

## 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.

Download available at:

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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 15: PURUṢOTTAMA PRĀPTI-YOGA

### INTRODUCTION

Sri Ramakrishna:  
The bounded soul is man,  
The liberated soul is “Iswara.”

The yoga to attain union with the Parabrahman.

Purushottama: best among the purushas - Parabrahman;  
Prapti: to attain;  
Yoga: Union with the Supreme Parabrahman.

The Gita can be divided into the following three sub-sections.  
The first section consists of chapters 1-8 and chapter 8 is “Akshara Parabrahma Yoga.”  
The second section is chapters 9-15 and chapter 15 is “Purushottama Prapti Yoga”.  
The last section is chapters 16-18 and chapter 18 is “Moksha Sanyasa Yoga”.

The first section, we can say is like getting basic degree in spiritual science and to get to understand the Parabrahman.

The second section is like obtaining the “Masters” degree and to get to understand the principle of “Parabrahman” in greater depth. Towards this progress the glory of Parabrahman was given in detail followed by the vision of the “Universal Form”. Bhakti/devotion gained from this experience is to assist the seeker to develop an in-depth knowledge of the field and the knower of the field and finally capacity to analyse his gunas. On transcending the gunas, the seeker will be able to understand the Parabrahman more clearly and this chapter is concerning an in-depth knowledge of the “Purushottama.”

The last section is like getting “Post-Doctorate” degree wherein even the desire to attain Moksha has to be abandoned.

The Arjunas of the world who are the sincere spiritual seekers with a desire to understand and unite with the Supreme Purusha, have to study and analyse the message in the 14 chapters so that they can understand the philosophy of this 15th chapter.

One needs to have the art of explaining in a simple language what a pen is to someone who does not know what a pen is and has not seen it. This chapter is on this principle.

Parabrahman is not simply something that is “not known” to majority but “He” is “Un-knowable.” We will get a beautiful description of this “Un-knowable” in this chapter.

“Purusha” is “A being”. We, the humans are given the title of “Purushas of the world”.

The human body is a nine gated city, the “Pura”, we have studied so in the introduction.  
“Isha” is the Lord.

The Lord of the Pura is “Purusha” and he is the ruler of the nine gated city.

On an individual basis, the Purusha in each body is “The Atman.” Union of the Atman with the five gross elements (prakriti) is the cause for creation of life on this universe.

The best among all the Purushas is “He who creates, sustains and brings dissolution of life on this universe and who upholds Dharma, uproots evil and protects the righteous”.

The un-manifest Brahman from where the entire creation took place is “Purushottama.”

This chapter is about lifting us, the mortals, from the known phenomenon (birth and death with a name, form and qualities) to the un-known. (The immortal without name, form or qualities.)

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।

छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥1॥

śhrī-bhagavān uvācha

ūrdhva-mūlam adhaḥ-śhākham aśhvattham prāhur avyayam ।

chhandānsi yasya parṇāni yas taṁ veda sa veda-vit ॥1॥

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा

गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः ।

अधश्च मूलान्यनुसन्ततानि

कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥2॥

adhaśh chordhvaṁ prasṛitās tasya śhākhā

guṇa-pravṛiddhā viśhaya-pravālāḥ ।

adhaśh cha mūlāny anusantatāni

karmānubandhīni manuśhya-loke ॥2॥

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते

नान्तो न चादिर्न च सम्प्रतिष्ठा ।

अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल

मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्वा ॥ 3॥

na rūpam asyeha tathopalabhyate

nānto na chādir na cha sampratishṭhā ।

aśhvattham enaṁ su-virūḍha-mūlam

asaṅga-śhastreṇa dṛiḍhena chhittvā ॥3॥

Sloka 1

**SHRI-BHAGAVAN UVACHA  
URDHVA-MULAM ADHAH-SHAKHAM ASHVATTHAM PRAHUR AVYAYAM  
CHHANDANSI YASYA PARNANI YAS TAM VEDA SA VEDA-VIT**

**The Lord said:**

**They (the wise/knower of the Vedas) speak of the aswattha tree (of samsara) having its roots above and branches below and the Vedas, its leaves. He, who knows it, is the knower of the Vedas.**

urdhva moolam: with roots above;  
adhah shakam: with branches below;  
ashwattam: aswattha tree (of samsara);  
prahuhu: (the elders or the vedas) they speak of;  
avyayam: imperishable;  
chandamsi: Vedas;  
parnani: the leaves;  
yasya: to which;  
yaha: who;  
tam: that;  
Veda: knows;  
saha: he;  
vedavit: knower of the Vedas.

**Sloka 2**

**ADHASH CHORDHVAM PRASRITAS TASYA SHAKHA  
GUNA-PRAVRIDDHA VISHAYA-PRAVALAH  
ADHASH CHA MULANY ANUSANTATANI  
KARMANUBANDHINI MANUSHYA-LOKE**

**The branches of this tree are nourished by the gunas and the sense objects are its tender buds; it spreads downwards and upwards; and below in the world of men, are stretched forth its roots ending in action.**

adhash cha: and from below;  
oordhwam: upwards;  
prasrutasasya: spread;  
tasya: of the tree;  
shakha: branches;  
guna pravruddhaha: nourished by the gunas;  
vishaya pravalaha: sense objects are its tender buds;  
adhascha: below;  
moolani: its roots;  
anusantatani: are stretched forth;  
karmanu bhandini: bondage by actions;  
manushya loke': in the world of men.

### Sloka 3

NA RUPAM ASYEHA TATHOPALABHYATE  
NANTO NA CHADIR NA CHA SAMPRATISHTHA  
ASHVATTHAM ENAM SU-VIRUDHA-MULAM  
ASANGA-SHASTRENA DRIDHENA CHHITVA

**The real form of this tree of samsara is not perceived in the world. Its beginning, its end and its middle is not seen. Cut asunder this firm-rooted Aswatha tree of samsara with the strong axe of non-attachment.**

na: not;  
roopam: form;  
asya: of this (tree);  
iha: here (in this world);  
tatha: in that manner;  
na upalabhyate: is not perceived;  
na: not;  
anto: end;  
adhir na cha: and not the beginning;  
na: not;  
sampratishta: and its existence (middle);  
ashwathamenam: this aswatha (tree of samsara);  
suviroodha moolam: firm rooted;  
asanga shastrena: with the axe of non-attachment;  
chitva: cut asunder;  
dhrudena: firmly/strong.

These three slokas have a depth of meaning attached to them and it is not easy to grasp the meaning.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।  
छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥१॥

śhrī-bhagavān uvācha

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chhandānsi yasya parṇāni yas tam veda sa veda-vit ॥१॥

### Sloka 1

SHRI-BHAGAVAN UVACHA  
URDHVA-MULAM ADHAH-SHAKHAM ASHVATTHAM PRAHUR AVYAYAM  
CHHANDANSI YASYA PARNANI YAS TAM VEDA SA VEDA-VIT

**The Lord said:**

**They (the wise/knower of the Vedas) speak of the aswattha tree (of samsara) having its roots above and branches below and the Vedas, its leaves. He, who knows it, is the knower of the Vedas.**

The life in this world/samsara is compared to the Aswatha tree.

The Aswatha tree has roots below and branches above.

But, we are told, that this “Aswatha tree of samsara” has roots above and branches below. Why?

The bondage we experience in life is due to:

The attachment of the Soul with the body and the attachment of the body to the world around.

For the seeker who would like to attain Moksha, the first step is to know who he is and why he is not able to achieve the end result. Each one of us is really “The Atman” within. By identification with the mind/body/senses equipment we associate ourselves with the field/kshetra about which we have discussed in detail in chapter 13.

The reason that prevents us from achieving the goal is “The Vasanas” and we have studied in chapter 14 that we have to strive to become a “Gunatita” and transcend the gunas.

Examples are for us to understand the subject matter and what better example than a tree and that too the Aswatha tree.

The trees have roots, stems, branches and leaves. From the branches of the stems spring forth the buds that form the flowers and the fruits.

The roots bind it to the earth.

The trunk is the main body.

Nourished by the roots and by the atmosphere/nature, the trunk spreads forth as the branches and from the branches spring forth the buds, flowers and the fruits.

We are deeply rooted to the earth we are born into. Attracted by the nature we get bound to this world.

It is therefore good to understand the example of a tree.

It is still good to understand the same by using the example of “Ashwatha tree”.

Botanically it is known as “Ficus Religiosa” or “The pipal tree”. It is a massive tree and compared to any other tree it has a very long life span. The “Bodhi” tree underneath which sat Lord Buddha and got enlightenment is an “Aswatha” tree. It is said to be more than 2000yrs old and is still surviving today.

Compared to the life span of us, the humans, we can say it is “Eternal.”

But, it is “relatively eternal” and not “absolutely eternal”. The only “Absolutely Eternal” is Parabrahman who has no beginning and no end.

The Aswatha tree has a beginning and is bound to have an end but compared to the average human life span of 100 yrs or so, it has relatively no beginning and no end.

So, Aswatha tree is a good example to take in understanding the philosophy.

The tree as such has strong connection to the earth below by its roots. Aswatha tree has very strong roots and is bound very strongly to the earth.

We, born from the will of Parabrahman (who is said to reside in higher worlds than the sphere of earth we all live in) are really having our roots above.

This is the basis of writing the family tree. The family tree is traced upwards and as it is traced upwards it leads to the first person in the family tree and in the case of all forms of life on this earth, it is Parabrahman who created us.

But, this tree is turned upside down from us or we are said to perceive this tree of life upside down. Our roots are strongly rooted to the earth below.

If we see the reflection of a tree under water, it looks upside down.

We are unable to perceive the tree of life clearly and unfortunately are bound to this world.

Coming back to the Aswatha tree: it has not only roots below but also has aerial roots that binds it to the earth that much stronger.

We, the humans, have developed the roots like the Aswatha and are strongly bound to this world.

In the older days, because of its massive size and the consequent large area of shelter it provided, it was used by way-side travellers on a horse to take rest under it in the middle of their journey. The horses were tied to its branches to get shelter and the travellers took rest under the shade of the tree (on a massive platform build specifically for this purpose). In Sanskrit the horse is “Aswa” and hence the name “Aswatha tree.”

Sree Shankaracharya has given us another beautiful explanation for the word “Aswatha”:

“swa” means “tomorrow”;

“stha” means that which “remains”;

“swastha” is that which “remains tomorrow”; and

“aswatha” is that which does not remain tomorrow.

“Samasara” is that which is there today and “apparently” not there tomorrow, it is “Aswatha.”

They (the wise/knower of the Vedas) speak of the Aswatha tree (of samsara) having its roots above and branches below:

Our roots are from the Parabrahman and our branches are into this world we live in.

Just like the ignorant that does not look at anything straight, we covered by maya act like the ignorant and are looking at the tree of samsara upside down.

Prauhu: the elders/knowers of the Vedas say:

The ancient seers who accepted the Vedas as authoritative source are the spiritually wise and knowers of the Vedas. They have said that the samsara is like the “Aswatha tree” and add:

“Avyayam”: “indestructible”. Really speaking it is only comparatively indestructible. This we can say is true by looking at its life span and comparing to the average life span of the humans.

In Kathopanisad we come across the same message. It says: “samsara has roots above and branches below and this is Aswatha and it is eternal.” True to our philosophy, Lord Krishna has quoted Vedas and Upanisads as the authoritative source of knowledge.

On one side we are told that it is “not there tomorrow” (Aswatha) and immediately we are told it is “Avyayam”. (imperishable).

Is it not a contradictory statement?

Because, the Lord immediately adds “Prahuravyayam” - “the knowers of the Vedas say so.”

We, the mortals say that the life ends tomorrow when death approaches.

But the learned scholars say that the life is an on-going cycle of births and deaths and it is relatively immortal.

This is the explanation for the first half of the first sloka.

Now, the second half of the first sloka:

Whose leaves are the Vedas:

The botanists say that the leaves, evaporate water, create an osmotic imbalance and the roots absorb water from the earth.

The leaves do take carbon di oxide and let go of oxygen. We, the humans, depend on oxygen for survival. (We also need something to take up the carbon di oxide we exhale with every single breathe.)

In autumn the leaves drop off and the trees look bare, with no beauty in them. Cutting off the leaves from the tree would stunt the growth of the tree.

The Vedas, the power source of eternal knowledge give us the guidelines for proper actions for the benefit of life on earth. Without them, there is no guide/authoritative source for correct action. Actions do bind us to the world and actions indirectly lift us from the world of samsara as well. The entire world lives on “action” by the residents on this earth. The moment we stop our actions, technically the world will come to an end.

Hence, the Vedas are compared to the leaves on the tree.

To summarise the first sloka: samsara:

The roots come from Brahman,  
Its trunk is the buddhi,  
Its branches are the universe,  
Its leaves are the Vedas.

Just as the leaves protect the tree, the Vedas protect the life on earth.

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा  
गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः |  
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसन्ततानि  
कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ||2||

adhaśh chordhvaṁ prasṛitās tasya śhākhā  
guṇa-pravṛiddhā viṣhaya-pravālāḥ |  
adhaśh cha mūlāny anusantatāni  
karmānubandhīni manuṣhya-loke ||2||

**Sloka 2**

**ADHASH CHORDHVAM PRASRITAS TASYA SHAKHA  
GUNA-PRAVRIDDHA VISHAYA-PRAVALAH  
ADHASH CHA MULANY ANUSANTATANI  
KARMANUBANDHINI MANUSHYA-LOKE**



**The branches of this tree are nourished by the gunas and the sense objects are its tender buds; it spreads downwards and upwards; and below in the world of men, are stretched forth its roots ending in action.**

Adhascha urdhvam prasarutasya sakhaha:  
Its branches spread both below and upwards.

Gunapravruddhaha vishaya pravalaha:  
The branches of this tree are nourished by the gunas and the sense objects are its tender buds:

The tree spreads out by its various branches that spring forth from its trunk.

The tree of samsara spreads in this world by so many shoots that branch out from it. The branches can be compared to the manifold life on earth. Nourishment to them comes from the gunas. In the absence of gunas there will not be any activity at all. So, the gunas are said to nourish the branches of the tree.

The sense objects are its tender buds:

The sense objects are the source of “desire” which is the motive force for action. So, the buds from which the branches shoot out are compared to the “desires”. Because of desires all our actions stem forth. Every new desire creates a new branch of action.

“It spread upwards and downwards”:

“It” refers to the tree that branch out, the tree being “the tree of samsara”.

Every action has a result and,  
The result of good actions due to the gunas lifts us upwards (towards the heaven and the other higher lokas);  
Or, if our actions are bad the consequent results push us downwards (towards lower spheres of existence).

The desires in the end are responsible for our future. They will bind us to this world and we end up having to swim in the ocean of samsara with consequent and endless cycle of births and deaths.

On one side the original roots keep us connected to the Brahman but the strong aerial roots that spring forth from the tree of samsara shifts the emphasis on to the world and gets us all bound to the world.

Adhascha moolanyanusandadani:  
And below the roots are stretched forth.

Karmanubandheeni manushya loke’:  
Originating actions, (binding) in the world of men.

The roots below bind the tree to the world strongly.  
The binding effect of the samsara becomes stronger by the actions and reactions to the actions. These are due to the desires/hatred we develop as a result of contact with the sense world.

We, the men/women/children on this planet earth, are bound to the earth. The earth is known as “karma bhoomi” (land of actions).

To understand the tree of samsara further:

The trees in general are usually planted so that they are on either side of the road. If they are overgrown, their branches sometimes become an obstacle for those using the road. If the branches are falling on the road by the tree being uprooted, it becomes an obstacle for the travellers on the road.

Similarly, the tree of samsara and the branches (the gunas), can become obstacle for the spiritual seeker. The seeker has to overcome the branches/gunas which are blocking the road and continue his spiritual journey.

न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते  
नान्तो न चादिर्न च सम्प्रतिष्ठा ।  
अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरुद्धमूल  
मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्वा ॥ 3॥

na rūpam asyeha tathopalabhyate  
nānto na chādir na cha sampratiṣṭhā ।  
aśvattham enam su-virūḍha-mūlam  
asaṅga-śhastreṇa dṛiḍhena chhittvā ॥3॥

### Sloka 3

**NA RUPAM ASYEHA TATHOPALABHYATE  
NANTO NA CHADIR NA CHA SAMPRATISHTHA  
ASHVATTHAM ENAM SU-VIRUDHA-MULAM  
ASANGA-SHASTRENA DRIDHENA CHHITVA**

**The real form of this tree of samsara is not perceived in the world. Its beginning, its end and its middle is not seen. Cut asunder this firm-rooted Aswatha tree of samsara with the strong axe of non-attachment.**

Na roopamasya tatha upalabhyate:  
The real form of this tree is not perceived in the world.  
Na anto' na cha adir na samratishthaha:  
Its end or the beginning and its middle is not seen,

The tree of samsara is difficult to comprehend by us, the mortals.  
We have three levels of perception:  
At the level of the sense organs;  
At the level of the mind;  
At the level of the intellect.

The great force, “Maya” keeps us bound within the limits of these three levels of perception.

The force that keeps it alive is the “Atman” within each form. But, the Atman is not seen/perceived by the senses, mind or the intellect.  
We are immersed in the life inside this physical world so deeply.  
We all had a past, we are in the present and we have a future.

We have a vague memory of few recent past incidents. At each stage of life, we get involved in that play of life, we forget the previous stages.

We will not proceed further in our understanding of the subject if we start looking at the tree of life too literally. The aim of the spiritual study is to get the “Tatvaartha” (understanding the spiritual meaning and not the word meaning - vakyartha).

It is a fact that when we look at any tree, we really do not see the tree in its entirety. We will not be able to see its roots.

In the case of the tree of samsara about which the introduction to this chapter is:

The samsara has a past, present and future.

We certainly have no knowledge of our (real) past,

We are in the middle (present) but not aware that it is the middle,

We certainly do not know the future;

Hence, the statement:

Its end, beginning or existence is not seen as such.

The only way to see the same is by developing the spiritual eye of knowledge. This can be had only by the grace of Lord. Arjuna did receive this Grace and therefore was able to see “past, present and future” of the universe.

Our beginning is from the “Brahman” but with the deep rooted attachment to life we cannot see “our beginning.”

We do not analyse our existence of the “present”. This is because of ignorance which is due to the accumulation of so many vasanas and getting bound so strongly to the world around.

Hence the word: Suvirudhamoolam (firm rooted):

The tree of samsara has been firmly fixed with its wide spreading roots. It means that our attachment to the objects is spread far and wide. It is very difficult for us the ordinary mortals to cut off our attachments.

How to cut off this attachment?

How can we then come out of this life?

Asangashastrena dhrudena chitva:

Asanga: no attachment (to any of the worldly objects/possessions and vairagya/detachment)

Once we can get an idea of how the roots of trees can cause damage to the neighbouring properties, And how our attachments cause damage all round, (to us and others too).

We are said to be on the path to attain the knowledge.

We can analyse deeply the implications of getting attached to the life around and,

“Learn the art of detachment in attachment”.

It is no use just running away from life but it is imperative that we understand the message from the sacred text and practice the philosophy it preaches. The art of developing “Vairagya” (detachment) has been stressed so many times in the sacred text.

It has to be a firm resolve to develop “detachment in attachment.”

This sloka is to give us an idea of what to do with the “Seen” (drishya).

When there is “seen” there has to be “a seer” (drik).

We have been given the picture of “Drishya” of our life.

With the intellectual eye of wisdom we can be “seers/drik” and visualise the “drishya/seen”.

This is the end of the summary of the first three slokas of this chapter.

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं  
यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।  
तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये  
यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥4॥

tataḥ padam tat parimārgitavyam  
yasmin gatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ |  
tam eva chādyam puruṣham prapadye  
yataḥ pravṛtṭiḥ prasṛitā purāṇī ॥4॥

#### Sloka 4

**TATAH PADAM TAT PARIMARGITAVYAM  
YASMIN GATA NA NIVARTANTI BHUYAH  
TAM EVA CHADYAM PURUSHAM PRAPADYE  
YATAH PRAVRITTIH PRASRITA PURANI**

**Then, that state of Paramatma, entering which there is no return, should be sought after. I seek refuge in that primeval Purusha, from which stemmed forth all activity, from time immemorial.**

tataha: then;  
padam: Goal;  
tat: that;  
parimargitavyam: should be sought for;  
yasmin: in which state;  
gataha: entered;  
na nivartante: no return;  
bhooyaha: again;  
tam: in that;  
eva: even;  
chadyam (cha adyam): and primeval;  
Purusham: the Purusha;  
prapadye: I seek;  
yataha: from;  
pravruttim: action (refers to the samsara);  
prasruta: stemmed forth;  
puranee: beginningless, (from time immemorial).

After giving a geographical description of the family tree, we are now getting introduced into the details of the destination (gamyā).

The destination which the Lord advocates is “that state of Paramatma, entering which there is no return.”

There is no definite designation with a specific name like various lokas/spheres above the earth (heaven, Brahma Loka etc). These are all spheres to receive the benefits of the fruits of good actions but also have a date of expiry to that period of happiness experienced. The destination/gamya is “That state of Paramatma” which is “Sat-Chit-Ananda” (Truth, Knowledge, Bliss).

“Ananda” (Bliss) is a state of experience.

All our life we strive for happiness. The efforts in life by majority are usually for experiencing “happiness”.

This can be realised by dedicated hard work to achieve the success.

We have studied already that this state of happiness experienced is relative in relation to “Time”. We have studied already that the happiness has time span of its own and may even end in sorrow.

Whereas, the “Ananda” on uniting with the “State of Parabrahman” (by developing equanimity) has no birth, no growth, no decay and no death. It is one absolute level of contentment.

This comes from “Chit” (Knowledge).

At the end of each year of study in school/college the students feel happy in having obtained the required knowledge to get a pass that year. But, there is a thirst to obtain more knowledge and need to strive for getting that higher knowledge.

When we progress from one stage/ashrama in life to the next stage, there is a lot to learn in that stage and to prepare for the next stage of life.

So the Life is an on-going process of striving for knowledge, getting that knowledge, entering into the next stage of life, striving for knowledge in that stage and so on and so forth.

We should be striving to understand what is, “Sat-Chit-Ananda” and aim for the Supreme knowledge (Para Vidya). We also need to develop the knowledge that is needed to survive in this world. (Apara Vidya)

“Para Vidya”: “Knowledge of Parabrahman” which is “Supreme, Highest knowledge” (of Brahman)  
“Apara Vidya”: worldly knowledge. That which is not the knowledge of the Parabrahman is “A-para Vidya.”

“I seek refuge”: (Prapadye)

It is another word of importance to understand.

We are in one loka.

We would like to go to another loka.

In the world we are in, it is like wishing to go from one country to another.

We, the seekers who would like to enter the “State of Paramatma” (for the Bliss) do not have a right of entry to that state. We have to be like refugees wishing to enter His abode.

We have to depend upon the Grace of the “Paramatma”.

We have just one duty - continue to discharge our ordained duties. Work in the spirit of “Karmanye vadhikaraste” (sloka 47, chapter 2).

We can seek refuge to enter into His Kingdom and it is entirely His Grace that will let us achieve the goal and reach the destination.

How to achieve Para Vidya?

Let go of worldly attachments and develop attachment to the Supreme. It is simply the process of gradually letting go of the “Apara” (lower) and holding on to “Para” (higher).

a) Vairagya:

It is detachment in attachment to the physical world and its possessions. While making efforts to get the worldly knowledge (Apara Vidya) the sincere seeker has a duty to strive to get the “Spiritual Knowledge” (Para Vidya) and learn the art of detachment in attachment to possessions acquired in this life.

b) Attachment to “Para Vidya”.

Prasruta puranee: (stemmed forth from time immemorial.)

The learned sages say “Only when He desired to create”. We have no historical data to give the date when the creation started. The Vedas say the Paramatman is “Anaadi” (no date of beginning) and He created the universe.

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा  
अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।  
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञै  
गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥5॥

nirmāna-mohā jita-saṅga-doṣhā  
adhyātma-nityā vinivṛitta-kāmāḥ ।  
dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha-duḥkha-sanjñair  
gachchhanty amūḍhāḥ padam avyayam tat ॥5॥

Sloka 5

**NIRMANA-MOHA JITA-SANGA-DOSHA  
ADHYATMA-NITYA VINIVRITTA-KAMAH  
DVANDVAIR VIMUKTAH SUKHA-DUHKHA-SANJNAIR  
GACHCHHANTY AMUDHAH PADAM AVYAYAM TAT**

**Free from pride and delusion, conquering the evil of attachment, dwelling constantly in the Self, the desires being completely stilled, freed from pairs of opposites called pleasure and pain, the un-deluded reach the eternal goal.**

nir: freed;  
mana: pride;  
moha: delusion;  
jita: conquering;  
sanga: attachment;  
dosha: evil;  
adhyatma: in the Self;  
nitya: constantly (dwelling);  
vinivrutta kamaha: desires completely turned away;  
dwandair: pairs of opposites;  
vimuktaha: freed;  
sukha dukha samjnaih: known (called) as pleasure and pain;  
gachhanty: reach;  
amudhaha: un-deluded;

padam: goal;  
avyayam: eternal;  
Tat: That.

This sloka gives steps/means to reach the goal.

What is the goal?

“Tat”: “That”.

It refers to the “Tat” in The Maha Vakya, “Tat Tvam Asi” (Thou art That). It is directing us to the goal which is not millions of miles away from us physically. It is within us but still appearing to be millions of miles away because of our strong attachment to our own body and our surroundings.

Let us briefly study the Mahavakya “Tat Tvam Asi” meaning “Thou Art That.”

“Tat” is “That”;

“Tvam” is “You”;

“Asi” is “are”.

“Tat” is “past”,

“Tvam” is “present”.

“You”, the present, is really “that” (Parabrahman) who “is Eternal.”

You have forgotten “the past” concerning your origin. We studied in the first three slokas the art of tracing our roots “above” which will lead us to the “Supreme”.

Unfortunately, like the upside down family tree, we are taking the downward path and getting attached to the physical world and our roots are getting strongly bound to the earth.

The goal for the spiritual seekers to achieve “Purushottama Prapti” which should really become “Yoga” in its own merit is to reach “That goal” which is “Tat”.

Padam avyayam: the Eternal Goal.

Whatever we achieve in our life in relation to the world we live in, is only temporary. Either we depart from it or it departs from us sooner or later. The only goal which is permanent is “Tat”.

After all, this chapter is “Purushottam Prapti Yoga”.

Five qualities that are needed to be developed by the seeker are given in this sloka. They are:

Nirmana moha

Jitasanga dosha

Dwandair vimuktaha

Adhyatma nitya

Vinivrutta kamaha

Dwandair vimuktaha sukha dukha samjnair: freed from the pairs of opposites called pleasures and pains.

What do we get by achieving the goal in relation to the material aims and objectives?

We get the pairs of opposites known as “Pleasures and pains.” This has been discussed several times in the previous chapters.

Liberation from desires is the first step to be taken by the seeker. This in turn leads to destruction of all stored vasanas. (vasana kshaya).

Initially one must know what constitutes “good” and what constitutes “bad desires”,

Then, learn to drop the bad desires,

And finally to drop even the good desires.

Attachment to pleasures is “Bhoga” and attachment/union with Atman is “Yoga”. The seeker must make efforts in yoga and not be a “Bhogi”. (who runs after pleasures)

So, what is the remedy? How can we get happiness that is Eternal?

“amoodhaha”: by being “un-deluded”

And

“adhyatma nitya”: constantly dwelling in the Self.

There are broadly speaking three types of men in this world. They are:

- a) Those who constantly fix their mind on the Atman
- b) Those who meditate on the Atman and make attempts to fix their mind on the Atman at certain periods of time in a day
- c) Those who remain fixed on worldly objects at all times.

This sloka is for the second group of people.

“Nitya”: constantly dwell on the Self is the advice.

Whatever activities we undertake daily has to be done with constant remembrance of the “Atman” within and “Atman” all round.

It refers to “Tvam” in the Mahavakya “Tat Tvam Asi”. “Tvam” is “You”. “Tat” (that Parabrahman) is inside you “Tvam”. You are really “Tat” proclaim the Vedas.

Delusion in relation to what?

We are deluded by the effect of the stored vasanas in the mind and the so called objects of pleasures that are abundant around us. Therefore we must learn the art of “Vinivrutta kamaha.” We must suppress the feeling to go after the pleasures.

How to achieve this state of balance of the mind?

Nirmana moha and jitasanga dosha and adhyatma nitya:

Freed from pride and delusion,

With victory over the evil of attachment and

Ever constantly dwelling in the Self

The seeker can succeed in his efforts.

What is “Pride”?

“Pride” is defined as “setting too high a value of oneself or one’s own importance and a feeling of superiority”. It is an inflated account of one’s own importance and an error of judgement.

“Pride” is one of the strong evils. In this state, we overestimate our strength. It deludes us. We consider that we are strong and can achieve anything in life. We tend to show off the objects we manage to get for ourselves. This refers to pride of beauty, pride of success in education, pride of position in the society, pride of worldly possessions and many more such things in life. We forget that whatever we have and whatever we manage to get are all momentary possessions. The tool of the Lord, “Time” weakens what we have or takes it away from us or we are taken away from it.

We have seen many examples of ruin of those who show this quality. By achieving victory in elections and becoming a Prime Minister should actually make the person feel and act humble. If not, he will ruin himself and many more around him.

The truly wise on the other hand consider everything in life as “Grace of the Lord” and do not show off their wisdom.



The seeker has nowhere to turn to fight this evil because the evil is within him. He can achieve victory only by developing the art of “Detachment in attachment”. He should not forget the truth: “even this is momentary” (in relation to whatever he/she is experiencing at that period of his/her life).

Opposite to this quality is the beauty of “Satsanga” which is “attachment to the Truth”.

(Sree Shankaracharya in Bhaja Govindam:

Sat sangatve nissangatvan

Nissangatve nirmohatvam

Nirmohatve nischala tatvam

Nischal tatve jeeven muktam

Bhaja govindam bhaja govidam bhaja mooda mate’)

Sree Ramakrishna says:

The bound soul is man,

The liberated soul is “Iswara.”

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः ।  
यद्गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥6॥

na tad bhāsayate sūryo na śhaśhāṅko na pāvakaḥ |  
yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama ॥6॥

## Sloka 6

**NA TAD BHASAYATE SURYO NA SHASHANKO NA PAVAKAH  
YAD GATVA NA NIVARTANTE TAD DHAMA PARAMAN MAMA**

**That the sun illumines not, nor the moon, nor the fire; having reached which (the wise) return not, that is My supreme abode.**

na: not;

tad: that;

bhashayate: illumines;

na shashankaha: nor the moon;

na pavakaha: nor the fire;

yad gatva: to which having reached;

na nivartante: not return;

tad dhama: that abode;

paramam: Supreme;

mama: My.

The sun, moon, fire are the three examples given in this sloka.

Examples for what?

Examples to describe the brightness of the Supreme abode of Parabrahman.

What does the brightness represent?

Brightness represents the “Knowledge”.

The abode of the Supreme Knowledge is the abode of Parabrahman.

The Vedas declare that the “Supreme Knowledge” and “Parabrahman” are not two different entities. “Parabrahman” is “Knowledge personification”. “He” is “Chit” aspect of “Sat Chit Ananda”.

Let us now look at these three examples and relate it to our own body.

We see the sun, the moon and the fire with our eyes. The three have one common feature, it being, “They shine”. They are the sources of light for us that will help us to carry on our activities. We cannot carry out any activity in darkness. There has to be a source of light to conduct activities.

The important point to note is that the eyes are only the medium/tool to see the sun, moon or the fire. The eyes cannot see without the mind within, the mind cannot see without the intellect within and the intellect cannot see without the Atman within.

The individual has to be alive to see them.

The sastras therefore say that the brightness of the “Life Force” within us illumines these three and anything else in the world around us. They say that the brightness within us that makes us see the sun, moon and the fire is only from the “Parabrahman” who resides in each as “The Atman”.

We can understand it further by observing a visually handicapped person. The person cannot see physically because of the handicap but he still carries on most of the activities. This is because the “Atman” within that individual is the “Light” that assists him to carry out the activities.

Having reached which return not:

It has to be understood as “having attained the Supreme Knowledge” there is no return to the mundane world.

Who can reach that abode?

“The wise”.

He who has this knowledge is said to be a wise man.

He who has the Highest Knowledge is the one and the only “Parabrahman”. This knowledge is “Para Vidya”. The seeker who is successful in his efforts will unite with this knowledge and is considered to have achieved “Liberation” (Moksha).

The knowledge of anything other than that of the Parabrahman is lower knowledge. It is “Apara Vidya”.

The Vedas, the Supreme authority on the subject of “Parabrahman”, the Mundaka Upanisad says are also “Apara Vidya”. They too are considered as “lower knowledge” and by themselves are not The Supreme Parabrahman. Taking example of the knowledge of sciences we are familiar with, the highest texts that are used by the Post Doctorate students are also the tools for getting the “Post Doctorate” degree. They are not the degree themselves.

Similarly, the Vedas are the highest and the best tools to achieve entry into the abode of “The Supreme Knowledge”.

We can understand this further by looking at it from another angle.

It is concerning “The subject and the object.”

The Parabrahman is the “Subject” and we are the “objects”. The study of the sacred texts is to understand the “Subject”. The rule of thumb is: “The object can never be the subject.”

The “seeker cannot be the seen”. “Seeker is Drik” and “seen is Drishya”.

The Supreme Parabrahman is “Adreshyam”, meaning “not visible” say the Upanisads. What is visible has to be an “object of seeing”.

We are able to see because of the “Life force” within. The “Life Force” is the “subject” that sees and it is “The Atman” within. Even with our physical eyes we cannot see the Atman within. This is because the Atman being the subject, the rest of our body is only an object. What really sees is the “Life force” within and in its absence (meaning death of the individual) the eyes will not see anything.

On an individual basis, we are the subjects and the world around us is the object. Unless we, the subjects are there, there cannot be objects. This is because we perceive the objects with our senses.

Using the telescope we can see the stars in the yonder regions. But, turning around the telescope we cannot see ourselves. It is impossible to make the subject and object function together at one and the same place.

Is it not true that the one object we cannot see for ourselves is: “The eyes.” We can never see our own eyes. We can only see the reflection of the eyes in a mirror.

The moon, sun or the fire cannot see the life force within. When alive one can see these three because of the life force within.

We have learnt that:

The sun illumines the eyes and the deva for the eyes is the sun, (the sun being a ball of fire, light from the fire illumines the eyes),

The sound illumines the ears and the deva for the ear is space,

The touch illumines the skin and the deva for the skin is air,

Water illumines the tongue and the deva for the tongue is water and finally,

The earth illumines the nose and the deva for the nose is earth.

The five gross elements, earth, water, fire, air and space illumine the five sense organs and bless us to see the world.

The mind has to be functioning for the senses to work. The mind is the superior officer that illumines the sense organs. It is the subject and the sense organs are the objects.

Going further deeper, the mind functions only when the individual is alive and what makes one alive is “The Atman”. “The Atman” which is “The Light of Conscience” is the subject and rest of the body is “Object.”

Therefore (neither) the sun (eyes) nor the moon or the fire, meaning:

Our own eyes cannot see the Atman within.

In a dark cave one cannot see anything including himself. But he is still aware that he is there. He does not need the sense organs to see himself. The awareness of oneself is “Knowledge” and the seers say this awareness is the: “Consciousness within that illumines all.”

The awareness of being alive because of the Life Force within is “Prajnanam” and the Vedas declare “Prajnanam Brahma”.

“yad gatva na nivartante tad dhamam paramam mama” is reiterating the meaning of the words “gachantyamudhaha” in the last verse.

ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।  
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥7॥

**mamaivānśho jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ |  
manaḥ-śhaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi prakṛiti-sthāni karṣhati ||7||**

### **Sloka 7**

**MAMAIVANSHO JIVA-LOKE JIVA-BHUTAH SANATANAH  
MANAH-SHASHTHANINDRIYANI PRAKRITI-STHANI KARSHATI**

**Only an eternal portion of Myself has become the soul in the world of the living. He draws the five senses, abiding in the prakriti with mind as the sixth sense.**

mamaiva (mama eva): even/only My;  
amshaha: portion/part;  
jiva loke': in the world of living;  
jiva bhootaha: having become a soul;  
sanatanaha: eternal/ancient;  
manas shashtani: with the mind as the sixth;  
indriyani: the senses;  
prakrutisthani: abiding in prakriti;  
karshati: draws.

This sloka emphasises the divine nature of all of us in this universe. There should not be any differentiation on grounds of religion, caste, creed, colour, nationality etc. It is not just one named God for one particular group of people but to the principle of one single divinity and the Hindus refer to it as "Parabrahman."

Mamaivamsho jiva loke jiva bhootaha santanaha:  
"Only an eternal portion of Myself" should be understood as: "A portion of Myself which is Eternal".  
"Portion of Myself" refers to the "Soul" (the life principle/energy within). "This soul is Eternal" is one interpretation of this sentence.

We have studied already that the Soul identifying with the physical body gets associated with the body and forgets its original divinity. It is "The maya" (illusion) due to the power of the gunas. This is responsible for the feeling of "I" ness with the happiness, sorrows of life that come with it. It goes through the process of several births and deaths of various experiences until the moment it realises its true divine nature and becomes one with the Parabrahman. This is "Moksha" (Liberation).

So according to this way of understanding, the Soul, like the Parabrahman is said to be "Eternal".

On the other hand if we take it as: "only a portion of My eternal Self": here, the emphasis is that the Parabrahman is eternal and a portion of it becomes the soul in individual beings on this universe.

Either way the truth remains that the individual soul which has become the jiva is nothing but a portion of "Parabrahman." Both the Parabrahman and the Soul are eternal.

The Soul draws the five senses abiding in the prakruti with the mind as the sixth sense:

The five senses are the Jnanendriyas: eyes, ears, nose, tongue and the skin, each with a specialised power of perception. The senses abide in prakriti. Prakriti is the five great elements (Pancha Maha

Bhootas) which are the earth, water, fire, air and space. The five senses bring in information about the prakruti to the mind.

The important word to understand is “Karshati”. The soul which has become the jiva, draws the nature to itself via the senses and the mind. As a consequence it is totally involved with the physical world around and loses the memory concerning its real identity as “The Soul”. The jiva imposes on itself the limitations of the body (birth, growth, disease, decay and death).

The experts give us the example of the pot and the space to understand this apparent confusion between the Paramatma and the Jivatma.

There are a number of pots and each pot encloses within it an amount of space. As long as the pot is in existence the space which it occupies is “pot space”. When the pot is broken, the “pot space” is no more and it has become one with the vast space (akasha). The limitations of the individual pot space are imposed on the vast space. The pot space and the vast space are one and the same and have the same qualities of the space.

Similarly, in each house there are a number of rooms separated by the walls built around them and different houses are separated from each other by the limitation of boundaries imposed on them. The feeling of my house, your house, and their house are imposed on the vast space. When the houses are demolished the house space is one with the vast space.

Similarly all the blessed attributes of “Paramatma” are present in the jiva but masked by the illusion. When the jiva breaks its identification with the body, (gives up false identification with the prakruti and remembers its original state) it becomes one with the Parabrahman.

The body is inert and so cannot claim the jiva to be its own but it is the jiva that claims the body as its own.

The word “sixth sense” refers to “the mind”. The mind is the central station that receives the impulses from the five senses. It is therefore, actually another sense organ. As it is subtle it is not seen by the physical eyes. The reactions to the impulses brought in by the five sense organs are carried out in the mind which stores the impulses as the thought imprints. Hence, the mind is “The sixth sense”.

We all have a name and with it the designations like “Mr, Mrs, Miss, Dr etc.” and we use these to make others know about ourselves. These are used only in relation to the life we live in this world and the role we have been given to play on the stage of life.

When it comes to the spiritual world, there should not be any room for differentiation because all are only an expression of the “Parabrahman.”

The important point to remember is:

The Soul with the self-expression has become the Jivatma.

The Jivatma with Self-assertion can become Paramatma.

By association with the physical world we become “Bhogis” (enjoy the life in the sensuous world), We can become “Yogis” by remembering our true identity and dropping identification with the physical world.

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः |  
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥४॥

śharīram yad avāpnoti yach chāpy utkrāmatīśhvaraḥ |  
gṛihītvaitāni sanyāti vāyur gandhān ivāśhayāt ||8||

### Sloka 8

**SHARIRAM YAD AVAPNOTI YACH CHAPY UTKRAMATISHVARAH  
GRIHITVAITANI SANYATI VAYUR GANDHAN IVASHAYAT**

**When the Lord obtains a body and when he leaves it, He takes these and goes just as the wind takes the scents from their sources.**

shareeram: the body (referring to the Soul that has apparently become the jiva);  
yad: when;  
avapnoti: obtains;  
yat: when;  
cha: and;  
apy: also;  
utkramati: taking;  
iswaraha: the Lord;  
gruheetva: taking;  
etani: these;  
samyati: goes;  
vayuhu: air/wind;  
gandhan: the scents;  
iva: as;  
ashayat: seats/sources.

Utkramati: leaves the body (on death of the physical body):

Subtle body: consisting of the mind, intellect and the causal body encased within;

Gross body: made up of the five gross elements which has subtle and causal bodies within when it is alive.

When the Lord leaves the body: refers to the subtle body that leaves behind the gross body on death.

When the Lord obtains a body: refers to the birth when the subtle body gets a new physical body to express its stored vasanas.

Majority of those who leave the physical world on death do still have in them a number of unfulfilled thought imprints and have to undergo many more births and deaths. This sloka refers to those who belong to this category.

The energy that carries the subtle body out of this physical world is “Udana”, one of the five expressions of energies in the body. (The other four are: prana, apana, vyana and samana.)

Avapnoti: (when the subtle body) obtains a new body.

The subtle body with the vasanas, (by the grace of the Lord and at a suitable time determined by Him) takes a new body (made up of the five gross elements) to carry on the sojourn to burn the vasanas accumulated from the past. This refers to the soul within and with the mind and intellect carrying on all the stored vasanas.

Gruheetvaitani samyati vayur gandha nivashayat:

He takes these and goes just as the wind takes the scents from their sources.

The scents are the vasanas and “He” is the Soul (bound to the subtle body) at the time of death of the physical body.

“Takes” refers to the soul moving along with the subtle body.

“From their sources” refers to the vasanas in the individual physical bodies at the time of death.

The wind, as it flows apparently does take the scents from their source. It only carries it for a short distance and the wind as such is said to be free from the scents. (the scent does not stick to the air)

Similarly the soul within the subtle body is only a carrier of the stored vasanas.

Just as the wind has no preference to pleasant and unpleasant smells, the soul has no preference to good or bad vasanas stored in the mind of the physical body during its life.

The nature of next birth in the new environment which the soul gets is termed as “Purva janma samskara”. It simply means that it is according to the samskaras (results of past actions) in the previous births.

The lesson to learn is: Drop the identification with the body (dehatma buddhi) and develop identification with the Atman within (“I” am the Atman).

Here the word “Iswara” refers to the Jivatma which is the Lord over the senses, the mind and the intellect.

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।

अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ॥९॥

śhrotram chakṣhuḥ sparśhanam cha rasanam ghrāṇam eva cha ।

adhishṭhāya manaśh chāyam viśhayān upasevate ॥९॥

**Sloka 9**

**SHROTRAM CHAKSHUH SPARSHANAM CHA RASANAM GHRANAM EVA CHA  
ADHISHTHAYA MANASH CHAYAM VISHAYAN UPASEVATE**

**He enjoys the sense-objects presiding over the ear, eyes, touch, taste and smell and also the mind.**

srotram: the ear;

chakshuhu: eyes;

sparshanam: (the organ of) touch;

rasanam: (the organ of) taste;

ghranam: (the organ of) smell;

eva: even;

cha: and;

adhishtaya: presiding over;

manas: the mind;

ayam: he;  
vishayan: objects of senses;  
upasevate: enjoys.

“He” refers to the “Jivatma” who has developed association with the intellect, mind and the sense organs. He thereby apparently is in touch with the physical world around and as a consequence has forgotten his original state as “The Atman.”

“He” enjoys: What does “He” enjoy?  
His enjoyment comes from the sense objects around which bring in the impulses from the world around.

The mind in turn receives guidance from the intellect on what action to take in relation to the impulses received.

The intellect which is actually supposed to be the organ for reasoning is expected to reason out what is good and what is bad.

Because the jivatma has forgotten his real identity, the intellect becomes the seat for ego and reasoning power is weak or lost.

“Presides over the ear, eyes, touch, taste and smell and also the mind”: this refers to the intellect who is the presiding organ and superior officer for the mind and the five sense organs.

The end result is:

The senior-most officer who is supposed to rule over and make the junior officers conduct actions as per the rules and regulations, becomes a slave for the pleasures of the world around.

Instead of ruling over the mind and guiding it in the right track, the intellect falls a pray to the pleasures.

He who truly rules over the mind and the senses is “Iswara”.

He who becomes a subordinate to the sense organs and the mind is the “Iswara” within (who as jivatma has forgotten his original identity), and who has thus become the “ego”.

We, who are supposed to hate slavery, have unfortunately become the slaves ourselves to our own sense organs and the mind.

We, realising this truth have to develop the determination not to be the slaves for our sense organs and the mind.

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥10॥

utkrāmantam sthitam vāpi bhujñānam vā guṇānvitam ।

vimūḍhā nānupaśhyanti paśhyanti jñāna-chakṣuṣhaḥ ॥10॥

**Sloka 10**

**UTKRAMANTAM STHITAM VAPI BHUNJANAM VA GUNANVITAM  
VIMUDHA NANUPASHYANTI PASHYANTI JNANA-CHAKSHUSHAH**



**He, who departs, stays and enjoys, who is united with the three gunas, the deluded do not see.  
But those who possess the eye of knowledge do behold.**

utkramantam: departing;  
sthitam: staying;  
va: or;  
api: also;  
bhunjanaam: enjoying;  
vaa: or;  
gunanvitam: united with the gunas;  
vimoodha: the deluded;  
na: not;  
anupashyanti: see;  
pashyanti: behold;  
jnana chakshushaha: those who possess the eye of knowledge.

“He”: refers to the Atman within.

Departs: when the Jivatman associated with the physical body departs at the time of death from the physical body (but stays with the mind and intellect as the subtle body);  
Stays: the Jivatman stays with the subtle body till it takes a new body.

When the Parabrahman bestows His Grace, Jivatman within the subtle body takes up a new body in association with the five gross elements and continues his journey in the new body. This is an on-going process of births and deaths during which time, the jivatman constantly stays with the body. (Either with the subtle body on death or with the physical body while living)

Jnani is he, who can see with the eye of knowledge; who gets the real knowledge from the grace of the Lord, the guru, the learned elders and by his own past good samskaras.

Enjoys: The Jivatman by becoming the “ego” enjoys the pleasures of the world.

We are told that those who possess the eye of knowledge, by the capacity of discrimination see the reality as such. “Knowledge” of one’s own true identity should be the light to see the phenomenal world and (to) live in it.

But, the deluded, who do not possess the eye of knowledge lose this capacity for discrimination and do not see the Atman as such (which is within and all round).  
These, the Lord says are the “Moodhas”.

Seeing the “Atman” by the un-deluded is the path to “Self-realisation”.  
The next step to proceed by the seekers is “Self-assertion”.

“Vimoodha” is he who allows “self-expression” of the ego.  
This is the basis for the reference to the “Aswatha” tree visualised “upside-down” by the ignorant.  
(slokas 1-3 of this chapter)

The lesson to learn is: “Transcend the gunas and strive to be a Gunatita”.

**यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।  
यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥११॥**

yatanto yoginaśh chainam paśhyanty ātmany avasthitam |  
yatanto 'py akṛitātmāno nainam paśhyanty achetasah ||11||

### Sloka 11

**YATANTO YOGINASH CHAINAM PASHYANTY ATMANY AVASTHITAM  
YATANTO 'PY AKRITATMANO NAINAM PASHYANTY ACHETASAH**

**The sages, striving, behold Him dwelling in themselves, but the impure and unintelligent though striving, do not behold Him.**

yatantah: striving;  
yoginaha: the yogis;  
cha: and;  
enam: this (Atman);  
pashyanti: see;  
atmany: in the self;  
avasthitam: dwelling;  
yatantaha: striving;  
api: also;  
akrutaha atmaanaha: the impure;  
na: not;  
enam: this (Atman);  
pashyanti: see;  
acetasha: the unintelligent.

This sloka needs a clearer understanding: (it is easy to misunderstand its significance).

Let us start with the word “Enam Pashyati” meaning “see this Atman.”

The sincere efforts seekers put in to reach this level of understanding this chapter will help to open the “Spiritual eye of wisdom” and visualise the Atman within.

This is “Self-Realisation”.

Realising the presence of the Atman within is “Self-Realisation.”

We need to get an answer to the following questions:

Can anyone be eligible to see the Atman?

Who can see the Atman?

The simple answer is “yes, anyone can see”. But there are conditions to be fulfilled.

Those who fulfil the following conditions can see the Atman.

Sadhana - effort,  
Purity, and  
Pure Intelligence.

What do we call the person who is striving to see the Atman?

“Yogi”.

Yatanto yoginas chainam: the yogis striving for this Self-Realisation.

This is the spiritual essence of the first quarter of the sloka.

What is the sadhana referring to?

It is:

“Sadhana chatushtaya”.

These are:

Viveka - “Nitya anitya viveka vicharana”. Constant analytical study of what is nitya and what is anitya (constant/eternal and not eternal.) It is to realise that “Jagat mithya and Brahman satya.” (The world is an illusion and Brahman is the absolute reality).

Vairagya - dispassion to worldly objects.

Shatsampadi - the six treasures: sama, dama, uparathi, samadhana, tithikshatva, sraddha.

Mumukshatva - earnest desire for Moksha.

Sama and dama: control over the mind and the senses respectively.

Uparathi: It is the state of the mind which is absolutely calm, has stopped running into the outer world and turns inwards and settles on the Atman.

Tithikshatva: forbearance of trials and tribulations of life with fortitude. Free from anxiety.

Sraddha: faith in the God, the guru, scriptures and elders.

Samadhana: Perfect tranquillity of mind at all times to grasp the meaning of the spiritual teaching.

The seeker who fulfils the above criterion is a yogi who is striving for “Self-Realisation”. (Please refer to chapter 6, slokas 40-46 that gives a description of the true yogi who is striving for Self-Realisation and how he will achieve success in his efforts.)

Yogi has mastered the art of developing Sraddha in following the spiritual path, He has developed purity of mind, speech and actions, He is “intelligent (Viveki)”. He has intelligence to grasp the true meaning of the scriptural texts he studies, (He has the grasping power to get the “Tatvartha” - spiritual meaning), what the guru has taught and what the life has taught him. He has intelligence to understand the philosophy of the Vedas and the Upanisads.

The yogi can be meditating on any of the paths of “Karma, Jnana or Bhakti”. The path he follows is not important but the way in which he implements the rules of the paths is important. This is true intelligence referred to in this sloka.

Let us now look at “Acetasaha”. Why does the Lord say “Unintelligent”? Does it not amount to partiality to selected few?

Not everybody is intelligent and not being intelligent is not the barrier for attaining Moksha. Everyone has a birth right to achieve Moksha.

What it means is that the individual has to have faith in God, would want to achieve Moksha and be willing to take up the guidance from the learned masters. He has to strive to become intelligent to understand the philosophy. He has to acquire “self-control” (sama and dama) and vairagya (dispassion to worldly possessions). He needs to purify his heart to clear all impure tendencies.

Every child has a right to get the degree but it does not come by not going to school and study the recommended texts. The child has to put efforts to understand what is taught and become intelligent.

Many say:

“I do perform pooja every day,  
I perform so many special vratas,  
I contribute to so many different charities,  
I read so many spiritual texts daily,  
But the Lord has not blessed me”.

It is simply a delusion to think that Godhood is achieved by these methods and one can say that it is “Spiritual egoism and not real sadhana”.

The fact that “He” is with us from birth to death and is giving us the opportunity to exhaust our vasanas and thereby reach His abode at the end is the greatest blessings we can expect to get in life and “He” has given it to all of us already.

यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।  
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥12॥

yad āditya-gatam tejo jagad bhāsayate 'khilam |  
yach chandramasi yach chāgnau tat tejo viddhi māmakam ॥12॥

**Sloka 12**

**YAD ADITYA-GATAM TEJO JAGAD BHASAYATE 'KHILAM  
YACH CHANDRAMASI YACH CHAGNAU TAT TEJO VIDDDHI MAMAKAM**

**That radiance residing in the sun which illumines the whole world and that which is in the moon and the fire - know that light to be Mine.**

yat: which;  
adityagatam: residing in the sun;  
tejo: light;  
jagat: universe;  
bhasayate: illumines;  
akhilam: whole;  
yat: which;  
chandramasi: in the moon;  
yat: which;  
cha: and;  
agnou: in the fire;  
tat: that;  
tejaha: light;  
viddhi: know;  
mamakam: Mine.

In this and the next three slokas we are going to get the glory and the greatness of Paramatma.

Law of physics is: “The light makes us see the objective world.”

What are the sources of light for us to see?

The sun;

The moon;

Artificial light generated from electricity and

The light from a lamp lit with the fire.

There is another condition for seeing the objective world and that is:

“We should be alive.”

The impulses of objects are carried by the eyes to the mind and the mind has to be alive with the light of life to see the impulses received.

The mind needs the light of knowledge to see the worldly images brought in by the sense organs.

So, it is said that the “The Light of Knowledge of the Parabrahman” is needed to illumine the source of light that make us see the objective world. The main sources of light for us are the sun, moon and the fire. These three are the secondary sources of light and the Lord is the only primary source of light.

This “Light of Knowledge” is “Cit” and is “self-luminous”. It does not need any other source of light to see.

When it says “The radiance of the sun, moon and fire is from Me”:

What do we understand by such statement?

The source of light for the sun and the moon is also the Parabrahman. There is a source of power behind these sources of light for us.

The physicists agree that the life span of the sun and moon is also limited and in course of the passage of time (may be for millions of years) new moon and new sun appear in the galaxy.

Let us take the example of a lighted match in the mid-day heat in a tropical country in summer when the temperatures are above 40 degree centigrade.

The lighted match is insignificant in the presence of the bright sun.

We conduct aarati with a lighted lamp to the idol at the temple. We are supposed to express the feeling while conducting the aarati that the light from the aarati is so insignificant when compared to His glory but we cannot express it any better than the light from the aarati.

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।

पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥13॥

gām āviśhya cha bhūtāni dhārayāmy aham ojasā |

puṣṇāmi chauṣhadhiḥ sarvāḥ somo bhūtvā rasātmakaḥ ॥13॥

**Sloka 13**

**GAM AVISHYA CHA BHUTANI DHARAYAMY AHAM OJASA**

**PUSHNAMI CHAUSHADHIH SARVAH SOMO BHUTVA RASATMAKAH**

**Permeating the earth I support all beings by energy and having become the sapid moon, I nourish all herbs.**

gaam: the earth;  
avishya: permeating;  
cha: and;  
bhootani: the beings;  
dharayami: support;  
aham: I;  
ojasa: with energy;  
pushnami: nourish;  
cha: and;  
oshadhee: herbs;  
sarvataha: all;  
somou: moon;  
bhootva: having become;  
rasatmakaha: the watery.

The last sloka was about the light that shines and helps us to see the objective world.

This sloka is about the power that gives us the energy for survival. This power that nourishes us, we call it as “food”.

The food we eat is a product of the earth.

The energy of the Parabrahman, the Lord says permeates the earth and makes it fertile. This energy is “Me” says the Lord, referring to Himself. “He” is not boasting about His power but simply stating a fact.

“He” is not only the source of light for the moon but also source of power for the moon. The energy He is referring to is that which permeates the herbs that thrive in the presence of moonlight. This is the basis of Ayurvedic medicine. Himalayan region is said to be abundant with many medicinal herbs. The mythological “Sanjeevani” herb from the Himalayan region was said to have been brought by Lord Hanuman to revive Lakshmana who was unconscious in the battlefield at Sri Lanka. The medical profession has found “reserpine” in the herbs that is used to control high blood pressure.

Rasatmaka: watery. It simply refers to the watery nature of the extracts that are obtained from the herbs and also to the sapidity of the vegetable kingdom on earth. “Sapid moon” referring to the watery nature of the herbs and vegetable kingdom can be looked upon as a poetic description from sage Veda Vyasa.

The water is also needed in the form of rain for the crops to grow on earth. The power as “rain” is also from Parabrahman. As energy from sunlight, He draws the water from the ocean which form the cloud. The clouds burst out as rain also by the power of energy. The common factor for all is “energy”.

It is accepted by the scientific world that one form of energy transforms itself into another form and energy in one form or other energy is essential for survival of life on earth.

The manifest energy in its original form, as it emanates from the Parabrahman is known as “Ojas”.

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।  
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥14॥

aham vaiśhvānaro bhūtvā prāṇinām deham āśhritaḥ ।  
prāṇāpāna-samāyuktaḥ pachāmy annam chatur-vidham ॥14॥

## Sloka 14

### **AHAM VAISHVANARO BHUTVA PRANINAM DEHAM ASHRITAH PRANAPANA-SAMAYUKTAH PACHAMY ANNAM CHATUR-VIDHAM**

**I abide in the body of beings, and having become the digestive energy called Vaishwanara, I digest the four fold food, associated with vital forces of prana and apana.**

aham: Me;  
vaishwanara: the digestive energy/fire called jataragni;  
bhootva: having become;  
praninaam: of beings;  
deham: the body;  
ashritaha: abiding in;  
prana pana samayuktaha: associated with the vital forces of prana and apana;  
pachamy: digest;  
annam: the food;  
chaturvidham: four fold.

In the last sloka the Lord said that He produces the food by His energy/sakti and sustains all being with His energy. Now, in this sloka He adds that He also assists in digesting the food we eat. He created us and is nourishing us too.

This particular sloka and sloka 24, chapter 4, (brahmarpanou brahma) are recited before partaking meals in a number of spiritual institutions and by many Hindus.

“I abide in the body of beings”:

The Lord residing as the Atman within expresses His power through five different channels of expression. These are called as “Pancha Pranas”. They are:

Prana  
Apana  
Vyana  
Samana  
Udana

Prana and apana are the two pranas referred to in this sloka. They are the powers in relation to the digestive system in our body.

Vaiswanara is the digestive force called “Jataragni”. “Jataragni” is the fire in the stomach. Part of the energy of the Atman, residing in the stomach as Vaishwanara helps us to digest the food we ingest. The power that assists in digesting the food is referred to as “Prana” in this sloka.

Prana is the “Life force” in general within our body. With respect to the digestive process it is the power that causes motility and other powers residing in the upper part of the digestive system in our body that assists in digesting the food.

“Apana” referred to is the force that assists in excretion of unwanted items from the food we ingest. It also includes the power in the organs of reproduction. (Anything in general that involves excretion from the body is due to the power of apana.)

As prana and apana He helps in digesting what we eat and eliminating the by-products of what we eat which are not needed and can be harmful.

(Udana is the force that carries the subtle body on death of the physical body to the moola prakruti;

Vyana and samana are forces that circulate the food to various parts of the body –circulatory and nervous systems.)

There are variations in the descriptions of the five pranas in the texts that are available and what I have given is one such description.

Pachamyannam chaturvidham: Digest the four fold food.

There are basically four ways by which we take food in.

These are:

Eaten by the process of mastication: It is “Bhaksyam”.

Soft foods that are sucked in: It is “Bhojyam”.

That which has to be licked: It is “Lehyam”.

That which has to be swallowed as whole: It is “choshyam” (liquids).

In summary:

The Lord abiding as the Atman, becomes the digestive power to digest the food, motility force to move the food down the gullet and the force to take away the by-products of digestion for the four types of food eaten by all beings.

The steps to be followed before eating the food:

Wherever possible follow the guidelines to eat satvika type of food - chapter 17, slokas 8 and 9.

The food eaten must have been earned by righteous means,

Keep the food cooked on a clean plate and offer it to the deity in the prayer room of the house, (this is Naivedyam and should be food shared by all members of the family afterwards),

Pour out a spoonful of water on to the palm of the right hand,

Reciting this sloka first and then sloka 24, chapter 4,

Sprinkle this water by moving the hand clockwise round the plate three times and drop the same on to a small bowl/plate kept at the side of the dining plate.

Collect a small part from all items of food that are going to be served for the meal and put it in the bowl/plate at the side.

Then only one should start eating the food.

The food collected on the side is to be left outside for the insects/birds etc.

Food eaten this way becomes a “Yajna” (dedicated act) and it pleases the Lord.

Offering the food to the Lord and reciting prayers is “Deva yajna”,

Offering the food for the birds/insects becomes “Bhoota Yajna” and

Offering the food to the poor and needy becomes “Nara yajna”.

And these acts bring points of merit to the individual in his life.

As the Lord is a witness to all our actions, the main action of eating for survival has to be carried out remembering the Lord and offering our salutations to Him. Hence the sastras recommend to recite the mantras during meals following the above guidelines.

Praninaam Deham ashritaha: “abiding in the body of beings.”

The Lord is saying that He has taken ashraya (shelter) in our body. While taking shelter He also undertakes the task of caring for the body.



Really speaking it should be the other way round. We have to take shelter under Him and undertake the tasks that please Him. The tasks that would please Him are those that fit in with the principle of “Loka samastha sukhino bhavantu”. (let all in the loka live in happiness.)

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि सन्निविष्टो  
मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च ।  
वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो  
वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥15॥

sarvasya chāham hṛidi sanniviṣṭo  
mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanam cha |  
vedaish cha sarvair aham eva vedyo  
vedānta-kṛid veda-vid eva chāham ॥15॥

### Sloka 15

**SARVASYA CHAHAM HRIDI SANNIVISHTO  
MATTAH SMRITIR JNANAM APOHANAM CHA  
VEDAISH CHA SARVAIR AHAM EVA VEDYO  
VEDANTA-KRID VEDA-VID EVA CHAHAM.**

**And I am seated in the hearts of all beings. From Me are memory, knowledge and forgetfulness. I am verily that which is to be known by all the Vedas. I am the author of Vedanta and verily I am the knower of the Vedas.**

sarvasya: all;  
cha: and;  
aham: Me;  
hrudi: in the heart;  
sannivishto: seated;  
mattaha: from Me;  
smruti: memory;  
jnanam: knowledge;  
apohanam: forgetfulness/loss of memory;  
vedaischa: and the Vedas;  
sarvair: all;  
aham: Me/I am;  
eva: verily;  
vedyo: to be known;  
vedantakrut: author of Vedanta/upanisads;  
vedavid: knower of;  
cha: and;  
aham eva: I alone.

Where does He abide?  
What do we get from Him?  
What is to be known by the Vedas?

Who is the author of Vedanta?

Who is the one who knows all the Vedas?

The answers to these questions are to be found in this single sloka.

Where does He abide?

“He” refers to Sree Krishna who has revealed Himself as the Parabrahman who has descended on to the earth to protect the righteous, destroy the evil and to establish righteousness.

Parabrahman / Universal Soul, is seated in the hearts of all beings.

“All beings”: can be understood as all men/women/children in the universe irrespective of nationality, religion, caste and creed.

“In the hearts of”: it is not the physical heart but the intellectual heart of all beings.

This is important for those who feel that they are inferior or think that the Lord is not with them. The Lord has no partiality. “He” is equally present inside the sinner and the saint and in the rich and the poor alike.

The lessons to be learnt from this are:

Do not show any differentiation because of nationality, religion, sex, richness, poverty etc.

Learn the art of searching for Him within you. Your search will end sooner or later and you will find Him. Really speaking, it should be, “You will find that you are “That” you are searching for.”

What do we get from Him?

“Memory, knowledge and forgetfulness arise from Me”.

These three are three expressions of mental energy. The mind owes its birth and existence to the Parabrahman and so the three expressions of the mind are from Him only.

What is memory?

Memory is storing the past experiences and thoughts in the mind.

What is knowledge?

Certain actions conducted in the past give us some experience that makes us understand it better.

For example if I burn my finger over a fire, I experience the pain.

Two things happened from this event.

We realise that it hurts and getting burnt was an experience that is stored in the mind as memory.

The experience reminds me to be careful when approaching the fire.

This is “Knowledge.”

Memory and knowledge are “His Grace” says the Lord and it is our duty to thank Him for giving these two to us.

We undertake studies to acquire knowledge. The knowledge cannot come without having the capacity to remember what we have studied and to implement it in our daily duties.

Those who feel that they have good memory and have acquired the knowledge have to be thankful to Him for this gift.

Why then say “Forgetfulness” also comes from Him? Is it also His gift to mankind?

Yes, definitely yes, will be the answer.

Let us therefore analyse it and ascertain that it is correct assumption.

The brain is a powerful organ but it simply cannot take everything in and store it. It has to remove something stored to make way to store something else new to be stored in its place.

It is a blessing to be able to remember but it is also a blessing to forget too.

We go through different stages in life and if we have to remember every single event in each stage of life, the mind will become overloaded and its efficiency will diminish. It will not have any room for storing experiences in later stages of life.

The store room called the mind has to be cleared so often to make room for the new.

This process of clearing away is “Loss of memory/forgetfulness” and it is also the grace of the Lord.

Also, a number of sad events happen in every individual’s life. Sad events reduce the efficiency of work. One cannot live grieving constantly for something/somebody he/she has lost. The society even though is sympathetic to one’s grief, do not expect or cannot support one who is in constant grief.

The learned say, “Time heals everything.” This is because of the capacity of “Forgetfulness/loss of memory”. The “Time” referred to in this statement is the “tomorrow” of one’s life.

Let me make it clear that it does not apply to every act of forgetfulness.

Lack of application cannot be called forgetfulness.

The student, for example, who fails in examinations cannot use this statement as a support for his failure to pass. Saying that “I forgot” and then add that it is God that made me forget is wrong notion. What happened in this instance is “lack of application” which resulted in forgetfulness. This is not the grace of the Lord “He” is referring to in this sloka.

Next questions to be answered from this sloka are:

What is to be known by the Vedas?

Who is the author of Vedanta?

Who knows all the Vedas?

The word “Veda” stems from the root word “Vid” meaning “to know.”

To know “Sat, Chit and Ananda” which is “Eternal” and realise “nama, roopa” which are not eternal is the subject matter of the Vedas. It is:

The experts say:

“Nitya anitya viveka vicharana”. It is constantly analysing and applying the answer to the question:

What is permanent and what is impermanent?

Except Parabrahman who is Eternal, everything else in life is transient in relation to time. Everything that has a birth has to have a death also.

“He who has no birth has no death” and that, “He” is “Parabrahman.”

No one is immortal and nothing in life is permanent. Everything has a beginning, middle and an end to it.

The subject matter of the Vedas is to understand this “Truth”.

Parabrahman is the author of Vedanta. Vedanta is the end of the quest for spiritual knowledge.

Upanisads are considered to be “Vedantas”. The Srimad Bhagawadgita is the summary of the

Upanisads. The author of the sacred text is Lord Krishna, incarnate of Parabrahman on earth.

It is the answer to the eternal question “Who am I, where did I come from” etc. The answers to these questions lead one to realise the Tatvartha (meaning in essence) of the Mahavakyas:

Prajnanam Brahma

Tat Tvam Asi

Ayam Atma Brahma and

Aham Brahmasmi.

If we refer back to the first three slokas of this chapter concerning the “Aswatha Tree” we will understand it better.

Tracing the roots that stem from above leads one to the source of all life on this universe. That root being: “Parabrahman.” The roots of the worldly life are traced downwards but the roots of spiritual life are to be traced upwards.

Finally, who knows all the Vedas?

Only the author of the Vedas knows all about the Vedas.

The sincere seekers who go in search for the eternal knowledge finally become one with Him and lose their individual identity.

The only one who knows the Vedas is “Parabrahman”. Parabrahman who incarnated as Krishna is reminding us of this “Truth”.

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।

क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥16॥

dvāv imau puruṣhau loke kṣharaśh chākṣhara eva cha ।

kṣharaḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭa-stho 'kṣhara uchyate ॥16॥

### Sloka 16

**SARVASYA CHAHAM HRIDI SANNIVISHTO**

**DVAV IMAU PRURSHAU LOKE KSHARASH CHAKSHARA EVA CHA**

**KSHARAH SARVANI BHUTANI KUTA-STHO 'KSHARA UCHYATE**

**Two purushas are there in the world, the perishable and the imperishable. All the bodies of beings are perishable and the Jiva (Kutastha) is called imperishable.**

dwa: two;

imou: these;

purushou: purushas;

loke': in the world;

kshara: perishable;

akshara: imperishable;

cha: and;

eva: even;

ksharaha: the perishable;

sarvani: all;

bhootani: beings;

kutasthaha: immutable;

aksharaha: the imperishable;

uchyate: is said/called.

This and the next sloka bring to our notice a total of three purushas in the scriptures.

Kshara purusha,

Akshara purusha and

Purushottama.

We get to know about the first two purushas in this sloka.

To understand this we must recollect the different parts of the body and study what happens to those bodies in relation to time.

- The gross physical body also known as “Sthoola shareera”,
- The subtle body also known as the “Sookshma shareera” and

c) Finally the casual body which is the Atman which in turn is a spark of Parabrahman. Karana Shareera.

The gross physical body with a name and form goes through various modifications like infancy, childhood, adult, old age and finally there is death of the physical body which will have no more name and identification.

This gross physical body is therefore said to be “perishable” and the word used here is “kshara”.

This body has subtle parts inside it in the form of the mind and the intellect. Mind stores all the vasanas and the intellect analyses the impulses received.

On physical death of the gross body, the soul is encased within the mind/atman of the subtle body and departs from the gross body. The death that happened was only to the gross body.

The subtle body continues its journey and waits for the grace from the Parabrahman to take another birth with a new name and form to it.

The process of births and deaths goes on and on till the total clearance of all stored vasanas and the mind is totally empty of any vasanas. This is “Liberation.” On Liberation the Atman merges back into the Paramatman from whom it came to life and from whose grace it entered the universe of names and forms.

The Atman is a spark of Parabrahman.

The Atman identifying with the mind and the intellect becomes the jivatman.

Jivatman forgetting its origin from the Atman becomes the jiva.

All along it has been only Parabrahman. He is eternal and absolutely imperishable.

Parabrahman as part of the leela (sport) becomes the Atman, (causal body) Atman takes up the body and becomes jivatman, (subtle body). Its life span is greater than that of the gross body. It is comparatively imperishable.

Jivatman because of the ego associates as the jiva. It is the gross body. It has a limited period of life on this earth. It is said to be perishable. (kshara)

Kutastha used in this sloka refers to the subtle body which is the “Jivatman”.

In a goldsmith’s workshop one finds the goldsmith using a solid block on which he places the ornaments and uses the hammer to hit the metal. Using the blows by the hammer and the heat from the flame of the fire he manages to bring a shape to the metal. The solid block remains the same for years. This solid block is called “Kutastha.”

To summarise:

When I identify myself with the physical body I am “Kshara purusha”,

When I identify myself with the subtle body, I am “Akshara purusha” and

When I identify myself with the Parabrahman I would be “Akshara Purushottama”. (Akshara Parabrahman.)

**उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।**

**यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥17॥**

**uttamaḥ puruṣhas tv anyaḥ paramātmety udāhṛitaḥ ।**

**yo loka-trayam āviśhya bibharty avyaya īśhvaraḥ ॥17॥**

## Sloka 17

### UTTAMAH PURUSHAS TV ANYAH PARAMATMETY UDAHRITAH YO LOKA-TRAYAM AVISHYA BIBHARTY AVYAYA ISHVARAH

**He who is different from the two purushas, is called the Paramatma. Who permeating the three worlds, sustains them is the Supreme Purusha.**

uttamaha purusha: the supreme Purusha;  
anyayaha: different;  
paramatma: Paramatma;  
iti: thus/as;  
udahrutaha: is called;  
yo: who;  
lokatrayam: the three worlds;  
avishya: permeating;  
vibharti: sustains;  
avyayaha: imperishable;  
Iswaraha: Lord.

Permeating the three worlds:

The three worlds are:

Bhooloka: The earth,

Devaloka: The lokas of celestial beings (devas) which are above the sphere of the earth.

Patala loka: The nether worlds underneath the sphere of the earth.

Three attributes are given to Him. They are:

Anyaha: different;

Avyayaha: imperishable;

Bibharti: sustains.

The Paramatma is different from the jiva and jivatma (kshara and Akshara purushas described in the last sloka). Why is He different from the other two?

The kshara purusha is perishable. The gross physical body is controlled by time.

The Akshara Purusha (the subtle body) appears to be imperishable but only in relation to the life span of the Kshara Purusha. He is still under the control of time and perishes eventually. When the stored vasanas are exhausted and the mind is empty of vasanas (vasana kshaya and mano nasha) the Atman that was encased merges back with the Paramatman.

Uttama Purusha (the causal body) is the one and the only absolutely “Imperishable and Eternal.”

Bibhartaha: As the primordial energy He provides the various forms of energy that sustains all forms of life in all the three worlds.

Because of the nature of His subtlety He has permeated the three worlds. He has enveloped the entire universe and has permeated into every form of life (as pancha pranas).

The energy that is all round is also in every cell of the body of the beings and hence He is said to permeate all.

He supports all and so it is said that He sustains three lokas. (Sloka 5, Chapter 9: I support all beings and am the efficient cause of all beings). Without the power of His energy there cannot be life on any of the three lokas.

Each of us has three states of existence:

Wakeful,

Dream, and  
Deep sleep state.

The common factor in all the three states is that the individual is alive. This is possible only by the presence of the power of the Atman which is “The Consciousness”. (Prajnanam Brahma) So, one can say He supports the individual at all the three periods of time.

The three states are perishable. There has to be death of one state for the next state to present itself. But the Atman who is the common factor for all is independent and witnesses the three states of experiences. This state is “Turiya” and is constant state of expression of the Atman. It has no death.

Because of His power, He is the Iswara, the Lord of all the three worlds.

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः |  
अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ||18||

yasmāt kṣharam atīto 'ham akṣharād api chottamaḥ |  
ato 'smi loke vede cha prathitaḥ puruṣhottamaḥ ||18||

### Sloka 18

**YASMAT KSHARAM ATITO 'HAM AKSHARAD API CHOTTAMAH  
ATO 'SMI LOKE VEDE CHA PRATHITAH PURUSHOTTAMAH**

**As I transcend the perishable and as I am higher even than the imperishable, for that reason, I am declared as Purushottama in the world and in the Vedas.**

yasmat: therefore/as;  
ksharam: perishable;  
ateetam: transcend;  
aham: I;  
aksharad: imperishable;  
api: also;  
uttamaha cha: and superior;  
ataha: for that reason;  
asmi: I am;  
loke': in the world;  
vede: in the Vedas;  
cha: also;  
puruṣhottamaha: as Purushottama;  
pratitaha: declared.

The Vedas, the highest authorities for all the Hindus have re-iterated this truth (as mentioned in the last two slokas).

The masters who have studied and understood it have said so.

The population in general who have faith in the scriptures and the masters have accepted this to be so. This has been passed on from generation to generation and has been accepted by the Hindus in general.

यो मामेवमसम्मूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।  
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥19॥

yo mām evam asammūḍho jānāti puruṣhottamam ।  
sa sarva-vid bhajati mām sarva-bhāvena bhārata ॥19॥

### Sloka 19

**YO MAM EVAM ASAMMUDHO JANATI PURUSHOTTAMAM  
SA SARVA-VID BHAJATI MAM SARVA-BHAVENA BHARATA**

**O Bharata, he, who, free from delusion, knows Me as thus, as the Supreme Purusha, is the all-knowing. He worships Me with his whole being.**

yo: who;  
maam: Me;  
evam: thus;  
asammudo: free from delusion;  
jaanaati: knows;  
puruṣhottamam: as puruṣhottama;  
sa: he;  
sarvavid: the all-knowing;  
bhajati: worships;  
maam: Me;  
sarva bhavena: whole being;  
Bharata: Arjuna.

Free from delusion:  
What is the delusion about?

He who is in search of the knowledge concerning the universe and for everlasting happiness realises in course of time that the pleasures derived from the physical world are transient and the root cause for all misery.

Not realising that the pleasures from the physical world are transient and the root cause of all misery: This is delusion.

Acquiring knowledge to come out of this state of delusion is real knowledge. Freedom from delusion comes after realising that the source of eternal Peace and knowledge is the abode of the Supreme Parabrahman.

Such a seeker who has acquired this knowledge is the “All-knowing.”

The rest who have managed to acquire knowledge in the specialities concerning the various aspects of the physical universe are not all-knowing. They may hold Post-Doctorate degrees in the specialities but are still not “all-knowing”.

Such an individual on acquiring the perfect knowledge of the Supreme Purusha, accepts the Supreme Purusha as the Parabrahman and will then spend his time on earth worshipping the Supreme at all the three periods of times in a day (trikala) and with his mind, speech and actions. (trikarana).



The Lord and the learned masters say that he is “Sarvavid”. This is “Brahma Jnana” (complete knowledge).

The man with this knowledge is able to see the unity in plurality and the Lord permeating the entire world of plurality.

The all-knowing is he who has transcended the “ego” and identified himself with the Supreme. He worships the Supreme for the love of the Supreme with no selfish motive behind the act.

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघ |  
एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ||20||

iti guhyatamam śhāstram idam uktam mayānagha |  
etad buddhvā buddhimān syāt kṛita-kṛityaśh cha bhārata ||20||

### Sloka 20

**ITI GUHYATAMAM SHASTRAM IDAM UKTAM MAYANAGHA  
ETAD BUDDHVA BUDDHIMAN SYAT KRITA-KRIRYASH CHA BHARATA**

**O sinless Arjuna, thus I have declared unto you the most secret sastra. He, who understands it well, becomes the wise and has accomplished all his duties.**

iti: thus;  
guhyatamam: most secret;  
sastram: the sastra;  
idam: this;  
uktam: said;  
maya: by Me;  
anagha: sinless;  
etad: this;  
budhya: knowing;  
buddhimaan: the wise;  
syat: becomes;  
krutakrutyas: of accomplished duties;  
cha: and;  
Bharata: Arjuna.

Anagha: Arjuna is addressed as “sinless”.

This state can come by total mental purity acquired by the practice of self-perfection. Constant self-analysis of one’s thoughts and actions, constant policing of one’s thoughts that are generated in the mind, keeping constant memory of the Parabrahman dwelling within and all-round will eventually lead to self-perfection.

The condition required to receive the Brahmavidya from the masters is “self-perfection”. Krishna, as the Jagatguru therefore gave the Brahmavidya to Arjuna, the sinless. The Lord has already said that He will bless the sincere seekers free from ego and full of faith and devotion with “Buddhiyogam”.

Only the merit of acquiring the spiritual Post-Doctorate degree of “Brahmajnana” will entail the seeker with the ultimate success of fulfilling the duty of birth as a human being and that is “Moksha”. He has no work to do or duties to fulfil in any of the three worlds.

The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. (Brahmavid bhavati).

Contrary to anagha, sinners are those who have not developed total mental purity and self-perfection. Without these two conditions, the true impact of what has been or will be taught is bound to be misunderstood, misrepresented and used to win benefits for fulfilling personal desires only. Hence the Lord is so specific on what types of seekers deserve to be imparted with the knowledge of Brahmavidya by the guru.

For the same reason, Lord Krishna is saying that it is the most secret of all types of knowledge. The knowledge acquired is for “Loka Kalyana and for Mukti for the individual seeker”. If these conditions are not met, the secret message will be misrepresented and misused for harming the nature and life on earth and for personal gains which in turn are going to be harmful to the individual himself.

We all feel happy when a certain task undertaken has been fulfilled successfully in all respects. This is “Krut-Krutya”.

He who has received this knowledge, used it for universal welfare and for achieving the merit of Moksha is said to be a ”Krut-Krutya”.

He who has fulfilled the purpose of having been born as human is said to be a “Krut-Krutya.”

Mundaka Upanisad - chapter 3; section 2; sloka 5:

“samprapyaina (samprapya ena) rishayo jnana truptaha krutatmano veetaragaaha prashantaha”

When the sages have attained the Atman they become satisfied with their knowledge, their purpose is fulfilled, they become free from desire and they gain tranquillity.

We all know that the life is an uphill struggle and full of agitations. This is because each one of us has at some time or other in our life an honest regret at not having fulfilled ourselves in one or other of our endless desires and plans in our lives.

When all desires dry up and plans come to an end there comes an experience of tranquillity of mind (Prashanta). This state is “Krutakrutya”. (having gained that is to be gained, known all that is to be known, seen all that is to be seen.)

This state comes when the ignorance about our true divine nature ends and knowledge dawns of our divinity.

**Iti Śrīmadbhagavadgītasūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṃ yogaśāstre  
Śrīkṛṣṇārjuna-saṃvāde puruṣottamayogo nāma pañcadaśo'dhyāyah**

**Thus ends the fifteenth chapter, “PURUSHOTTAMA PRAPTI-YOGA“, from Srimad Bhagavadgita, which is Upanishad, Brahma Vidya and Yoga Shastra, in the form of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.**