Hara, Bahurupa, Trayambaka, Aparajitha, Vrsakapi, Sambu, Kapardi, Raivata, Mrgavyadha, Sarva and Kapali, Sankara, Girisha.

Sankara:

“Sam karoti iti Sankaraha.” He, who does good/auspicious is Sankara. Through distress (making them cry), he takes sadhakas towards Liberation/Moksha very quickly.

Yakshas and rakshasas:

Yakshas are the celestials/godlings. Some people consider them as the mysterious spirits who wander about in fields, forests and jungle. They are the demi-gods who are the attendants of Kubera, the God of wealth. They are also said to be employed as guardians of the gardens and his treasures.

Rakshasas are the demons including the bhutas which are evil/malevolent spirits. They are said to wander about at night and can assume any form. Some consider them as the offspring of Khasa, one of Daksha’s daughters and others consider them as children of Pulastya.

Kubera is the son of Pulastya. (It is interesting to note that Ravana is also the son of Pulastya and the half-brother of Kubera.) He is the divine treasurer. He is portrayed as having ugly features like a pot belly, being fattish and of short stature with a small head and eight protruding teeth. (This is probably because the ancient seers who brought out all these myths detested wealth. For them only wealth was spiritual wealth. They considered that riches drag the men down from the spiritual path.)

Vasus: these are the Vedic deities presiding over the seasons.

Also considered as the “Land, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Moon, Sun and Stars” which constitute the gross Nature. They are also known as “Viswadevas”. Lord of Fire, Agni is the chief among them. There are hymns in Rigveda in praise of Viswadevas which are for protection from all types of distresses.

Vasus are eight in number.

Here is the mythological story concerning the Vasus as is found in Adiparva of Mahabharata:

Vasus once disturbed Rsi Vasishta in his meditation and he cursed them to be born on earth. On pleading guilty and requesting pardon, he said that they would be born as children of mother Ganga and king Shantanu. The Vasus begged mother Ganga to kill them soon after birth so that they could return to heaven. King Santanu fell in love with Ganga and proposed marriage. She put a condition that he should not question any of her acts and the day he did so she would depart from his company. He agreed to the condition. She drowned the first seven children born to them in wedlock (and thereby released Vasus from the curse) and Santanu did not question her. Unable to keep quiet any longer, he stops her from drowning the eighth baby. Ganga immediately leaves his company and takes the baby with her. This baby is grandsire Bhishma of the Mahabharata.

Meru is the mythological golden mountain believed to be in the centre of the universe. According to the Hindu cosmography, the Lord lives on top of this mountain and below it are the seven islands that constitute the world.

The spinal column in the human body is known as Meru danda. The spiritual centre on top is Sushumna the highest point of God consciousness. This is the spiritual Meru.

## **Sloka 24**

**PURODHASAAM CHA MUKHYAM MAAM VIDDHI PARTHA BRUHASPATIM  
SENANEEM AHAM SKANDAHA SARASAAM ASMI SAGARAH**

**Arjuna, among the priests, know Me as the chief Bruhaspati. Among the generals, I am Skanda.  
Among the bodies of water, I am the ocean.**

Purodhasaam: among household priests;  
cha: and;  
Mukhyam: chief;  
maam: Me;  
Viddhi: know;  
bruhaspateem: chief priest for the devas;  
Senaneem: among generals;  
skanda: Lord Subramanya;  
Sagaraha: ocean;  
asmi: am;  
sagaraha: oceans.

Bruhaspati is the chief priest for the Gods and the Lord of prayers. His role is to make sure that the benefits of ritualistic sacrifices reach the right person. He administers ritualistic worship and sacrifices among the devas. Those seekers who want to learn and develop wisdom pray to Lord Bruhaspati. Thursdays in the week is dedicated to Bruhaspati.

He is also the planet Jupiter, the Lord of all planets.

Vedas call him as “Brahmanaspati” meaning the Lord manifest in all gurus.

Skanda, also known as Lord Subramanya is the son of Lord Shiva and Parvati, younger brother of Lord Ganesha and is the general supremo for the devas.

All the rivers finally reach the ocean. If there were no oceans, one can say the rivers would dry up in course of time. The ocean suggests the infinite aspect of the Supreme. Water being fluid spreads in all directions and is symbol of omnipresence of God.

## Sloka 25

**MAHARSHEENAAM BHRIGUR AHAM GIRAM ASMI EKAM AKSHARAM  
YAJNANAAM JAPA YAJNOSMI STHAVARANAAM HIMALAYAHA**

**Among the great rishis I am bhrigu; of the utterances I am the monosyllable om, of yajnas, I am japa yajna, and of unmoving things, the himalayayas.**

Maharsheenaam: among great rishis;  
bhrigu: sage Bhrigu;  
aham: I;  
giram: among words;  
ekam aksharam: the one syllable;  
yajnanaam: among sacrifices;  
japa yajna: sacrifice of japa (silent repetition);  
sthavaranaam: among immovable;  
Himalayaha: mountain Himalaya.

The following is the classification according to seniority of the rishis.

Rajarshi: Emperors and kings who possess the knowledge of the scriptures and put its injunctions into practice and who fulfil the social role as the Lords over kingdom they hold are considered as Rajarshis.

Maharshis are great rishis.

There are seven mind born sons of Brahma and are collectively called Saptarshis. All of these are Maharshis. These are: Brighu, Marichi, Atri, Angirasa, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu. Brighu is the chief among them.

Bhrigu is highly respected and considered to be the best by all the rishis. Once all the rishis collectively performed a great yajna and as per the custom had to give the first offering to the best person in all the three worlds. They selected Bhrigu to make the decision as to who was the best to receive the first offering.

Brahmarshi: He has maximum control over his senses and remains in a state of tranquillity under all circumstance.

Vasishta is Brahmarshi. Once sage Viswamitra attacked him to take the “Kamadhenu/Sacred cow” away from him by force and in the ensuing battle killed all his sons. Sage Vasishta remained in tranquil state even at that minute and did not curse Viswamitra.

Devarshi: “divine rishi/seer”. Sage Narada is considered as Devarshi.

Giraam aham aksharaha: among words I am the one syllable Akshara.

The Vedas declare that one syllable “Omkara” (Pranava) is the first manifestation of Nirguna, Nirakara Brahma. Brahman without form and qualities first manifested as OM with a form but no qualities. (refer to chapter 9, sloka 13). When meditated on its own it is the most powerful of all “Mantras”.



When prefixed to various names and forms of divinity it enhances the divine potential of that divine potential.

Among sacrifices I am Japa yajna: Japa is mental recitation of mantra.

By this method the seeker performs japa and maintains a constant stream of same divine thought in the mind. It acts as a purifier of the mind. Unbroken remembrance of “The Self” in thoughts and actions is japa. It confers Moksha to the seeker.

It can be performed at any time and at any place.

There is no barrier of sex, caste, creed to conduct the japa.

The seeker conducting japa yajna can do so repeating any one of the mantra of his choice.

The only condition is “Absolute Purity of thought, action and speech.”

The act of uniting the individual with the Atman is Yajna. Yajna is said to unite oblation (of what it signifies) with the object of worship.

Japa is repeating with:

Sincere feeling;

Intelligent understanding; and

Sincere concentration and full of faith and determination.

Among mountains which are immovable aspect of nature, Himalayas are considered the best. Almost all our ancient rishis spent their time meditating in the serene atmosphere of the Himalayas.

## **Sloka 26**

**ASHVATTAM SARVA VRUKSHANAAM DEVARSHEENAM CHA NARADAH  
GANDHARVANAAM CHITRA RATHAHA SIDDHANAAM KAPILO MUNIHI**

**Among all trees, I am Ashwattha, among the Devarshis/divine rishis, I am Narada,  
among Gandharvaas, I am Chitraratha, among Siddhas, I am Kapila.**

Aswattham: Aswattha tree;

sarva vrikshanaam: amongst all the trees;

devarsheenam: among devarshis;

Naradaha: Narada;

Gandharvanaam: among gandharvaas;

chitra rataha: chitraratha;

Siddhanaam: among Siddhas;

kapilo munihi: Muni Kapila.

Ashwattha is “*ficus religiosa*” commonly known as “Peepull” tree (holy fig). The Hindus consider it as the most sacred and offer their worship on many occasions. It has a long life of several hundred years and relatively “eternal” in comparison to other trees. (we will get a detailed description of this tree in chapter 15, sloka 1,2,3)

Lord Buddha is supposed to have received enlightenment on meditating under this tree.

Among Devarshis I am Narada. We have looked into the meaning of the word “Devarshi” in the previous sloka.

Sage Narada is depicted as having the power to travel at will at any time to any of three Lokas (Devaloka, Bhooloka, Patala Loka - the spheres above the earth, the earth, and the spheres below the earth.) He is the most devout devotee of Lord Vishnu and spends his life spreading the glory of the Lord.

He is one of the rare few people who have no death and are known as “Chiranjeevi”. He is present during all the eons.

There are a number of volumes on Narada and the best one is “Narada Bhakti Sutras” which is a compilation of slokas expounding the theme of “Bhakti”.

Mythologically he is depicted as one who loves to bring disputes between two parties and enjoys the resulting tussle/quarrel between them. The word in Sanskrit for this role is “Kalah priya”. Behind this act there is a great motive and that is to fulfil the wish of the Lord.

Narada had the habit of disclosing to both gods and demons, the secrets about each other. Gods and demons, eventually, detested each other. Narada's deeds often created trouble and friction among gods, demons and men, and such friction often led to a war in the end. At the end it would eventually lead to victory for the good daivic forces. Hence Narada, being a notorious mischief-maker, acquired the name, Kalaha-Priya or the lover of quarrels.

How can we call such a person a saint? Was it right that he set people against one another by spreading gossip? But we must remember that Narada's intention was to espouse a good cause. It was his constant desire that bad people should be punished for their deeds, that the haughty ones should learn their lesson soon, and that the good should live happily ever after.

Chanting “Narayana, Narayana,” the divine sage Narada went across the three worlds spreading rumors, causing rifts.

In Vaikuntha (Lord Vishnu's Abode), he would regale the Lord with his merry tales. “I put the fear of death in Kansa's mind...I praised the pompous Ravana into believing that he was greater than all Gods...”

“Why do you do this, Narada?” asked Vishnu.

“Do What?”

“Cause so much trouble.”

“I don't do anything. I merely test their faith in you. If they were your true devotees, would any of them be lustful, wrathful, greedy, envious, frightened or proud?”

Vishnu burst out laughing and blessed his dearest devotee Narada, who kept chanting, “Narayana, Narayana”

The Hindu philosophy is based on “Chaturvidha Phala Purushartha.” (The four steps to fulfil the role of having been born as humans.) It is “Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha.” (righteousness, acquiring wealth, fulfilling desires and attaining Liberation in that order.) But, in case of Narada, it is different. He does not wish for Moksha/Liberation. His desire is that he should be “The Eternal servant” of the Lord. He would like to read into the mind of the Lord and take action to prepare grounds for the fulfilment of the task desired by the Lord.

For example, to kill the demon Hiranyakashipu who was a terror to the three worlds, to make the Lord come down to earth to destroy him, Narada acts as a friend and well wisher of Hiranyakashipu and encourages him to find the Lord and fight him. There are a number of mythological stories on this theme.

Sage Narada who fulfils this wish of the Lord is the best amongst all the rishis.

Gandharvas:

These are the celestial musicians who entertain the Gods, heavenly devas and residents in heaven. They are said to roam about in the mountain regions and bring in serenity by their divine music. The art of music is also known as “Gandharva vidya”.

Chitraratha is the chief of the Gandharvas and all the apsarasas (heavenly maidens). In Mahabharata, it is said when Pandavas were returning from Ekachakra to Panchala, Chitraratha tried to stop them. Arjuna defeated and captured Chitraratha. Kumbhini, the wife of Chitraratha pleaded for the release of her captured husband. Arjuna obliges and releases the chief of Gandharvas. In gratitude, Chitraratha imparted to Arjuna some Gandharva knowledge on warfare and gifted him with four divine horses which never get tired. These were the horses on the chariot of Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

Among Siddhas I am Kapila Muni.

Sadhakas are those who follow the spiritual path to attain Moksha. Among sadhakas who achieve the goal are “Siddhas”. “Siddha” is he who has achieved perfection in the art of sadhana. They are “Jivanmuktas” who attain Liberation in this present birth. They take up the role of giving moral and spiritual guidance to the aspirants and are considered as spiritual teachers.

Muni is he who is constantly established in Japa yajna.

Sage Kapila is endowed with all the qualities of a great muni: righteousness, wisdom and dispassion. Kapila muni, the author of “Samkhya” philosophy is the best among the Siddhas.

There are few legendary stories about Kapila.

He is considered as incarnation of Lord Vishnu who preached the art of Sankhya philosophy to his mother.

Here in an episode concerning the arrival of river Ganga on to the earth:

Sagara was a famous king in the line of Ikshvaku. He had 60,000 children from first wife and one son (Amshuman) from second wife. He wanted to perform Ashwamedha yaga. He sent his 60,000 sons to follow the path of the sacrificial horse. Events led to the horse getting lost and the sons went in search of the horse and found it in the nether worlds in the ashram of Kapila, who was not aware of the presence of the horse kept in stealthily by Indra. Kapila was in deep meditation and the sons in anger put a dead snake round his neck. This disturbed him, he opened his eyes in anger and all were burnt to ashes. So they could not have ancestral rites performed by the descendants.

The answer was to purify the ashes by the sacred river Ganga which had to be made to come down from heaven.

Amshuman came to know about this but failed to get Ganga come down from heaven.

Dilipa was his son but he also failed in his attempts.

His son (third generation) was Bhagiratha. He managed to get Ganga come down to earth.

When the sacred river flowed on the ashes of the 60,000 ancestors, they were released and reached heaven.

Bhagiratha became famous because he managed to get sacred river Ganga down to earth.

(Refer to Bhagawatha Purana, episode of Bhageeratha, descent of Ganga.)

## Sloka 27

**UCCHAIHSRAVASAAM ASWANAAM VIDDHI MAAM AMRUTODBHAVAM  
EIRAVATAM GAJNEDRANAAM NARANAAM CHA NARADHIPAM**

**Among horses, know Me as Uchhaihsravas, born of nectar; among elephants, as Airavata and among men as the king.**

Ucchahsravas: celestial horse;  
aswanaam: among horses;  
viddhi: know;  
maam: Me;  
Amrutodhbhavam: born of nectar;  
eiravatam: chief elephant of Indra;  
Gajendraanam: among elephants;  
naranaam: among men;  
cha: and;  
Naradhipatim: king.

Airavata and Uchhaihsravas are two of the several items that projected to the surface of the earth from the bottom of the milky ocean on its churning by devas and danavas. To understand the spiritual significance of this episode from the Puranas, it helps to recollect the episode of churning of the milky ocean.

Once the danavas managed to defeat the devas and Indra lost his position. When the devas approached Lord Vishnu for help He suggested that the devas should churn out the nectar from the bottom of the milky ocean and obtain immortality and thereby not get defeated by the danavas.

He advised Indra to approach the danavas and request their help in churning the ocean. He recommended them to use the mountain Mandara as the rod, serpent Vasuki as the rope to churn.

Because of the nectar, the danavas agreed to the proposition by Indra.

They failed in their first attempt to churn because the mountain was too heavy and was getting sunk. Lord Vishnu took up the form of the tortoise and supported the mountain on its shell.

Amrita, the nectar emerged as the last item in churning. Several great articles came out in the beginning.

In this sloka there is the mention of Airavata and Uchchairsravas which are two of the items that emerged from the milky ocean. Uchchairsravas is considered as the king of horses, long haired, white in colour with a black tail.

Airavata is an elephant white in colour with four tusks. It has wings and can fly. Both of these were claimed by Indra and were appropriated to him.

Now, the spiritual significance of this episode:

The milky ocean represents the ocean of samsara, the life in which we are drowned in this world. The mountain mandara, the rod used for churning represents the mind which is full of vasanas. The vasanas are responsible for us getting drowned in the ocean of samsara.

The world has both good and bad in it. The beauty is that it also has got the Amrita in it.

This world, which is a “Karma Bhoomi” gives us the due rewards for our efforts. Depending upon our stored vasanas and our actions, we get results which are either good or bad.

For the sake of exhausting all the stored vasanas, we should make use of both good and bad vasanas. The good vasanas are the devas and the bad vasanas are the danavas. To assist in the process of churning, we do need the grace of the Lord.

The tortoise represents Lord Vishnu who is the support for us in this life on this earth. Without His Grace we will simply get drowned in life. With His Grace, we will get results which will either give us happiness or sorrow. These are the various good and bad items that came out in the churning of the ocean.

When all the stored vasanas are exhausted, what is left is “The Amrita”. This is the “Moksha” (immortality) which is the aim for the seekers born on this earth as humans.

To summarise:

- 1) The mountain Mandara is the rod used to churn the ocean: our life is a mountain of thoughts and experiences. The thoughts we entertain in our life are so many that they can be considered as mountain of thoughts and experiences.
- 2) Vasuki: in the next sloka we will learn that among the serpents, “He” is Vasuki. It is the divine cosmic energy. The one and the only power that can withstand the great churning can be only “The Divine Energy”.
- 3) The Milky ocean: the world we are in.
- 4) The tortoise: Lord Vishnu who bestows His grace and helps us in burning out all the stored vasanas. He bears the weight of all our thoughts and keeps us in this world.
- 5) The devas: good vasana imprints on our mind.
- 6) The danavas: bad vasana imprints on our mind.
- 7) Airavata and Uchiasravas: the best results for the good actions conducted. (It is an irony that the best results make our ego become prominent. This is signified in this story by saying that Indra got them. “Indra” is the Lord over the “Mind”.)
- 8) In this episode “Poison” also emerges from the ocean.

This episode is a depiction of our life in this universe.

We want to get good things in life. But along with it bad things also present (as a consequence of our own actions both past and present). We have to accept them both.

After all what is churning?

It is an act by which one agitates liquid violently to separate the constituents in it. We extract butter out of curds by churning.

Churning by devas and danavas: in churning, the rope is pulled to one side by one party and on to the opposite side by the other party. In this episode, one party is devas and the other party is the danavas. The good and bad vasanas pull us hither and thither in this world. Sometimes our good actions predominate and other times bad actions predominate and together the actions bring out the results.

Learning, understanding the sacred text gives us the means to follow the principle: “Sree Krishnarpanamastu” and offer all good results at the feet of the Lord and withstand the bad results that come our way.

Naranaam cha naradhipam: among men I am the king.

In the days gone-by the countries were ruled by the kings. It is in relation to that practice that was in vogue this statement has to be considered.

The scriptures have given rules and regulations for the governance of a country too. The main emphasis in the scriptures is welfare of the common man and towards this importance to “Dharma”.

The king came to the throne after having been taught in gurukula the code of conduct towards welfare of subjects by upholding dharma and propagating dharma. Lord Krishna has said that He incarnated for upholding dharma, protecting the righteous and uprooting evil.

The king among men is the best because of his role of upholding and propagating dharma. Human nature being what it is, this rule/code of conduct is forgotten even by the kings. To correct this problem made worse by the kings every so often, the Lord comes as the Emperor of the universe and protects public.

## **Sloka 28**

**AYUDHAN AHAM VAJRAM DHENUNAM ASMI KAMADHUK  
PRAJANAM ASMI KANDARPAHA SARPANAM ASMI VASUKIHI**

**Among weapons: I am the thunderbolt, among cows Kamadhenu, among progenitors, I am Kandarpa, and among serpents I am Vasuki.**

Ayudhan: among weapons;  
aham: I;  
Vajraha: vajrayudha, the thunderbolt of Indra;  
Dhenunaam: among cows;  
Kamadhuk: Kamadhenu;  
Prajanaschasmi: among progenitors;  
kandarpa: lord of love;  
Sarpanaam: among serpents;  
asmi: am;  
Vasukihi: Vasuki.

Vajrayudha:

This is the most powerful weapon which belongs to Indra, the lord of the devas. It is said that Indra, proceeding majestically on Airavata, wields his thunderbolt which breaks the clouds and brings forth the rain. The noise we hear during thunderstorms is believed to be the sound caused by wielding of this weapon.

Story concerning the Vajrayudha:

There arises frequently a war between the devas and asuras. In one such episode, an asura, by name Vritta led the asuras against the devas. He was extremely powerful and Indra could not defeat him. Lord Vishnu, the saviour of the devas came to the rescue and told Indra that the only way to kill Vritta

would be from a weapon made by the bones of the great rishi Dadichi. Dadichi had taught the Ashwini twins the Brahma Vidya and in return they had granted him immortality. Indra was advised to approach the rishi along with the Ashwini twins and request for his body.

When thus approached by Indra, Dadichi agreed to abandon his immortal body by his will power because it was the advice by Lord Vishnu to protect the devas who were in distress by the acts of the powerful asura, Vritta. Viswakarma, the architect of the devas used the bones from the physical body of the rishi and manufactured the magical weapon.

**Dhenunaam aham Kamadhuk:**

It is the “mythical divine cow (white in colour) of plenty” that could yield anything that is wished. It is another item that came out during the churning of the ocean. This was given to Sage Vashishta. Surabhi, Savala, Kamadhenu are some of its other names.

Son of Kamadhenu is said to be Bhringi, which is the vehicle of transport for Lord Siva.

**Prajanam asmi Kandarpaha:**

Among the progenitors I am Kandarpa.

Kandarpa is also known as “Manmatha”, the Cupid, God of love. It is the personification of the progenerative instinct. We have to understand (and thereby respect) by this statement that the urge to love which is the precursor for progeny is also divine.

The creative Consciousness is Kandarpa. It is the energy in parents for begetting progeny. In this context the downward directed current flowing in the spine is known as Kandarpa.

**Sarpanaam asmi Vasuki:**

Among serpents I am Vasuki.

It is the legendary serpent that is said to adore the ring finger of Shiva and is considered as the king of serpents. He became the instrument that acted as a rope for churning of the Milky ocean. He is the serpent son of Kadru, daughter of Daksha. It is the symbol of Shakti, the Cosmic energy. Kundalini Shakti is the dormant energy in man that remains coiled in the Mooladhara. (bottom of the spinal column) Happiness and misery, birth and death of experiences (that bring about happiness and sorrow): the negative expressions are the poison of the snake Vasuki.

## **Sloka 29**

**ANANTASCHASMINAGANAAM VARUNO YADASAAM AHAM  
PITRUNAAM ARYAMA CHASMI YAMAHA SAMYATAAM AHAM**

**I am Ananta among nagas. I am Varuna among water deities. Of the Pitrus I am Aryama. Of the controllers I am Yama.**

Anantaha: Ananta;

cha: and;

Asmi: am;

Naganaam: among Nagas;

varuno: Varuna;

Yadasaam: among water-deities;

aham: I;

Pitrunaam: Among Pitrus/departed ancestors;

Aryama: Aryama;

Yamaha: Lord of death;

Samyamataam: among controllers;  
aham: I.

Nagas are many hooded serpents which are said to be non-poisonous and among them Ananta is the chief.

It is said that during dissolution (Pralaya) all the subtle bodies with unfulfilled vasanas enter into "Moolaprakriti". Lord Vishnu rests on this thousand hooded serpent which is Moolaprakriti and enters into "Yoga Nidra".

Ananta is also known as "Adishesha". It means that "which remains". During dissolution there remains only "Ananta on which rests Lord Narayana."

Why is the so called thousand hooded serpent form?

If we understand that all the subtle bodies in the moolaprakriti are nothing but un-fulfilled vasanas which are only desires/hatreds entertained but not fulfilled, one can see why the sages of the past have given it the form of the serpent. They gave the form of the serpent for depicting desires and hatreds. These instincts kill the individual and do not let him fulfil the purpose of human birth which is "Moksha", (Salvation.). Also one can see that these vasanas do not affect the Lord and this is depicted as the Lord lying on this serpent without getting bitten by it.

There is another interpretation of this. According to this the Ananta is five-hooded serpent which symbolises Prakriti made up of five great elements. The Lord is said to rest on Prakriti.

I am Varuna among water deities.

Varuna is one of the Vedic deities and associated with rain. Our ancient sages deified the forces of Nature. Varuna is considered to be the God of rain. During periods of drought even now the Hindus conduct "Varuna Yajna" to pacify Varuna and request Him to provide the showers of rain.

Among Pitrus I am Aryama.

Pitrus are the departed ancestors. They are said to enter the world of manes known as "Pitruloka". Aryama is considered to be the chief of Pitruloka. He is one of the sons of Aditi.

### **Sloka 30**

**PRAHLADASCHA ASMI DAITYANAAM KALAHA KALAYATAAM AHAM  
MRUGANAAM CHA MRUGENDRO'HAM VAINATEYASCHA PAKSHINAAM**

**Among the Daityas I am Prahlada; among reckoners I am time; among beasts I am Lion and among birds I am Garuda.**

Prahladascha: and Prahlada;  
Daityanaam: among daityas;  
Kalaha: among time;  
Kalayatam: among reckoners;  
aham: I;  
Mruganaam: among beasts;  
Mrugendra: Lion, Lord of beasts;  
Pakshinaam: among birds;



Vainteyaha: son of Vinata, Garuda.

Among daityas I am Prahlada:

The story of Prahlada is to be found in great detail in Srimad Bhagawatham. The daityas, the children of Diti are considered to be the sworn enemy of the devas. Devas are the residents of heaven and higher regions which are above the sphere of earth. Daityas are residents of the nether worlds. Prahlada is the son of daitya Hiranyakashipu.

Prahlada, even though born in the daitya family was the greatest devotee of Lord Vishnu. Our mythologies give him the title of “Mahabhakta” (great devotee). He got his father so angry by repeatedly praising the name of Lord Vishnu so many times that one day out of desperation he challenged his son to show Vishnu inside the pillar of the royal hall. Lo and behold, Hiranyakashipu broke the pillar with his mace and out of it came “Narasimha” (man-lion) who killed Hiranyakashipu and thereby ended the reign of enemy of the devas.

The word “Ahlada” means “Happiness”. Prahlada means “full of divine bliss.”

Among reckoners I am Time:

We reckon about “past, present and future” and this broadly fits under the common name “Time”. “Kala” (time) is supposed to be the instrument of Lord with which He puts us into the reins of “Maya” (delusion). This makes the world appear vibrant place which we love to live in.

Among beasts, the beast that exhibits great majesty and power is the Lion.

Vainateya is the son of Vinata and is another name for Garuda. The sisters Vinata and Kadru were wives of Kasyapa. Kadru is considered as mother of snakes. There was a quarrel between the two sisters which ended in Kadru enslaving Vinata. Hence it is said that Garuda, her son, became the enemy of all snakes.

It is the “Divine eagle (white necked)”. Eagles are the enemies of snakes. While flying in the sky, when they notice a snake on earth, they come down, pick the snake and fly away. Spiritually speaking, “Snake” is poisonous and one can say that king of birds is that which kills the source of poison.

By giving these examples, we are made to understand that His Manifestations include all living beings and not just human beings.

### **Sloka 31**

**PAVANAHA PAVATAMASMI RAMAHA SHASTRABHRUTAM AHAM  
JHASHANAAM MAKARASCHASMI SROTASAAM API JAHNAVI**

**Among purifiers, I am the wind; among warriors, I am Rama; among fish, I am Makara and among the rivers, I am the Ganges.**

Pavanaha: the wind;

Paavataam: among the purifier;

asmi: am;

Ramaha: Rama;

Shastrabhrutaam: among the wielder of weapons;

Jhashanaam: among fish;

Makara: shark;  
Asmi: I am;  
Srotasaam: among streams;  
Jahnavi: the Ganges.

It is a well known and accepted fact that air purifies by removing a number of impurities. It blows away unpleasant smells. Fresh air is made to circulate around the house through the open windows and purify the house. Medical specialists agree that fresh air purifies the wards of unwanted germs in hospital surroundings. Sanatoriums for patients suffering from infectious diseases like Tuberculosis are built in such a way that there is a constant flow of fresh wind in the region.

Air, water, fire and earth, four of the five gross elements are all purifiers but the wind is considered to be the best among these four elements.

Sri Rama is considered to be the incarnation of Vishnu, born as human in a royal family, living the life of a human, encountered all the problems the humans can face in life and won fame for living the life of “Truth and Dharma” under all adversities in life. He is depicted as having a bow and a container (quiver) full of arrows on his back. His life shows that he was always ready to fight evil. Rama did not misuse/abuse the weapons and used it for the protection of dharma. Hence, Rama is considered the best among the warriors whose responsibility is to uphold righteousness and protect the citizens of the land against tyranny.

Shark is the most powerful among fish. Makara is the mythological shark. It is the vehicle for Varuna, the Lord of rain. It is also the fertility symbol and appears on the banner of Kama, the God of Love. Lord Vishnu is decorated with ear rings resembling the Makara.

Among rivers, I am Jahnavi: she is considered as the daughter of the rishi Jahnu.

Bhagiratha by his severe austerities managed to get Ganga flowing in the heavens to come down to earth to purify his ancestors who were burnt to ashes by the curse of rishi Kapila. Initial stages of her landing on earth, she was showing off her force by flowing extremely powerfully and causing damage to property and life. Sage Jahnu, it is said drank all the waters of the river. After pleas for mercy, he lets her flow out of his ears. (hence considered as the daughter of jahnu.)

As a matter of fact there is a spiritual significance of this event. Ganges represents spiritual knowledge and an extremely powerful purifier of all sins. Rishi Jahnu had a thirst for spiritual knowledge and hence he drank all of it. (This is for Jahnu drinking the entire waters of the river.)

The Vedas give spiritual knowledge to mankind. Vedas are known as “Srutis” because they were heard by the rishis during intense state of meditation. The ear, organ of hearing is depicted as the source for the knowledge coming out from the expert of spiritual knowledge, Jahnu.

## **Sloka 32**

**SARGANAAM ADIRANTASCHA MADHYAM CAIVAHAM ARJUNA  
ADHYATMA VIDYA VIDYANAAM VADHAHA PRAVADATAAM AHAM**

**Among all creations, I am the beginning, the middle and the end. O Arjuna, among sciences, I am the science of Self-knowledge and among arguments I am the logic.**

Sargaaam: among creations;  
Adihi: beginning;

Antaha: the end;  
Madhyam: the middle;  
cha: and;  
eva: also;  
adhyatma vidya: knowledge of the Self;  
Vidya: knowledge;  
vidyanaam: among sciences;  
vadaha: logic;  
pravadataam: among controversialists/arguments;  
aham: I.

The Lord creates, sustains and causes dissolution of what He created. But He remains in every form that He creates and remains with the same till the end. Hence it is said that He is the beginning, middle and end of all. As Brahma, He creates the lokas, as Vishnu, He maintains the same and as Shiva brings out its dissolution. He is Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

“He” is the number “1” and we are all the zero’s after it. Without the number “1” in the beginning the zeroes have no value on their own. Two zeroes with a “1” in front make it one hundred and without the “1” the zeroes remain zero.

There are a number of sciences we know of in the material world and it is true they have brought wonders to this world. Unfortunately, they have also been responsible for misery and suffering because of misuse of the science. This misuse is because of our false identification with the “ego”. We have forgotten our true identity as “The Atman.” Knowledge of the Atman which is our true identity is “Adhyatma Vidya.” Once this knowledge is fully grasped, the ego has to vanish and once the ego is vanished, there is no selfishness and this paves way for “Peace and prosperity” all round. Hence among sciences, Adhyatma vidya is the Vibhuti of the Lord. This is also known as “Brahma Vidya”.

Arguments are to establish the “Truth”. Proper reasoning capacity will in the end establish the Truth and it is the correct conclusion of the argument/vada. Best example for the same is that we come across in the court rooms. In front of the sitting judge for the day, the lawyers for and against a case, trying to establish the Truth, argue for and against as the case may be. The judge by his presence is trying to see that the arguments are logical and for the sole purpose of establishing The Truth. There are no intentions of harm to anyone in “vada”.

The buddhi (reasoning capacity/intellect) is the most useful gift by God to mankind. It is to enquire into the real and non-real, into truth and false without any prejudices. Pure reason is Vada, the glory of the Lord.

Contrary to Vada, there are two more words which need to be understood. They are :

Jalpa;  
Vitanda.

Jalpa: it is that type of argument for the purpose of establishing one’s own importance and belittling others.

Vitanda: argument aimed at destroying the views of others by hook or crook. It is used only for the purpose of condemning others.

Jalpa and vitanda may weaken the opposite party but will not establish the Truth.

### Sloka 33

#### AKSHARANAAM AKARO'SMI DWANDWAHA SAMASIKASYA CHA AHAM EVAKSHAYAHA KALO' DHATAAHAM VISHWATOMUKHAHA

**Among letters, I am letter “A”; I am dual among compounds; I am the everlasting Time; I am dispenser having faces everywhere.**

Aksharanaam: among letters;  
Akaraha: the letter “A”;  
Samasikasya: among compounds;  
Dwandwaha: dual;  
Akshayaha: everlasting;  
Kalaha: time;  
Vishwatomukhaha: with faces all round;  
dhataham: I am dispenser (of fruits of actions).

We have discussed about “akshara” in the beginning of chapter 8. “Kshara” is that which is perishable and “Akshara” is that which is imperishable. We have studied that the alphabets we learnt in childhood will remain in our memory till death/senility and these make up the words/sentences we have to make so that we can communicate with the society around us.

Among these letters, “I am the letter A” says the lord.

In Sanskrit it is “A” and is one of the most frequently used letters. The most sacred of the mantras “OM” is made up of three monosyllables: “A, U, M”. The monosyllable “A” is said to originate from the naval region. From the naval region of Vishnu was born the four headed Brahma who is the father of creation of life. “A” is therefore equated with Brahman.

Among the compounds I am the dual:

In this context dual is “cause and effect” which is “the Soul and the body”. “The Soul/Atman” we know is the Brahman and “the body” is an illusion/maya which is again created by Brahman. The body and the soul which is represented as various forms of life makes up the universe we know of.

Hence, He is the dual among compounds.

”Compound” is referred to a substance made up of two or more products and “dual” is that which is made up of “two” products.

The principal of compound words is that both the words joined to form the dual retain equal importance. The soul and body in the above example retain equal importance. Without the two joined together there is no life.

I am the everlasting “Time”:

“Time” as we know is a made up of “Past, present and future”. We, the mortals belong to one of the three categories of time. We are subject to the Laws of time and are bound to it. The only one who is not under the control of time but who has the time under His control is “Parabrahman.” This theme has been brought in sloka 30 of this chapter.

I am the dispenser of the fruits of actions:

Whatever results we do experience, albeit “good or bad” of our actions, are definitely results of our actions but “He” the Lord of the Universe is the dispenser of the same. As “The Eternal witness” in the form of “Atman” within, He sees all our thoughts and as the judge dispenses the results of actions. It is important not to forget that “He” decides on the appropriate time to dispense the results of action. We have to have faith in this statement and not look for proof of this statement.

Viswathomukhaha: with faces all around:

If we consider Him as the Atman within all forms of life, evidently He is capable of having faces all round. We are surrounded by various forms facing all directions and each one is the representation of the Parabrahman Himself. Similarly, as the witness for the thoughts and actions of each one of us, on an individual basis also, He has faces all round and He witnesses every thought and action of ours. It is like the popular saying “The Law has faces all round”.

### **Sloka 34**

**MRUTYUHU SARVA HARASCHA AHAM UDBHAVASCHA BHAVISHYATAAM  
KEERTIR SREE VAC CHA NAREENAAM SMRUTIR MEDHA DHRUTI KSHAMAA**

**And I am the all devouring death, the birth of those who are to be born. Among feminine qualities I am fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, firmness and forgiveness.**

Mrutyuhu: death;  
Sarvahara: all-devouring;  
cha: and;  
Udbhavascha: origin/to be born;  
Bhavishyataam: of those to be born;  
Keerti: fame;  
Sreehi: prosperity;  
Vaak: speech;  
Nareenaam: of the feminine;  
Smrithi: memory;  
Medha: intelligence;  
Dhruti: firmness;  
Kshama: forgiveness.

I am the all devouring death, the birth of those to be born.

Birth is manifestation of something (apparently new but only a modification) and death is disappearance of the manifested (only from that form of manifestation.)

When the energy in the five gross elements that make up the physical body departs the body is said to have undergone death.

The five gross elements that make the body come alive in the presence of the energy.

The common factor is “The Energy” which is termed as “The Atman”. The Atman is only a manifestation of Parabrahman.

With this explanation we can understand when the Lord says,  
I am the all devouring death and the birth of those to be born.

For the new body that is born, the natural process is going through the stages of boyhood, youth, old age and finally the death. Illness does present itself during the life in various forms. Not all will go

through the process of boyhood, youth and old age and not all suffer illness. The constant factors are “Birth and Death,” and this has been highlighted in this sloka.

The second half of the sloka:

I am fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, firmness and forgiveness.  
These are seven virtues and the Lord terms them as feminine qualities.

Let us get it clear the fact that the Lord is saying “feminine qualities” and not “qualities in women”. This has been misunderstood and misrepresented as “qualities of women” by some. Not just that, the Lord is also stressing the fact they are “divine” qualities.

It is also not correct to be critical on this statement from a masculine and feminine point of view. Let us learn to look at it from a philosophical point of view only and leave the gender alone. Let us learn to appreciate these virtues when we find them either in men or women and consider them as “divine virtues.”

There is a mythological story behind these seven virtues in this sloka:

Prasuti, the daughter of Manu married Daksha Prajapati. Kirti Devi, Medha Devi, Dhriti Devi, Smriti Devi, Kshama Devi are five of their 24 daughters. Sri Devi (Lakshmi, Goddess of wealth) is daughter of Bhrihu and Vagdevi (Goddess Saraswati, Goddess of speech) is the consort of Lord Brahma. These seven are the presiding deities of the seven virtues.

We can add by saying that this sloka is to be looked upon as a wake-up call for women. Let the women not consider them as weak and low. They have a birth-right to be respected and they can do so by expressing the virtues in speech, memory, intelligence, firmness and forgiveness in their relationship with family and society and thereby acquire fame and prosperity.

Speech: Highest form of expression.

Memory: Connects past and present. Seeds do remember how to grow into plants.

Connecting the past to the present will provide many answers for the ills in our life but alas we cannot and hence the suffering.

Dhriti: grasping power.

Kshama: harbours peace.

### **Sloka 35**

**BRIHAT SAMA TATHA SAMNAAM GAYATRI CHANDASAAM AHAM  
MASANAAM MARGASHIRSO'HAM RITUNAAM KUSUMAKARAHA**

**Among hymns, I am Brihatsama; among metres, I am Gayatri; among months, I am  
Marghashirsha; among seasons I am the flowery spring.**

Tatha: also;

Brihat sama: Brihatsama;

Samnaam: among hymns from Sama Veda;

Gayatri: the hymn Gayatri;

Chandassam: among metres;

Masanaam: among months;

margashirosmi: am Marghashirsha;  
ahma: I;  
Ritunaam: among seasons;  
Kusumakaraha: the spring.

Of the four Vedas, Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana, the Sama is considered to be the best. It is composed in metrical forms. The hymns are set to music and pleasing to listen to.

In the Sama Veda, there is a portion known as “Brihati” which is most difficult and complicated. The hymns sung in this metre are known as “Brihatsama” and this is considered to be the best.

The Gayatri is a highly sacred Vedic mantra and Brahmarsi Vishwamitra has passed this mantra to the mankind. It is a verse from a sukta of the Rigveda (Mandala 3.62.10). Gāyatrī is the name of the Vedic meter in which the verse is composed, consisting of 24 syllables divided into 3 lines of eight syllables each. There are a number of hymns composed in this metre, the most sacred being the one addressed to the Sun God (Savita), also called the Sāvitrī mantra. Its recitation is traditionally preceded by om̐ and the formula bhūr bhuvah̐ svah̐, known as the mahāvyaḥṛti "great (mystical) utterance".

The Gayatri is: “Om Bhoor Bhuvaswaha Tatsa Viturvarenyam bhargo Devassya Dheemahi Dhiyo yo na Prachodayaat.” (We meditate on the excellent light of the divine Sun, may He illumine our minds.) It is very popular and considered to be the strong potent mantra to cure a number of ills.

The young student in Vedic studies enters into the study period after a ceremony known popularly as “Upanayanam” around the age of 7-11 yrs. The Gayatri mantra is passed on to him by his preceptor and the student is presented with the sacred thread to be worn on the chest. (Yajnopaveetam)

Recitation of this mantra takes place during havans at the time of offering oblations into the sacred fire. (Havan, also called Yajna, is a Vedic ritual in which people invoke the fire God in a special platform built in the centre of the hall and make offerings along with chantings of mantras, mostly to please a god/goddess and/or achieve a certain objective.)

Devi Gayatri, Rudra Gayatri, Brahma Gayatri are some of the other popular Gayatris.

Among months I am Marghasirsha:

The ninth month of the lunar calendar is observed as Margasira Month. The star on the full moon day of this month is Mrugasira hence this month is named as Margasira Month. There are regional differences on the exact dates.

It also corresponds to the harvest period for farmers across the globe.

It is believed that about 5000 yrs ago, during the period of the famous epic Mahabharata, the year used to start in this month.

The sacred text, the Srimad Bhagawadgita was proclaimed to Arjuna by Sri Krishna in the month of Marghasirsha.

Lord Dattatreya was born in this month.

Among seasons, the spring is the best as it is abundant with new blossoms and flowers and the atmosphere is so pleasant full of sweet fragrance from the flowers.

## Sloka 36

**DYUTAM CHALAYATAAM ASMI TEJAS TEJASWINAAM AHAM  
JAYO'SMI VYAVASAYO'SMI SATVAM SATVATAAM AHAM**

**I am the gambling of the fraudulent; I am the splendour of the splendid; I am victory; I am determination and I am the goodness in the good.**

Dyutam: the gambling;  
Chalayataam: the fraudulent;  
Tejaswinaam: of the splendid;  
Tejas: the splendour;  
Jayaha: the victory;  
asmi: am;  
Vyavasayaha: determination;  
Satvataam: of the good;  
Satvam: goodness;  
aham: I.

The Lord has brought out the three gunas in this sloka.  
For tamasic guna, He has given the example of gambling,  
For rajasic guna, He has given victory and determination as example,  
For Satvic guna, He has given the example of goodness of the good.

Let us be clear that the gambling is a tamasic act. The Lord is not advocating or supporting gambling. Satva, rajas and tamas are the three fundamental qualities which are the ways we express ourselves. Only in the presence of the Atman within, the three qualities express themselves. In this sense, the Lord has used gambling as an example of tamas. Even this quality is expressed because I am within that individual, says the Lord.

There are a number of fraudulent activities that take place which are illegal in secular life. Forgery is an example of fraudulence. At all times in the history of mankind fraudulence has not been accepted and the culprits were/are prosecuted.

All along history, gambling has been approved in some form or other by the higher authorities of the time. Gambling was an accepted past time during the Mahabharata period. The Governments in so many countries have lottery tickets on sale which is in a way gambling of a type. People gamble by betting on horses and on the outcome of games. The fraudulent aspect in gambling is supposed to be strictly controlled by the governing authorities.

Please, let us not for heaven's sake believe/understand that the Lord is supporting gambling. Through the Mahabharata He has brought out to the surface the problems even the good people face as a consequence of gambling.

We can look at this from a different angle altogether:

Gambling is "gambling away what we possess."

We should not gamble with our health and ruin our health in return.

Let us not gamble the "God" within us and get entrapped by Maya and as a consequence suffer repeated births into this world which is an ocean of pains and sorrows.



Splendour, victory, determination are all considered as His manifestations in our actions. It is with His grace that we can achieve victory, with His grace that we can develop Satvic determination. We should learn to realise His manifestation in all that is splendid, good and eminent.

“Vyavasaya”:

We have come across this word in: sloka 41 and 44 chapter 2 and it as a very important word in the entire Gita. Please refresh your memory by going back to those two slokas.

In the context of this sloka, it is the determination of the individual to develop the divinity that the Lord is referring to and acknowledging the fact that “He is that Determination”.

“Tejas” is the word to denote splendour. The physical health by following the moderation in food, activity, recreation etc., by balance in the way of living in general, by the perfect sense-control and Brahmacharya (celibacy) in its truest sense is the “Tejas” one develops.

Finally, among the three gunas, the good/Satvic is the best, He adds.

### **Sloka 37**

**VRUSHNEENAAM VASUDEVO'SMI PANDAVANAAM DHANANJAYAHA  
MUNEENAAM AHAM VYASAHA KAVEENAAM USHANA KAVIHI**

**Among the Vrishnis, I am Vasudeva; among Pandavas I am Arjuna; among munis I am Vyasa and among the poets, I am Ushana.**

Vrushneenaam: among Vrishnis - vrishnis (Yadavas);  
vasudevosmi: am Vasudeva;  
Pandavanaam: among Pandavas;  
Dhananjaya: Arjuna;  
Muneenaam: among munis;  
aham vysaha: am Vyasa;  
Kaveenaam: among kavis (poets);  
Ushana: Ushana, the name of an ancient poet.

Lord Krishna was born in the clan of Yadavas, descendants of Vrishni, son of Bhima Satvata. There kingdom was in the north-western India. Vasudeva is the father of Krishna. Among the Yadavas, the Vibhuti/glory goes to Vasudeva, the father of Krishna. Sri Krishna is also known as Vaasudeva.

Arjuna is one of the five Pandava brothers and he took shelter in the Jagadguru Sri Krishna when he was in distress brought on by lack of knowledge of correct action during the battle of righteousness. Without this incidence, we would not have had the sacred text. So, the glory among the Pandavas goes to Arjuna and that glory is the manifestation of divinity.

In this sloka Sri Krishna says “Dhananjaya” and this word has a beautiful meaning in this context. “Dhananjaya” means “winner of wealth”. He gets this title on two counts:

- By winning the wealth for his brother Yudhistira during Rajasuya Yaga wherein he won battle over so many rulers who became subordinates to Pandavas.
- The greatest and best form of wealth, The Srimad Bhagawadgita was won by Arjuna through the grace of the Lord.

Among the munis I am Vyasa:

“Muni” is he who meditates constantly on the divinity and therefore his actions also become divine. The word means “he who elaborates on every point of discussion”.

In Vedic period the literature was in the form of Mantras.

In Puranic period, eminent rishis compiled the Vedas. The first among those compilers is Vyasa and the title of Vyasa was handed over to the subsequent generation of gurus who carried on the tradition. Sage poet Veda Vyasa composed the Mahabharata in which is incorporated the Bhagawadgita. His contribution to the Hindu Vedic philosophy is unique and unrivalled. The knowledge of the sage poet is the glory of the Lord.

In one sloka we have come across three important characters: Arjuna, Krishna and Vyasa. The combination of these three is the mother of the sacred text Srimad Bhagawadgita.

Among poets I am Ushana Kavi:

There are many explanations associated with the name of “Ushana”:

- a) Ushana is the name of Sukracharya, the guru for danavas.
- b) A famous risi Ushana closely associated with Agni, the God of Fire is said to have composed hymns for the “fire ritual”.

### **Sloka 38**

**DANDO DAMAYATAAM ASMI NEETIRASMI JIGESSHATAAM  
MOUNAM CHAIVASMI GUHYANAAM JNANAM JNANAVATAM AHAM**

**Of the punishers, I am “the rod of punishment”; of the seekers of victory I am “statesmanship”; of the secrets I am “the silence” and I am “the knowledge” among the knowers.**

Danda: the sceptre/rod of punishment;  
Damayataam: among punishers;  
Asmi: am;  
Neeti: statesmanship;  
Jigeeshataam: among those who seek victory;  
Mounam: silence;  
cha eva: and also;  
guhyanaam: among secrets;  
jnanam: knowledge;  
jnanavataam: among knowers;  
aham: I.

Dando damayataam asmi: among punishers I am the “rod of punishment.”

The sacred text is over 5000yrs old and rule by monarchs, emperors, kings was the way of governing the country. The king is depicted as having the sceptre with him which is a sign of “punishment” for those who break the law of the land.

The present day’s rule is mostly via a democratic rule and the “sceptre” is to be looked upon as the “Law of the country.”

The act of punishment is to bring out the reality in the mind of the criminal that it is wrong to break the law of the land. It is to make those with criminal tendencies to refrain from acts of crime.

On a wider perspective, the Lord in His depiction as “four-armed holding on to mace, sword, discus, bow” is to bring a fear of punishment and make people refrain from acts that harm individuals/society/nature.

We are knowingly/unknowingly breaking the laws of Nature by acting contrary to “Divine Law” (dharma) and have to be prepared to face the rod of punishment. Let us be clear that when we experience the pain of punishment, even though God ordained the same, it is the result of our own actions and hence we are responsible for the sufferings we undergo. Punishment is to be looked upon as Grace of the Lord.

The statesmanship approved by the sastras is for universal welfare and hence this is also “vibhuti” of the Lord.

Neeti asmi jigeeshataam: for the seekers of victory I am statesmanship.

This is a very important statement and should be the rule at all times. Without statesmanship there cannot be a victory. Neeti/statesmanship is right attitude, right relationship. The victory achieved has to be by the correct method and the common man in the land of victory should not be punished. The welfare of the citizens of the land won over has to be the main objective for the so called war. Punishing the entire community in any war is contrary to dharma. Hence neeti/statesmanship is also vibhuti of the Lord.

Mounam chaivasmi guhyanaam: of the secrets, I am the silence.

Secret in any other form other than silence can be unearthed at any time. What is kept in one’s brain is the secret kept in that brain and no one has an access to it. The last chapter was all about “Royal secret and Royal knowledge.” God realisation even though open to all is still a secret because it should be open to those who are pure at heart and who have a thirst for knowledge. The sacred text and the teachings by the Lord is to be kept as a secret only for the sole purpose of bringing out the thirst for the knowledge in the spiritual seekers who are ever pure at heart. This is the basis of “Guru-shishya” relationship of the older times. There were rules for the gurus and the disciples to follow. Even in the present set up of education there are rules to follow for the teachers and students in the educational institutions and the subject to be taught is open to those who show keenness to learn and practice the science.

The silence in word and thought are essential to attain self-control. Mastery over lower nature leads to “Self-realisation.”

Jnanam jnanvataam aham: I am the knowledge among the knowers.

When the process of knowing is directed onto the knower the subject matter is “Atma Vidya.” The knowledge of the “Atman” within the seeker is what is referred to in this sloka. This is the wisdom of the wise.

The knowledge in the jnani is to be expressed to bring out the “divine glory of the Atman”. This is the essence of vibhuti yoga.

## Sloka 39

### YACCHAPI SARVA BHOOTANI BEEJAM TAD AHMA ARJUNA NA TAD ASTI VINA YASYAN MAYA BHOOTAM CHARACHARAM

**O Arjuna, whatsoever is the seed of all beings, that also am I; there is no being moving or non-moving that can exist without Me.**

Yacchapi (yat chapi): which and also;  
Sarva bhootanaam: among all beings;  
Beejam: the seed  
Na: not;  
Tat: that;  
Asti: is;  
Vina: without;  
Yat: which;  
Syat: may be;  
Maya: by Me;  
Bhootam: beings;  
Characharam (chara acharam): moving and un-moving.

Towards the spiritual progress and divine realisation, the Lord has taken great troubles in giving in essence His glory. He has started to sum up His explanation and in this sloka He affirms that there is nothing moving/non-moving that can exist without him. We all know by now that this refers to the “Energy” within which is part of the Primordial energy. Without this “divine energy” nothing can survive for even a fraction of a second. “His” presence is “birth” and “His” departure is “Death.”

The special word He has used in this sloka is ”Seed”. “I am the seed of all” he says.  
Let us ponder on this word:

What is a seed?

The plant that exists today was a seed yesterday.

We, the humans were the seeds in the form of egg/sperm.

The biologists say that the seed does have all the potential of the plant/being in a blue print within itself.

The seed is the dormant condition of the plant of tomorrow. It has all the potential but is not manifest as the plant. Under favourable conditions it will become manifest and starts growing.

In our day to day life, our potential is not manifest in the deep sleep state of the day. Our personality is said to be in the state of a seed. On waking up, the seed shows its potential.

The state when the entire universe is in a sleeping state is “Pralaya”. All the subtle bodies enter into the “Hiranya garbha” (golden seed) under favourable conditions, the subtle bodies manifest again and the life begins in the universe.

Through this statement the lord is identifying himself with the total causation of the universe and this is His Vibhuti.

The difference between the seed we know of and the seed of Parabrahman is vastly different. In the normal day to day activity, there is no trace of seed when it converts into a plant. The seed becomes the plant.

But the seed (Lord) of the universe does not get destroyed. The Lord’s energy remains to sustain the life created.

This law applies to all the forms of life both moving and non-moving. (plant and animal kingdom)  
No type of pots can exist without the mud,  
No waves can exist without the ocean.

#### **Sloka 40**

**NA ANTO'STI MAMA DIVYANAAM VIBHOOTINAAM PARANTAPA  
ESHA TUDDESHATAHA PROKTA VIBHOOTER VISTARO MAYAA**

**O Parantapa, there is no end to My divine glories. This indeed is statement by Me of the particulars of My glories.**

Na: not;  
Antaha: end;  
Asti: exists;  
Mama: My;  
Vibhutim: glories;  
Esha: thus;  
Tu: indeed;  
Uddeshataha: brief statement;  
Proktaha: has been stated;  
Vibhuter: glories;  
Vistaro: particulars;  
Mayaa: by Me.

The Lord has given so far 54 examples of his glories. We know the population of moving and non-moving in the universe cannot be quantified.

After all, to give evidence of the presence of electricity, one needs to light just a few appliances only. There is no need to drive all the cars to realise the motor power of the vehicle for transport.

Just by hearing about the vibhuti, we cannot see Him everywhere. It is a life-long process of contemplation of the Truth that takes us to the destination. It is the intellectual eye of wisdom that has to see the Lord in all.

#### **Sloka 41**

**YAD YAD VIBHURIMAT SATVAM SREEMAD URJITAMEVA VAA  
TAT TAD EVAVAGACHA TVAM MAMA TEJOMSHA SAMBHAVAM**

**O Arjuna, whatever being that is glorious, prosperous and powerful in any being, know that to be only a fragment of My splendour.**

Yad yad: whatever;  
Vibhurat: glorious;  
Satvam: being;  
Sreemat: prosperous;  
Urjitam: powerful;  
Eva: also;  
Vaa: or;

Tat tad: that;  
Eva: only;  
Avagacha: know;  
Tvam: you;  
Teja: manifestation of;  
Amsha: part of;  
Sambhavam: the splendour.

Glory, prosperity, power are manifested in different people in different proportions in different periods of their lives.

The glory of the emperor who rules the land,  
Prosperity of the rich, including richness in knowledge,  
Power in those who hold position of authority,  
Could not have been there if the Lord as Atman was not within them.

One should learn to look at these as manifestations of the glory of the Lord and at the same time thank the Lord for blessing them with that special aspect.

Expression of the ego with these attributes is the cause for downfall of the individual/society.

The splendour of the sun cannot be measured by measuring the light that has illumined so many different things in the world. If not for the light from the sun, they would not have been manifest.

To put it differently, whatever we have is reflected glory of the Lord within and no more.

Is it not true that the reflection is not real? It is only a shadow of the real and similarly, glory, prosperity and power manifest in us is only a reflection of His vibhuti.

Let no one be proud of his glory, prosperity and power. In the course of one's life, these wane off. Kala (time) will take these away. But the Power of the Lord never wanes of. The Kala is under His command but we, the mortals are under the command of the "Kala".

The entire universe we know of and that which we do not know are all manifest only because of His presence and Grace.

By learning to look at the infinite in the finite, by seeing the soul in all jivas the seeker should gradually drop off the ego and this will lead to union with the Parabrahman.

## **Sloka 42**

**ATHAVA BAHUONAM EVA KIM JNATENA TAVARJUNA  
VISHTABHYAHAM IDAM KRITSNAM EKAMSHENA STHITHO JAGAT**

**O Arjuna, but of what avail to you is the knowledge of all these details? I exist supporting this whole universe with one fragment of Myself.**

Athava: or;  
Bahoona: many;  
Etena: by this;  
Jnatena: knowing;  
Tava: of you;  
Kim: what;  
Idam: this;

Kritsnaam: all;  
Jagat: universe;  
Ekamshena: a fragment of mine;  
Vishtabhya: pervading;  
Sthitaha: exists.

We come to the end of this chapter about the glory of the Lord. Sri Krishna is telling Arjuna that it is no use just by knowing all His glories. They are so vast that the human mind cannot fathom it at all.

We cannot even imagine the glory in terms of that of a river. It is nothing compared to that of the ocean.

All the waves, ripples that look magnificent are nothing compared to the great ocean. When He is pervading the entire universe we know of and that we do not know of, how can we assess His glory?

This statement is not made by the Lord to boast of His power. It is to make the seeker develop the quality of being humble and develop the habit of recognising the glory in all manifestations.

The infinite cannot be perceived by the intellect, mind and the sense organs.

By going through this description we are now taken to the next chapter, "Vishwa Roopa Sandarshanam". We should approach the next chapter with the understanding that we are part of the "Great One" and we are all enveloped in Him and His glory.

**Iti sreemad bhagawadgitasu upanisadsu brahma vidyayaam yoga sastre sree krishnarjuna samvade Vibhuti yogo nama dashamodhyayaha.**

**Thus completes the tenth chapter, "VIBHUTI YOGA", in the Srimad Bhagawadgita which is a Upanisad, Brahma Vidya and Yoga sastras in the form of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.**