

## 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:

@@@ [www.TheGita.org/Downloads/Chapter\\_16.pdf](http://www.TheGita.org/Downloads/Chapter_16.pdf) @@@

Copyright to the commentaries on Bhagavad Gita: Dr. P.V. Nath, Great Britain.

Inquiries concerning the text please direct to Dr. Nath at "[snath@btinternet.com](mailto:snath@btinternet.com)".

Inquiries concerning the administration of the newsletter and the downloads please direct to

[dasha@gmx.com](mailto:dasha@gmx.com).

To know more about Sri Swamiji, the Sadguru whose blessings made this newsletter possible, please visit: "[www.dattapeetham.org](http://www.dattapeetham.org)"

---

**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.**

---

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 16: DAIVĀSURA SAMPAT-VIBHĀGA-YOGA

### INTRODUCTION

Daiva: Divine;  
Asura: undivine/demonical;  
Sampad: treasure/wealth;  
Vibhaga: division.

Let us analyse the significance of the title of this chapter.

We learnt in chapter 15 about “Purushottama Prapti”.  
How to reach that “Purushottama” is the subject matter of this chapter.  
The spiritual seeker has to put all his sincere efforts in acquiring the treasure to reach the destination which is “The abode of Parabrahman.”

After all what is “treasure”?  
Oxford dictionary: “Treasure: accumulated wealth; valued things”.  
In the spiritual context, the Gunas are the wealth stored in our mind.  
They are the impressions on our mind.  
On physical death, the subtle body, namely, the mind and the intellect leave the gross physical body which is made up of the five gross elements. The subtle body, in the course of time, as ordained by the Parabrahman gets another physical body, with a new name and form.

The gunas stored in the mind of the subtle body are the only treasures that are carried on to the next birth.

An abundance of rajoguna and tamo guna will take us towards the world of the asuras and an abundance of satva guna will take us towards the world of the devas.

Hence the title, “Daivasura Sampat Vibhaga Yoga.”

The treasure of satva guna, which is needed to reach the abode of Parabrahman does not come by inheritance, cannot be bought in the open market and cannot be attained by bribery.  
It can only come by “self-effort” and this is the “Sadhana” needed by spiritual seekers. This sadhana requires sincere effort in understanding what constitutes satva guna, a keen desire to study the sastras and also the blessings of Sadguru.

The learned scholars say that life is a journey to acquire, what we want to achieve, through sincere effort and work. After all nothing in life can come by magic. It needs knowledge, time and effort.  
The effort we have to put in is “sadhana” and the time taken to achieve the objective is “The journey of life”.

When we take a decision, it is “The present.”  
The result will be in the domain of “The future”.  
To move from the “present” we are in, to reach the “future” is the journey of life.  
“Gamyā” is the Sanskrit word for destination.  
The Gamyā for the spiritual seekers is “The abode of Parabrahman” (Eternal Peace).

To reach any destination we need wealth and this in Sanskrit is “Sampat.”

There are three types of wealth needed for any journey. These are:

- Knowledge,
- Health and
- Finance.

And from the spiritual point of view,

- Wealth of values.

Let us take the example of a journey from one country to another country. What we need to reach the new country safely are:

The knowledge of the new country,

To fulfil the criterion for entering the new country,

The means to look after ourselves in the new country,

Good health,

Good financial reserves for our needs.

It is possible that there may be thieves who can rob us of our wealth during our journey. If this happens we will have no means to proceed further.

Broadly speaking there are three types of journeys:

1) Journeys we undertake in life.

- a) Journey from one stage of life to another stage of life;
- b) Journey from lower levels of education to higher levels of education;
- c) Journeys by transport.

2) Journeys to the higher worlds like the heaven and the realms of the devas

3) The Journey to the abode of Parabrahman which is “Moksha”.

Journeys to the higher worlds and the journey for Moksha come under the category of “Spiritual journeys”,

Journeys to achieve higher grades in education and the journey from one stage of life to another are “Life’s journeys”.

Monetary wealth cannot take us to the higher worlds. We cannot buy entry into the higher abodes. But if we make use of the wealth (that is rightly acquired) in the conduct of satvic actions, that result in the welfare of the community, we may become eligible for entry into the higher abodes. All good actions will bring us points of spiritual merit which we can use to reach the higher worlds.

The journey to higher worlds is only to spend the points of merit acquired by good deeds and the length of stay is according to the points of merit accrued.

On exhausting the merit points, we will have to get a birth into this world again and start life’s journey afresh.

The only wealth that is of value for the spiritual journey is “Wealth of virtues”.

No robber can rob us of our virtues at any time.

We cannot buy virtues as these are not commodities in the market to buy.

The wealth of virtues will be the ticket for the journey.

We find inspectors on the journeys we undertake, who check the validity of the ticket we possess and if we do not have a valid ticket we will have to disembark from the vehicle we are travelling.

The virtues we possess are our points of merit and these depend upon our gunas. Possessing satva guna is a divine virtue and will help us to acquire the points of merit necessary for the journey.

Rajo guna and tamo guna are considered as asuric virtues and what we achieve in life with them, will not give us the journey towards the abode of Parabrahman.

If we imagine putting all our vasanas in a sieve with tiny holes and holding a container underneath, the fine satvic virtues will filter down into the container held under the sieve,  
The grosser rajasic and tamasic virtues will remain in the sieve.  
What is collected in the bowl underneath will be pure satvic virtue.

This chapter is giving us the means to understand this principle.  
We are expected to analyse and get an idea of the gunas we have,  
Put these in the sieve called “intellectual analysis”,  
Collect only satvic virtues,  
Disregard rajasic and tamasic virtues,  
Conduct all ordained duties using satvic gunas,  
And we will be assured of entry to the abode of “Parabrahman”.

The chapter starts with a list of the divine virtues needed in the first three slokas and then follows with a description of the asuric qualities and the results of asuric actions.

One needs good health for undertaking this journey (both physical health and mental health). Ill health will make it difficult to continue spiritual practice.

Let us briefly look at material wealth.  
What can we get from material wealth?

We can buy luxuries that will make us feel happy but this state of happiness does not last long. Sooner or later we start looking for more or different pleasures.  
The way we use the wealth may also ruin our health.  
Or,  
We may not have the time to enjoy the wealth we possess either because we fall ill or death approaches us.  
It is also possible that someone else may rob us of our wealth.

Alternatively, the wealth of knowledge, which is essential for all spiritual seekers is far superior.  
This is the wealth we need to acquire.

Study of the scriptures, sacred texts and service of the guru etc. will provide us with the knowledge needed. Then, through actions and experience, this knowledge needs to be developed to eventually become wisdom, (Jnana Vijnana). Just theoretical knowledge will not get us anywhere in life.

Using this chapter we can learn the art of finding out which asuric gunas we possess and how to get rid of them.  
We are given a description of what constitutes the Daiva gunas, so that we can try to acquire them.

The first 3 slokas give a total of 26 divine virtues.

In general the sacred text gives prominence to practice which is “sadhana”. Every so often the Lord gives us ideas to practice. He has given us the qualities of a Sthita Prajna in chapter 2, of a Bhakta in chapter 12, of a Jnani in chapter 13 and Gunatita in chapter 14.  
These are all the means to practice.

It is by constant practice “Abhyasa” one can acquire them. It is also important not to lose good virtues but to strengthen them. The sincere and true seeker has to put his efforts into developing and nurturing these virtues. One may say that these will act like potent multivitamins giving the strength to undertake

the journey. Sadhana is nothing but constant practice in keeping the mind “Pure”. The Daivi qualities will keep the mind pure and the asuric qualities will make it “impure”.

With firm “resolute determination” (Dhriti), one should work in acquiring these virtues. Every day of his life, one should reflect on these virtues, questioning how many he has, how many he has lost and which ones he needs to develop. It is like guarding our material wealth. Do we not carefully guard our valuables during our journey? The true richness/wealth needed to undertake and progress in the spiritual journey comes from possession of these virtues.

The divine virtues (slokas 1-3) are to be imbibed and nourished by the spiritual seeker. The seeds of those virtues are to be sown in the intellectual garden and carefully protected and nurtured. These will assist in the progress towards divinity and experiencing the eternal peace/Shantihi.

Whereas, the six asuric qualities (sloka 4) are already within us in one form or the other and the spiritual journey is in recognising the same and learning the art of discarding them.

It is very important to note and realise that the moment we go slow in our spiritual journey and do not work at getting the divine virtues and looking after them, the ugly face of undivine/asuric virtues will manifest outwardly. This will take us away from our spiritual journey and take us in a downward path to hell.

So it is very important to develop the divine virtues and to discard the asuric qualities.

Slokas 1 to 4 as overview.

**SHRI-BHAGAVAN UVACHA  
ABHAYAM SATTVA-SANSHUDDHIR JNANA-YOGA-VYAVASTHITIH  
DANAM DAMASH CHA YAJNASH CHA SVADHYAYAS TAPA ARJAVAM ||1||**

The Lord said:

Fearlessness, purity of mind, steadfastness in the yoga of knowledge, alms-giving, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of the sastras, austerity and straightforwardness; ||1||

**AHINSA SATYAM AKRODHAS TYAGAH SHANTIR APAISHUNAM  
DAYA BHUTESHV ALOLUPTVAM MARDAVAM HRIR ACHAPALAM ||2||**

Non-injury, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion to beings, absence of greed, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickle-mindedness; ||2||

**TEJAH KSHAMA DHRITIH SHAUCHAM ADROHO NATI-MANITA  
BHAVANTI SAMPADAM DVAIVIM ABHIJATASYA BHARATA ||3||**

Luminosity (brightness), forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride, these belong to one born of a divine nature. ||3||

**DAMBHO DARPO BHIMANASH CHA KRODHAH PARUSHYAM EVA CHA  
AJNANAM CHABHIJATASYA PARTHA SAMPADAM ASURIM ||4||**

O Arjuna, pretension, pride, self-conceit, anger, harshness and ignorance belong to those who are born with demonical nature. ||4||

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।

दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥1॥

śhrī-bhagavān uvācha

abhayaṁ sattva-saṁśuddhir jñāna-yoga-vyavasthitiḥ ।

dānaṁ damaśh cha yajñaśh cha svādhyāyas tapa ārjavam ॥1॥

**Sloka 1**

**SHRI-BHAGAVAN UVACHA**

**ABHAYAM SATTVA-SANSHUDDHIR JNANA-YOGA-VYAVASTHITIH**

**DANAM DAMASH CHA YAJNASH CHA SVADHYAYAS TAPA ARJAVAM**

**The Lord said:**

**Fearlessness, purity of mind, steadfastness in the yoga of knowledge, alms-giving, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of the sastras, austerity and straightforwardness;**

abhayam: fearlessness;

satva samshuddhih: purity of the mind;

jnana yoga vyavasthitiḥ: established/steadfastness in the yoga of knowledge;

danam: charity;

damaśh: control of the sense organs;

yajna: dedicated actions;

swadhyaya: self-study;

tapas: tapas;

arjavam: straight forward/integrity.

A total of 10 divine virtues are enumerated in this sloka.

Abhayam: Fearlessness

This is considered to be the first and foremost requisite for the spiritual journey.

Why?

Life is a tug of war. In the game of “tug of war” the opposing teams put their strongest people to the front. For the daivi team “Abhayam” is the leader and for “Asuric” team “Damba” (pretension) the leader.

In most of the idols of the Gods, one can see the right hand of the deity pointing towards the feet of the idol. This is the “Abhaya mudra”. It simply means that the devotee is asked to take shelter under the Lord (the feet depict Dharma/righteousness). Follow “My dharma” and you will have no fear in succeeding, is the message to get from this. The seeker, who manages to get near the Lord this way, will have no fear.

Before we undertake any major journey there is always the fear of the unknown.  
Is it not true that we are frightened when we are not sure of something?  
Is it not true that we are frightened of the dark and frightened to walk on an unknown path?

Our fear in the journey of life, is the fear of the possible obstacles we may encounter.  
Ignorance of the sastras and ignorance of the message imbedded in the sastras makes us frightened.  
This can be overcome by the knowledge imparted in the sacred texts and with the assistance of the guru.

It is like a student who has the required knowledge, he is not frightened of taking the exams, he is ready to face the exams at any moment.  
But he, who has not got the required knowledge is frightened to hear even the word “exams”.

In the spiritual journey which takes a long time, the seeker may be frightened of losing many of his so called possessions, including family and friends. The attachment to possessions including one’s own physical body, is the cause for the fear.

We forget to remember or we are not aware, that our only lifelong companion in our life, is “The Atman” within.

Sri Satya Sai Baba’s famous words were “why fear when I am here”?

Knowing (Chit) the “Eternal Truth” (Sat) will give us “Ananda” and this is the meaning of the famous mantra “Satchidananda”. By following “Truth” there should not be any more room for fear.

Can we succeed in our efforts?

There could be the fear of unknown obstacles, which could block the spiritual journey or the fear of missing out on the present while striving for something in the future.

Lord Ganesha, for the Hindus is the God worshipped to help in overcoming the obstacles in life. He is worshipped as “Vighneswara” meaning “The Lord over the obstacles.”

The first task would be to know what is required for the journey and make efforts to get them before starting the journey.

In a battle the forces assembled on both sides will have to have “no fear” including fear of death.

The Mahabharata battle was a battle of “win or die” to get the throne of Hastinapura. The fear of the possibility of losing so many soldiers including the loved members of the family made Arjuna become despondent and drop his bow and arrow in the middle of the battlefield.

Lord Subramanya, the brother of Ganesha is the commander-in-chief of the army for the Devas. We should, like Ganesha learn sit over the doubts (by acquiring knowledge) and then take up the journey. For this journey we need to develop the virtue of “Fearlessness” and make ”Abhaya” the commander-in-chief in our battle to fight the asuric qualities in us.

Satva samshuddhim: purity of the mind.

The mind is the organ where thoughts generate. Thoughts are the precursor to actions. Actions bring the results which give the experience of happiness or sorrow. Impure thoughts make the mind impure and generate sorrow in our lives.

As we have discussed before the mind is the storehouse of vasanas/thought imprints. In our life of ignorance (before the knowledge dawns), we must have committed many wrong actions, developed a number of desires and hatreds and made our mind a store house of impurities.

We need to do an overhaul and clean the mind of such vasanas.

Gita mahatmyam:

Mala nirmochanam pumsa jalasnanam dine‘ dine‘  
Sakrut geetambhasi snanam samsara malanasanam

One can become free from contamination by taking bath with water every day. But, if one takes bath even once only in the sacred waters of Mother Gita, all the impurities of samsara are destroyed.

The mind is a subtle organ and the dirt on it is also subtle. One cannot see the impurity with the physical eyes. It needs the light of consciousness/knowledge to reflect from the intellect on to the mind to realise its presence. It can be cleaned only by spiritual knowledge and the sacred text Srimad Bhagawadgita is a tool for the task.

The first question we should put ourselves before undertaking any actions to fulfil a wish is: “Are our intentions pure and honest”?

The control over the mind is “sama”. To develop purity of the mind we need to exercise the power “sama”.

Purity of the mind comes from purity of heart. We have discussed before that the heart gives more importance to the welfare of other parts of the body than to its own welfare. Purity of mind comes when this aspect of welfare of others is exercised in the actions that ensue from the mind.

Jnana yoga vyavasthitam: established in the yoga of knowledge.

The infant baby in the first few weeks after delivery develops the knowledge that there is something/somebody that takes care of her needs and make her feel comfortable. The first action she starts with is the “first smile” to her carer/mother. Established in the knowledge that the person caring for her needs, is her “Carer”, she starts conducting actions and gets more knowledge. Eventually this knowledge becomes wisdom. Thus it revolves round from karma to jnana, jnana to karma, to bhakti and to constant meditation.

When we clearly realise that the “Parabrahman” is our primary carer, our actions that follow will reflect divinity, which in turn will please the Lord. The yoga to unite with the Parabrahman with this understanding is “Jnana yoga vyavasthiti”.

This is the spiritual knowledge or Atma Jnana. Our lives should become focused to attain this, to acquire more of this spiritual knowledge and experience “Ananda”. (Shuddha Ananda - Pure Bliss.)

Slokas 33-42 of chapter 4 give a detailed account of the “Atma Jnana”. Of these slokas, sloka 39 “Sraddhavaan labhate jnanam” is extremely beautiful and gives us the path to experience “Bliss”.

Nitya anitya viveka vicharana (analysis daily of what is eternal and what is transient) is the means to unite with The Parabrahman.

To cross over the ocean called “ignorance” we need to have the boat of knowledge and the Parabrahman will be the navigator. (sloka 34, chapter 4)

The Lord is giving us the knowledge of the sacred text to get rid of the ignorance we are carrying in our minds.

Danam:



“Taittareeya Upanisad” describes danam as the act when one can give what he has to others out of goodwill, without expecting anything in return.

This act of charity could be in the form of donating one’s own time, physical help, knowledge, wealth, food, land, clothes, water etc.

This is knowledge converted into action to purify the mind. It goes without saying that it is not the “Robin hood” way of robbing the rich to feed the poor. It should only be that which has been earned righteously. This can only come when one has a feeling of abundance with whatever one has got with him (due to the blessings of the Lord).

Each one of us is a treasure house of “Love”. Love is in abundance inside us but we do not recognise and use it as such.

“Mother Teresa” is one of the examples to understand the principle of Love.

Mahatma Gandhi shared his love with the millions of Harijans and worked for their welfare. The more unselfish love we give others, more will be the love generated within the body.

We should learn the art of sharing that which we have, which is good and useful, with deserving people. The charitable act should reflect humility and we should not express pride in such acts.

Dama:

The next divine virtue to develop is “Dama”. It is control over the senses. The five sense organs are the gateways for entry of both pure and impure impulses to our mind. True knowledge is when one can: differentiate between pure and impure impulses, control the senses, not let the senses bring impure impulses, let the senses receive and take in only pure impulses to the mind.

The senses are the gateways to hell as well as heaven.

Sama (internal/mind restraint) and dama (external restraint) are the self-restraints one has to exercise in the spiritual journey.

See no evil, speak no evil and hear no evil is dama.

Yajna:

Any dedicated act becomes a yajna. Dedicated acts to clear the impurity in the mind and the conduct of sacrifices for the welfare of others is yajna. We learn from the sacred text that yajna is not the animal sacrifice one associates it with but is the sacrifice of the animal instincts within. In the fire of the havan (a ritual wherein offerings are made into a consecrated fire) which is the fire of the light of knowledge, one is expected to pour all the impurities stored in the mind and burn them away. At the same time, one should also offer all that is pure within, with the feeling/prayer of “let all the pure in me be of benefit to all.”

Hence, the emphasis is on “Loka Kalyana” as the best form of Yajna. One should learn the art of sacrificing one’s selfishness in the fire (yajna) of knowledge (see chapter 4, sloka 28 for the names of different types of yajnas).

Swadhyaya: swa adhyaya meaning “self-study”.

The self-analysis of one’s own thoughts is swadhyaya. Clearing the mind of impure thoughts and allowing the mind to store pure thoughts is swadhyaya. No doctor can see through our mind and we are the only ones who can truly see our mind and recognise what is stored in it.

Regular study of the scriptures and holy texts to develop spiritual knowledge and practicing the truth enshrined in them is swadhyaya. Swadhyaya is to be looked upon as “Rishi yajna” one of the five daily yajnas we should conduct. The Upanisads say that even the gurus must do swadhyaya first thing in the morning and refresh what is said in the sacred texts and then proceed with imparting the knowledge to others.

Another explanation for “Swadhyaya”:

One gets the knowledge by the blessings of God, Guru and the Veda Sastras. Faith in the God, the Guru and the Scriptures is an essential condition to be fulfilled. Swadhyaya is receiving the spiritual knowledge from these three sources.

- Individual efforts (swa - self; adhyaya: efforts);
  - Development of bhakti to the Supreme;
  - Studying about the power that sustains the universe and putting into practice that which assists in universal peace and harmony (last sloka chapter 18 - yatra yogeswaro Krishna);
- are the means to receive the blessings from the Supreme.

Individual efforts to approach the guru by the right means (bhakti, service etc) to understand the scriptural message is swadhyaya in this sense. The guru will help to decode some of the intricate points in the sacred texts and guide his disciple in the right path.

Finally, one has to study from various available (and accepted) sources, try to understand the message and put that into practice which helps in clearing the impure vasanas.

Implementing the essence of the sloka 47, chapter 2 (karmanyevadhikarasthe) is swadhyaya.

Tapas:

There is a misunderstanding among many on what tapas means. The mythological stories and Puranas give information of the tapas conducted by so many, including the asuras. The seeker who conducts the tapas is said to get the vision and blessings of the Lord.

The examples include severe mortification of the body using excessive heat, sitting near to open fires in hot seasons, braving adverse weather conditions and abstaining from all eating and drinking. This is not true tapas for the majority.

“Tapas” is an act of purification of the speech, mind and the body. Chapter 17 elaborates on this aspect and makes it clear on what tapas means.

A student who worked hard all through his school and college days and graduates successfully, is said to have conducted tapas for so many years to acquire the knowledge to be a useful member of the society.

The parents who work to bring up their children as useful members of society, able to stand on their own two feet and contribute to others, are also said to have conducted tapas.

Gold is a precious mineral but it is also contaminated with impurities. The goldsmith puts it into fire to burn away the impurities. Tapas is like that act of the goldsmith. We should be putting our thoughts into the kiln of knowledge.

When the mind is cleared totally of the impurities,  
when the individual contributes to the welfare of the society,  
when there is no trace of selfishness,

one is said to have conducted tapas.

“Trikarana shuddhi” means purity/cleanliness of the three instruments of the physical body. We communicate with the outside world with these three instruments, namely the mind, the speech and bodily actions.

The mind thinks and then sends commands to the organs of action to fulfil a task. The mind has a number of stored thoughts in it but at one time or another, one thought will come to prominence and this thought will be converted into action, via speech or bodily movements. Tapas is the effort to kill the demon “ego” within and let the divinity within shine forth with all its splendour and glory.

It is an act of “self-denial” at the level of the body and the mind.

The seeker has to learn the art of denial, to not fulfil the impure thoughts stored in mind and to deny the entry of impure thoughts from the world outside.

By reducing the attachment to the physical world the seeker conserves the stored energy within. The seeker by this method can increase his spiritual power.

The True scriptural meaning of tapas is:

“Aikagryam paramam tapas”. Concentrated thinking is considered as tapas.

It is said that Lord Vishnu at the time of creation commanded Pitamaha Brahma to create. Brahma asked for advice as to how he could do so.

Vishnu advised Brahma to conduct Tapas.

He meant that Brahma should think on creation and nothing but creation at all times. It took several years of concentrated thinking before Brahma actually produced the life on earth.

In this particular sloka:

Yajna refers to the dedication of the wealth one has,

Tapas refers to the purification of mind, speech and actions

And

Swadhyaya refers to the dedication of the mind towards learning the spiritual message contained in the scriptures, the sacred texts and putting them into practice.

Arjavam: straight forward, integrity.

The ability to be straight forward at all times is “arjavam”. This is considered as one of the qualities which a brahmana has to possess for eligibility to be called a “Brahmin”.

Harmony of the mind, speech and actions for noble purpose (not for selfish purpose) is Arjavam.

Thinking something bad of a person and then uttering words of praise when face to face with that person is not considered as Arjavam.

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् |

दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ||2||

ahinsā satyam akrodhas tyāgaḥ śhāntir apaiśhunam |

dayā bhūteṣhv aloluptvaṁ mārdavaṁ hrīr achāpalam ||2||

## Sloka 2

**AHINSA SATYAM AKRODHAS TYAGAH SHANTIR APAISHUNAM  
DAYA BHUTESHV ALOLUPTVAM MARDAVAM HRIR ACHAPALAM**

**Non-injury, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness,  
compassion to beings, absence of greed, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickle-mindedness.**

ahimsa: non-injury;  
satyam: truthfulness;  
akrodham: absence of anger;  
tyagam: renunciation, sacrifice;  
shantihi: peacefulness;  
apaishunam: absence of crookedness;  
daya: compassion;  
bhooteshu: towards beings;  
aloluptvam: absence of greed/desire for enjoyment;  
mardavam: gentleness;  
hrir: modesty;  
acapalam: absence of fickle-mindedness.

Eleven more virtues of divine nature are enumerated in this sloka.

Ahimsa: non-injury.  
“A” means “no” and “himsa” means “injury”.

One can inflict injury on others, through three channels:  
The mind;  
The speech and  
Body.

These three are also the avenues for us to interact with the world around.

Injury to others even in thought generated in the mind is considered as injury. This is because thoughts that are not converted into actions but generated in the mind remain stored as “vasanas” and these will become actions at a later date/later birth. Having the thought of injury to others is therefore “himsa” (injury.)

What about “swearing”?

Many a time we swear within ourselves abusive words directed towards others but do not say it so openly. Even this is considered as himsa.

One of the worst ways of harming others is via speech. Under the grip of extreme anger people come out with words that harm others. States of extreme anger cloud the reasoning capacity (sloka 66, chapter 2).

Public speeches that generate anger in the minds of the crowd gathered are also considered as himsa.

Himsa is injury to others that hurts their feelings or harms them physically/mentally.

The world around is for habitation not only for us, the humans, but also for all other forms of life:  
moving and un-moving.  
The plant kingdom,  
Animal kingdom,

Aquatic life,  
Those who fly in air,  
Minute forms of life like the bacteria, viruses etc,  
All come under the various categories of life in this universe known to us.  
There are plenty of other forms of life unknown to the human mind.

There are different and contradictory views on which types of life the term ahimsa applies to.

The Jains consider that there is harm to innocent bacteria even in the simple act of breathing and so wear a mask over the face while walking. They also take care while walking and try their best to see that they do not tread on little insects and small forms of life on the road.

The question of vegetarians, vegans and non-vegetarians raises passions in the hearts of the public and some are genuinely unclear on the right food to consume.

What I have said so far and will say in the following paragraphs about “ahimsa” is an expression of the broad views on this subject.

Let us start with the three types of food “satvic, rajasic and tamasic”. The next chapter deals in greater depth on this subject. Satvic food is on the principle of “ahimsa” and directly takes one to the topic of “Vegetarians and Non-Vegetarians”.

Those who take up the spiritual sadhana and are striving for “Peace” and “Moksha” should consume vegetarian food. Non-vegetarian food brings about a passionate influence on the mind and this in turn influences the actions that ensue, which bind one to the world.

The subject in this chapter is about path towards reaching the Parabrahman by developing divine virtues and discarding un-divine virtues. The “ahimsa” referred to in this sloka is about absolute “non-injury” and the life of a true vegetarian is in accordance with developing this virtue.

One can summarise this discussion by saying that “God” resides in every form of life. Injury to any form of life is indirectly injury to the God. While we are striving to reach God, it is diabolical that we should injure God residing in other forms of life by acts of “himsa”. Where there is God there should be sacredness. It is as simple as that.

Satyam: Truthfulness.

One should be truthful in thought and speech and the deeds he carries out. One can put the question as to who can be the judge of what “Truth” is.

The answer is “Be truthful to your own conscience.”

The Atman within is the witness to all our thoughts, speech and actions. “Atma Sakshi” is to remember that the Atman is the neutral witness residing within each of us.

There are certain situations in life that may demand withholding the truth in the interest of the person concerned. (This cannot be taken as a general rule.) For example, a physician, in the best interest of the patient may decide to withhold from telling the whole truth, if by telling the whole truth, the patient’s condition may get worse.

Chapter 17, sloka 15 is about what constitutes a “Satvic truth”.

Akrodham: It means “absence of anger”.

We have discussed this several times already and sloka 63, chapter 2 has a graphic description of he who becomes a victim to the twin enemies of man: “desire and anger.” It leads at the end to the destruction of the individual.

Instead of anger ruling and ruining us, we should be the rulers and have absolute control over the feeling of anger.

What makes one get angry?

There are a number of reasons that can make one get angry. One such situation is when one feels that others do not come up to their expectations. Angry outbursts in the house between family members or between friends arise because of this cause.

The remedy for this is: “Patience and love”.

Another way of controlling the anger is by not showing immediate reaction to the situation that made one feel angry. A gap between thought and reaction to the anger reduces the chances of serious harm. This will help one to analyse the reason for the confrontation, their possible role in the situation and also to look at possible consequences of such actions.

“Was there anything that was my fault?” should be the first question to put to oneself.

The word “sorry” expressed with deep sincerity has a great benefit in reducing the damage and laughter sometimes cools the temper from building up.

It is true that in states of anger there is great deal of rapid agitation going on in the mind, the capacity to think and act reasonably is lost temporarily.

A sudden heart attack/stroke is also a possibility due to changes in blood pressure caused by anger.

Tyaga: renunciation.

It is a form of sacrifice. In spiritual terms it refers to renunciation of the fruits of actions. Every action has a reaction. Depending upon the actions the fruits can be sour, bitter or sweet. Is it not true that what we think is “ours” is not truly ours?

“Time” (Kala) takes away the possessions we consider as ours or we are taken away from those possessions. The only constant companion in our life’s journey is “The Atman” within who remains as an eternal witness for all our thoughts and actions.

Opposite to “tyaga” is “attachment”. We get attached to the objective world and in this sense our body is also an object we get attached to. The main point to remember is that our own body is only the temporary suit over the Atman.

One can still live with the family, house and possessions and there is no need to abandon all and run away to the forest and become a mendicant. The only rule should be, to keep in mind at all times, that those we are associated with, are only our companions by the grace of the Lord, given to us, to teach us important lessons concerning attachment.

Taking refuge in “Paramatma” and giving up attachment to the objects in the physical world is Tyaga.

The saint who followed this principle was “Saint Tyagaraja”, the greatest composer of divine music. He was given the title of the king of renunciation (Tyaga - Renunciation; Raja - King).

To assist in learning this lesson and imbibe the divine quality, Hindus who go on pilgrimage are advised to renounce an item of food they like most and not eat/drink that item for the rest of their lives.

It is like the “lent” for the true Christians who take an oath not to eat certain foods during the holy Easter period.

These practices are to develop a discipline in life.

I would say that true tyaga is the capacity to develop renunciation of evil thoughts and actions and renouncing the thought of enjoying the desires. Let us continue to discharge our ordained duties and learn the art of saying “Krishnarpanamastu” for whatever results we get. If it is a good result it should be offered to the Lord, if it is a painful result, we should develop the capacity to withstand the pain and remember that the feeling will gradually disappear in the course of time.

Another explanation for “Tyaga”:

To follow the principle of truth, righteousness and justice (satya, dharma and nyaya) and discard untruth, unrighteousness and being unjust in actions. (asatya, adharma and anyaya).  
Visarjana (abandon/sacrifice) of these qualities is tyaga.

Shantihi: it means “Peace.” (antahkarana upashamana)

“Om Shantihi Shantihi Shantihi” is a powerful mantra. It is the mantra for “Peace from within, Peace from all round (nature) and Peace from the heavenly wrath (adhyatmika, adhibhoutika and adhi daivika) “. It comes from practicing “tyaga”.

Desires and hatreds make one restless. When one has mastered the art of “Tyaga” “Peace” automatically ensues because there are no further desires. But for this to be effective no new vasanas should be allowed to enter the mind.

The tools for this are “sense restraint and self-control.”

By living the life of truth, practice of ahimsa, control over anger and tyaga “Peace” prevails.

The ocean of samsara is turbulent and there is no peace in it.

But in contrast the lake is quiet, peaceful and serene.

The mind should not be like the ocean with waves but should be like the calm lake.

When the mind is disturbed, it loses its potency.

When the mind develops equilibrium to all situations, serenity prevails.

Apaishunam: not pointing out the bad qualities of others is “apaishunam.”

Absence of crookedness is also apaishunam.

The tongue is a very powerful weapon but it can do a lot of damage. It is the organ (jnanendriya) for taste but also a tool (karmendriya) to speak. As a tool to speak we must know the correct way to use it. We will learn in the next chapter about “Tapas of the speech” to purify ourselves. Speech is a test of one’s character and temperament.

When we point out something bad to others we direct the index finger towards them and say “you did it” or to say “you are bad”. If we take notice of how we do it, we will see that when the index finger is pointing towards others, the 3rd, 4th and 5th fingers of ours are pointing towards ourselves. Sai Baba used to make this observation and ask people to look at themselves (see if you have that bad quality in yourselves first) before pointing the finger of guilt towards others.

Hiding our own faults/weakness (the three fingers pointing towards us) we put the blame on others and accuse them, this is crookedness in us and it is a bad quality.

We should look for our own evil traits within ourselves and work at getting rid of those traits.

Apaishunam is to get rid of this evil quality of pointing out faults in others.

Daya bhooteshu:

Any form of life which is made up of the five great elements (pancha maha bhootas) is “bhoota”. Apart from us, the humans, the term “bhoota” also includes all other forms of life (birds, aquatic creatures, insects, animals, plants etc.).

Compassion towards all forms of life is “Daya bhooteshu”. Ahimsa, non-injury to others has been discussed already at the beginning of this sloka.

Daya is not just non-injury but should also include all actions to make the life of that bhoota happy and peaceful. “Universal compassion” is lacking in the present world due to the invention of so many tools designed to bring us happiness. These tools trap us in a web of personal desire and make us forget the needs of others.

In our own body made up of so many organs, each organ and each cell in the body works with compassion towards the entire body. If there is a pin prick to the foot, the eyes and fingers move towards the object giving the injury and nurse the foot that is hurt.

To an extent we show compassion to other beloved members of our family. Taking it to a higher plane is showing compassion towards all ones fellow citizens and life in one’s own country, still better, is compassion to one and all in the entire universe.

The Supreme Lord has mercy and compassion to one and all but we, deeply immersed in the physical world do not take notice of this act by the Lord and blame Him for all the miseries we experience or we see around us.

Also, compassion should be given towards those who may not have reached higher levels of spiritual perfection and are ignorant of the spiritual way of living.

One cannot expect everybody to be perfect and understand what is dharma and what is the dharmic way of living. There should be the capacity to excuse the sinner also. It does not mean that there should be no punishment for the sinner. Each country has its own judicial system that orders punishment to the guilty. Wherever possible what is needed is to see that those who are punished for their bad deeds are not punished for life but are given the opportunity to come back and be part of the society.

It is probably not the place to look at the rights and wrongs of this approach but what I have said is designed to help each one of us, develop this quality of compassion to all.

Compassion to those in suffering is essential. Suffering could be for various reasons like poverty, ill health, unemployment etc. What we do to reduce the suffering should come from the bottom of our heart. We may not take away the sufferings of all at one go but we can play a small part in alleviating the same. As individuals what we can do can be limited but as a group what we can do can be a great service to humanity and to life in this universe.

Hence, the Vedas recommend “Bhoota Yajna” as part of the five nitya karmas. (Five daily duties conducted with the spirit of sacrifice: Chapter 3).

Alolatvam:

Lolatvam is indulgence in acts that bring about sensual pleasures. Absence of indulgence in sense pleasures is “Alolatvam.”



We should understand that the sensual pleasures apply to the impulses received from the five sense organs and also those impulses stored in mind from past experiences. It is not just absence from physical indulgence but also absence of day dreaming of such pleasures.

The medical experts wholeheartedly support moderation in all acts including those that bring about sense pleasures. Excessive indulgence in any form of pleasure has a harmful effect on the mind and the body of the individual, which in the course of time ruins not only the individual but also his/her family, friends and society.

The mind that indulges in such pleasures can be compared to a wild horse let loose.

Herein comes again the importance of the meaning of the picture of “The Gitopadesham”. (Refer to the “Introduction”).

We, in the battle of life, to reach the destination (Moksha) have to make use of the “Kama, Krodha, Lobha and Moha” (desires, anger, greed and delusion representing the four horses as shown in the picture). We should control these four and make use of them to reach the destination. These four have to be controlled by developing the quality of “non-indulgence”.

The act of “Brahmacharya” advocated in our scriptures refers to “non-indulgence” in sensual pleasures. The word means that the mind should be walking in the path of Brahman and Brahman only.

The mind should not be allowed to waver from the chosen ideal.

The fourth limb in the eight limbed (ashtanga) path for achieving “Samadhi” as advocated by Patanjali is “Pratyahara”.

“Pratyahara” is single pointed concentration on the object to be achieved and not letting the senses and mind waver from the objective. Withdrawal from sense objects is “Pratyahara”. “Alolatvam” is the quality for a “Pratyahari”.

Mardavam: it means “gentleness.”

Gentle in word and deed is the hallmark of a satvic person. It adds further power to the practice of “Ahimsa”. One should avoid being harsh and rude to others.

We can understand this if we observe the relationship between a mother and her child. The gentle nature of the mother finally wins over the unruly behaviour of the child. The child must learn how to react with the members of the society. By patience, by being gentle the mother slowly but steadily makes her child become a useful member of the society.

The gentle and kind nature of the mother acts like a strong medicine and helps the child in learning the lessons of how to relate to others.

The Gitacharya is so gentle towards all of us who commit many acts of sin and is ready to be the guide for us in our life.

The sadguru is really being kind and gentle to all of us.

Hrih: it means “modesty.” (Lajja)

Normally words of praise make one feel great. To a large extent it makes the individual’s ego feel happy. The contrary reaction to praise is “modesty.” A modest individual is always grateful to the Lord and remembers that it was His Grace that made him receive the praise.

We have examples in the history where great men from an ordinary background in life have reached the highest positions in society but have not forgotten their past. They carried out their professional duties efficiently but remained modest at all times.

The modest man does not feel ashamed to say “sorry”.

The word “Hrih” is used as an adjective in praise of the Lord because “He” is the most modest person in the entire universe.

Acapalanam: “capalam” is fickle mindedness. “Acapalanam” is absence of fickle mindedness.

This also includes unnecessary movement of the limbs.

The child in the classroom listening intently to the teacher is expected to keep still. Similarly, the student practicing yoga/meditation should learn the art of keeping the body still. At higher levels, it is keeping the mind still. The mind should be contemplating only on the Atman and nothing else.

The mind as we know is like a monkey that cannot sit quiet on one branch of the tree for any length of time. It keeps on jumping from one branch to the other. Our duty is not to become fickle minded.

तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहोनातिमानिता ।  
भवन्ति सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥३॥

tejaḥ kṣhamā dhṛitiḥ śhaucham adroho nāti-mānitā ।  
bhavanti sampadam daivīm abhijātasya bhārata ॥३॥

### Sloka 3

**TEJAH KSHAMA DHRITIH SHAUCHAM ADROHO NATI-MANITA  
BHAVANTI SAMPADAM DAIVIM ABHIJATASYA BHARATA**

**Luminosity (brightness), forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride, these belong to one born of a divine nature.**

tejaha: brightness, energy;  
kshama: forgiveness;  
dhriti: fortitude;  
shoucham: purity;  
adroham: no hatred;  
nati manitaha: absence of pride;  
daiveem: to divine;  
abhijatasya: of the born;  
sampadam: wealth/state;  
bhavanti: belong to.

Tejaha: this refers to the brightness/luminosity of Brahman.

The pure light of knowledge illumines the entire universe. To depict this luminosity, a glow of light behind the head (halo) is portrayed on the pictures of the divinity. One can see such a similarity in the pictures of divinities in many of the other religious denominations too.

Kshama: forgiveness.

At the highest level true forgiveness is when one can forgive even the worst sinner. Jesus Christ forgave the sinners who put Him on the Holy Cross and prayed to His Father in heaven to excuse them.

Opposite to forgiveness is revenge. The consequences of acts of revenge can be horrendous.

Mahatma Gandhi used to say, "Show the other cheek to he who slaps."

He who puts this virtue to practice in his/her life is a true hero.

He who has been the victim of crime has the right to exercise his right of self-assertion and take the offender to the court of justice. He has the opportunity to avenge the wrong done. But, the victim who has the virtue of "kshama" not only forgives the offender but also forgets the offence.

Let me say that it is not easy to forgive but to he who is on the spiritual path, to progress, he must work hard to put this virtue into practice. He has to look at the situation as a test conducted by the Lord on His beloved son. Passing the test with distinction will give the opportunity to take one step forward towards his master/guru.

Dhriti: firmness/fortitude.

Dhrida nischaya is dhriti. It is an attitude of the mind. (Nischayatmika buddhi). The right frame of mind will assist in achieving success and the wrong frame of mind will lead to failure. "Make or break" is in our own hands. The root word for it is "dhri" which means "to hold". To hold on to one's own dharma at any cost is dhriti.

In the path to moksha there are bound to be many obstacles, this is because of the vasanas from the past (sanchita papa/punya - accumulated points of de-merit and merit).

To hold on to the path of righteousness despite the adverse situations in life needs the virtue of dhriti. A firm belief in the Lord is essential on the journey to achieve "Moksha". One has to sacrifice a great deal to get what he wants in life.

The youth in their university studies have to sacrifice their sensual pleasures (practice Bramhacharya) to get the best results.

The students have gone to the university to get a degree. The degree is to help in getting a job. The job is needed to have security in life. The students need a firm determination to put their best efforts in at college, so that they may have a bright future ahead.

Avadhoota Tatvas (Bhagawatha Purana):

Lord Dattateya tells emperor Yadu the 24 teachers who taught him the lessons of life. Earth and mountain, he says were his first two teachers.

The power of endurance he learnt from studying "the Earth." Despite the insults we throw at mother earth, she continues to sustain us, giving us food, fertile land and providing for all our needs.

A wise man will ever be interested in doing good to others and he is convinced that he is born on this earth as a human being just for that purpose. This he learnt from the mountain, He says to Yadu.

To stand firm and be un-moved is the lesson from these two examples.

Shoucham: Purity.

This has been discussed several times already.

It simply means purity at the level of body, mind and speech.

Impurity of the physical body leads in turn to infections and illnesses.

Impurity of the speech leads one to lose friends in life and make enemies.

Impurity of the mind leads the seeker away from the chosen path in life.

Example: water is purifier.

Just imagine this scenario:

Sea water is not good for drinking/irrigation.

With the heat of sun, drops of water as vapour move upwards and form clouds in the sky.

With the heat of the sun, the clouds convert to rain.

In the process the sea water becomes pure water. It falls on the soil, nourishes the soil and forms streams and rivers which give drinking water and water for irrigation.

The sadhana of the seeker has to be like that of the sea water becoming rain water, in order to nourish mankind.

Impurity of mind, speech or actions ends in ruin of the individual.

A combination of these will hasten the destruction of the individual.

Impurity at all the three levels will surely destroy the individual.

It may also lead to the destruction of one's own close family, friends and the society.

The worst form would be impurity of the mind.

Ravana is one of the examples of those with an impure mind. His act of severe penance to please Lord Shiva and get boons was only to fulfil an impure thought in the mind. It led not only to his destruction but also to the destruction of his kingdom and all the subjects in his kingdom.

We must learn to keep our surroundings clean too.

Is it not a fact that when we are expecting friends/family/guests to the house we would like to present ourselves as tidy as possible? Do we not go to see ourselves in the mirror before opening the door?

In the olden days, there was a mirror placed just near the outside door of the house and at the landing while coming down the stair case. This was to look at oneself and tidy oneself before letting the visitor in.

In the journey of our life, the visitor is "Parabrahman" or it could be our preceptor. How can we present ourselves before them when we know that they can see the impure thoughts in our mind?

The Parabrahman who is residing within and who was kept in obscurity starts to come out into the open as we make progress in our spiritual journey. As He comes out, He will come nearer and nearer to our intellect and the mind. The mind is the store house of vasanas and we should not let Him see any impure vasanas.

We, as parents are responsible for bringing our children into the society as they grow older.

Involuntarily we make it a point to see that they are kept clean in body and mind. We correct their faults and help them develop good manners. We reprimand them for bad language.

Similarly we should see that we do not have any impurities.

Daily physical bath is to clean the body,

Daily prayers/japa to clean our mind.

Let us not give opportunity for the Lord to see us "unclean" and if we are "unclean" let us be ashamed of ourselves.

Adroha: droha is “betrayal”.

We should not betray the Atman who is the Lord within us.

The body is the vehicle to express divinity and any act contrary to expressing divinity is “droha” (betrayal) of the Lord.

We should not betray the trust the God has in us. After all He has given us birth as humans, so let us not betray His trust. Let us not be selfish and egoistic in relation to our actions.

When someone else betrays us, how should we react?

Self-analysis is important. We should try to find the answer to the question, “What was wrong in me that led to the betrayal”? This would be the way to better ourselves spiritually.

Creating bad feeling and feelings of revenge will only lead to bad actions that will hurt others and eventually lead to the ruin of ourselves.

Universal love and compassion are advocated to overcome the feeling of hatred.

Natimanitaha: absence of over-pride is “natimanitaha”.

In a spiritual sense, the seeker on developing all the above said virtues should not fall into the trap and become proud of developing them. On the contrary, the attitude of becoming humble as more and more virtues are developed is the quality of a true devotee of the Lord.

The spiritual seeker should live a pure life and not expect/look forward to being adored and worshipped by others.

“Self-honour” is the worst quality. Sage Viswamitra of the Puranic times was said to be one who was proud of his knowledge of the Brahman and it led to his downfall many times.

We should not expect others to honour us and respect us. Our basic duty for being born as humans with a good intellectual capacity of reasoning is “Universal welfare, love and affection towards one and all.” Why should one look for honour for the so called acts of social service?

It is not proper to have a gang of “yes men” who nod at whatever you do. When one loses the position/wealth the same “yes men” will desert him/her.

Looking at our own virtues and questioning ourselves regularly we will be able to acquire more virtues. Let us not be proud of having 25 out of 26 virtues. If we do so, it is the beginning of ruin for ourselves.

On the other hand we should look at the divine qualities we do not possess, work hard to acquire them and ensure that we do not drop even one of them at any time.

These 26 virtues are the most precious treasures for the spiritual journey.

Bhavanti sampadam daiveem abhijatasya bharata: these belong to one born of a divine nature.

The Lord ends this section on the divine qualities by saying “these belong to one born of a divine nature.”

We are all born with a pre-determined nature because of the vasanas we carry from previous births. As we discussed in chapter 14, our thoughts become our qualities at a later time in our life including future births. If we start thinking of these qualities the Lord will give us birth with a divine nature. The stronger we think of these, the greater will be the divine vasanas we carry forward and better will be the chances of a birth to strengthen them and progress spiritually.

Let us not forget that the human birth we have is already a blessing and His grace on us. We have been blessed with the intellectual capacity of reasoning. Let us make use of the buddhi He has given us and

progress in our journey to reach His abode. Our efforts will receive His Grace. He will bless us with “Buddhi Yoga” which strengthens our buddhi and takes us in the right direction.

What happens if we do not make use of the human birth and use our “buddhi”?  
The bad thoughts entertained will give us a birth of an “un-divine” nature and this is described in sloka 4.

In our spiritual journey we have to acquire the above 26 divine virtues and safeguard them at all times. Whereas, the asuric qualities we are going to study in the next sloka are to be searched for in our own mind and all attempts should be made to discard them.

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।  
अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ सम्पदमासुरीम् ॥४॥

dambho darpo 'bhimānaśh cha krodhaḥ pārūṣhyam eva cha ।  
ajñānam chābhijātasya pārtha sampadam āsurīm ॥४॥

#### Sloka 4

**DAMBHO DARPO ‘BHIMANASH CHA KRODHAH PARUSHYAM EVA CHA  
AJNANAM CHABHIJATASYA PARTHA SAMPADAM ASURIM**

**O Arjuna, pretension, pride, self-conceit, anger, harshness and ignorance belong to those who are born with demonical nature.**

dambo: pretension;  
darpa: pride;  
abhimana: self-conceit;  
cha: and;  
krodham: anger;  
parushya: harshness;  
ajnanam: ignorance;  
abhijatasya: of the born/born with;  
sampadam: wealth/state;  
asureem: demonical.

Six qualities that denote the demonical nature are enumerated here (the qualities that lead to destruction of oneself).

One can understand the word “Sampat” prefixed to “Daivi”.  
Here in this sloka, the Lord has used the words “Sampadam Asureem”.  
The good qualities are the treasures (daiviee sampat, refer last sloka), one should work to acquire and possess at all times in the journey of life.

Why then say “Asuri sampad”. How can the demonical qualities be the treasures?  
Really speaking they are not treasures at all.  
It is the ignorance that makes one consider them as treasures.

Keeping in mind constantly the truth that everything in the material world in our life including our own physical body is transitory, we are asked to undertake the spiritual journey.

It is very hard to get this maturity in understanding. This is because the majority of us are attached to the physical world and do not realise its transitory nature. The material wealth we acquire in our life as a matter of fact acts as a hindrance in our journey.

The material wealth gives us momentary happiness and sooner or later leads to sorrow. The scriptures advise the seekers to follow the path of “detachment in attachment” and are not tired of repeating it several times.

The wealth that can make us develop an asuric nature can be: Monetary, position in society, the physical strength, knowledge (buddhi), health, youth and many more. Even though all of these are not permanent possessions, we get strongly attached to them when they are with us and they lead us to develop asuric qualities. It is “The Maya” (illusion).

As these should actually be the deterrents in our journey, the Lord has taken pains to describe them elaborately in the slokas for the rest of this chapter.

For the king to remain in peace and let his subjects live in peace, he should first of all make strong efforts to keep his kingdom safe from the onslaught of the enemy. The enemy can come in disguise from any of the nine gates in the city which is our body.

The ignorance (ajnana) makes us get attached to our possessions. The Lord has taken it as His duty to clear the ignorance and so has given an elaborate description of these asuric qualities.

First sloka in chapter 9; the Lord says,  
“For you, free from envy, I shall declare this profound secret knowledge combined with realisation, which having known, you shall be free from evil.”

“Maya” is the enemy and the enemy comes in the guise of these asuric qualities which keep us in the dark regarding our real divine nature.

Let us not forget that our body is a temple with divinity within. We should not keep the temple dirty. We must keep it pure at all times. These evil qualities make it impure and we should work hard to get rid of them. We need to get rid of these bad qualities by clearing and lighting the temple with the “Light of Knowledge” and by expressing the divine qualities.

Let us now look at these six enemies:

Damba: pretension to appear greater than what one really is is “Damba”.

We should not give over-importance to ourselves by overestimating our capacity. Let us not cheat ourselves by overestimating our capacity and remember that the Lord within is a witness to all our thoughts and actions.

Whatever we have is really His and we are just the caretakers of His property. Even the knowledge we have is His grace.

The only one who knows our real worth is the Lord Himself.

Acts of pretension are wrong.

Pretending to be righteous is bad.

Thinking unrighteous thoughts and pretending to be righteous is an act of hypocrisy.

Darpa: Pride.

Self-importance because of the knowledge one possesses, wealth, status in the society etc. can make people look down on others.

It is a fact that we come across children of those in higher positions of society who act as though they are holding the higher position themselves.

The high ranking officials in any department hold the position only for a limited time and they are expected not to express pride, in their relationship with those in the lower ranks. The gang of yes-men surrounding those in higher positions or those who are wealthy will desert the person when the position/wealth is no more.

It so happens that as the time passes the arrogant person will probably be the loneliest person on earth.

Pride of belonging to the higher caste is another form of expressing hypocrisy by some.

Abhimana: the arrogant in the course of time become self-conceited. Giving self-importance to oneself is abhimana. Absence of true love and compassion are evident in such person.

As a matter of fact, the higher one climbs up the social ladder, the humbler should be his relationship with others.

One should learn to respect the chair they are holding in their official capacity and not be proud of holding on to an important position in society.

Krodha: anger.

This has been discussed so many times in the past. Sloka 63, chapter 2, gives a graphic description of downfall of he who has this quality. In chapter 3, the Lord says desire and anger are the two worst enemies of man (sloka 37, chapter 3).

Because of these qualities, the individual starts losing his temper more often when he finds that things are not going according to his wishes and desires.

Parushya: harshness.

Anger makes the individual act harshly towards others. Gentleness in word and deed are foreign to his nature.

Ajnanam: ignorance.

The above five qualities gradually make the person become more and more ignorant. Like a vicious circle, ignorance makes him strengthen the above bad qualities. Ignorance of one's true divine nature makes the person fall down from the position he has achieved.

Such people are called to be "diabolically fallen down".

दैवी सम्पद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।

मा शुचः सम्पदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥5॥

**daivī sampad vimokṣhāya nibandhāyāsūrī mata |**



**Sloka 5**

**DAIVI SAMPAD VIMOKSHAYA NIBANDHAYASURI MATA  
MA SHUCHAH SAMPADAM DAIVIM ABHIJATO 'SI PANDAVA**

**The divine treasure is (deemed) for liberation, the demonical nature is for bondage. Grieve not, O Pandava, you are born for the divine treasure.**

daivee: divine;  
sampad: treasure;  
vimokshaya: for liberation;  
nibandhaya: for bondage;  
asree: demonical;  
mataa: opinion/determined;  
maa shucha: grieve not;  
sampadam: treasure;  
daiveem: divine;  
abhijato'si: born for;  
Pandava: Arjuna.

After enumerating the divine and demonical virtues, we are now given the benefit of possessing the divine virtues and the dangers of harbouring the demonical virtues.

With this picture in mind,  
The seekers must first of all find out the virtues they possess,  
Classify them into two broad categories of divine and demonical virtues,  
Put the following question to themselves first:

What do I want in my life?  
If the answer is: "Liberation",  
Then they should work hard at:  
Developing the divine virtues that they do not have,  
Safeguarding the divine virtues they already have and  
Most importantly, working hard at getting rid of all the demonical virtues.

This does not happen overnight and may even take many births and deaths into this world.  
We are born already with so many virtues which remain dormant when we are young and start maturing as we grow older. The early family life if properly directed would assist in clearing the seeds of demonical virtues and nourishing the divine virtues.  
The blessings of Sadguru would make this task a lot easier,  
Faith in the scriptures and the gurus are the stepping stones to progress in the right direction.

It is possible that the facial expression of Arjuna made Krishna realise that Arjuna was wondering as to what was his fate.  
Sri Krishna immediately took steps to reassure His disciple Arjuna, with words of comfort. He says, "O Arjuna, you are born to acquire the Divine treasures".  
It meant that Arjuna was on the correct path to achieve "Liberation".

Can we note that the Lord has not used the word "goes to hell"? This shows the compassion the Lord has on us all who are His children.

It is the ignorance that is hiding the divinity in us.

Clearing the ignorance with knowledge and developing proper wisdom will take us all towards divinity.

Sri Krishna consoles His child Arjuna by saying “Ma Shuchaha”. No one should grieve thinking that they have demonical qualities and have no chance for Liberation.

The medicine, the Lord has given us (The Gita) will dispel the ignorance and this will take away the fear of a life in hell.

The fact that we have already come up to chapter 16 means that we are on the path to clear our ignorance, provided we have proper understanding and wisdom of what we have studied so far.

In sports we come across the “red flag” which some sportsmen are awarded for wrong play. It is a ban for a certain length of time and each one has the chance to redeem themselves and come back to participate in the game.

The demonical qualities are like the red flags for the athletes. The athlete who makes some major mistakes in the game is banned for a certain period of time. He is given opportunity to get rehabilitated and participate in the game at a later time.

We need a period of rehabilitation to come back on to the spiritual path when we commit mistakes due to the demonical qualities expressed.

द्वौ भूतसर्गो लोकेऽस्मिन्दैव आसुर एव च ।  
दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥६॥

dvau bhūta-sargau loke 'smin daiva āsura eva cha |  
daivo vistaraśhaḥ prokta āsuram pārtha me śhrīṇu ॥६॥

### Sloka 6

**DVAU BHUTA-SARGAU LOKE 'SMIN DAIVA ASURA EVA CHA  
DAIVO VISTARASHAH PROKTA ASURAM PARTHA ME SHRINU**

**There are two kinds of beings created in the world, the divine and the demonical. Of these, the divine has been described at length, hear from Me, O Arjuna, of the demonical.**

dvau: two;  
bhoota sargou: types of beings;  
loke'smin: in this world;  
daiva: the divine;  
asura: demonical;  
eva: even;  
cha: and;  
daivee: the divine;  
vistarasho: at length;  
prokta: described;  
aasureem: the demonical;  
Partha: Arjuna;  
Me': Me;  
shrinu: hear.

Before starting the detailed account of the qualities of those with demonical qualities, Sri Krishna asserts that there are two types of beings created in the world. Broadly speaking they are: Divine and Demonical.

Why the word “Created”, what do we understand by this word?  
Does “He” create people?  
If so why does He create “bad”?

No, definitely not, is the answer. He does not create “bad”.  
“He” is giving an opportunity to express the divine or demonical thoughts from the previous birth. We are expected to learn the lesson from the same and not repeat such mistakes.  
He is giving us all an opportunity to improve ourselves.

Chapter 6, sloka 5: uddharenatmano’ - every man has to raise himself by himself.

10 chapters later from that sloka, He has now come to give us a picture of the demonical qualities harboured in the mind.

We can learn by looking at our thoughts before our actions and by analysing the results of our actions. For this we need to stand in front of the so called “intellectual mirror of wisdom”.

The mirror we are familiar with gives us a reflection of our physical self. Of course, whether the reflection is true reflection or distorted reflection depends upon the quality of the mirror.

The ego, (maya) distorts the picture for the intellectual mirror. If we can keep a purified intellect as our instrument to analyse ourselves, we will be able to understand what is “demonical” and what happens when we harbour such qualities.

The demonical vasanas retard the progress in the spiritual path.  
The rest of this chapter is mainly elaborating on this theme.

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।  
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥७॥

pravṛtṭim̐ cha nivṛtṭim̐ cha janā na vidur āsurāḥ |  
na śhaucham̐ nāpi chāchāro na satyam̐ teshu vidyate ॥७॥

**Sloka 7**

**PRAVRITTIM CHA NIVRITTIM CHA JANA NA VIDUR ASURAH  
NA SHAUCHAM NAPI CHACHARO NA SATYAM TESHU VIDYATE**

**The demonical people do not know what to do and what to refrain from. They do not have purity, good conduct or truth.**

pravruttim: paths towards sensual world, (the path of the householders);  
nivruttim: paths towards spiritual world, (path taken by true sanyasis);  
jaanaa : know;  
na: not;  
asuraha: demonical nature;

viduhu: know;  
na: not;  
shoucham: purity;  
api: also;  
cha acharo: and right conduct;  
satyam: truth;  
teshu: in them;  
na vidyate: is not.

pravruttim cha nivruttim cha: “What to do and what not to do”.

The sastras and the Gita clearly describe what type of actions one has to do and what types of actions one ought not to do. They are the guides for the seekers who practice spiritual sadhana.

In general the true seeker (in any field) is he who works hard to develop the mental capacity to think upon one solitary idea to the exclusion of all other thoughts that may crop up in the mind.

He who succeeds in such an effort will, surely, in the course of time achieve success. He is said to have practiced yoga in the truest sense.

There are three ways to attribute success:

- a) Iswara kripa: Will of the Lord;
- b) Aatma shakti: expression of the power of the Atman within;
- c) Kundalini sakti: attribute to the power of kundalini.

(Kundalini yoga derives its name through a focus on awakening kundalini energy through regular practice of meditation, pranayama, chanting of the mantras and yoga asanas. The masters call it as “yoga of awareness”.)

In general the seeker needs to integrate his physical, mental and intellectual personalities together. The more he does so, the more powerful he will be.

A perfect jnani is he who develops the Supreme perfection in his personality.

Those who do not know what is right action and what is wrong action in relation to (nitya, naimittika, kama and nishuddha karmas - chapter 3) daily, obligatory, desire fulfilling and forbidden actions, fit in under the category of demonical.

Purity and good actions come under the category of “Dharmic actions.”

Pravritti is karma and nivritti is vikarma in this context.

We have discussed on “Purity” in sloka 3 of this chapter.

The demonical do not have purity of speech, mind and actions.

There is a need for a set standard of behaviour in the society we live in.

The Vedas, our sacred texts insist on Satya and Dharma.

“Satya” is “The Eternal Truth.”

For the demonical there is no yardstick for “Truth”.

They consider that truth as beneficial only which suits them.

For them what they say and what they believe is truth.

They consider that they are the sole judges of what is truth.

For them the truth can/will change with time and circumstances.

Sastras say that “Atman” is Satyam (Truth) and the body is unreal (Asatyam). The demonical natured people do not recognise this truth.

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।  
अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम् ॥८॥

asatyam apratiṣṭham te jagad āhur anīśhvaram ।  
aparaspara-sambhūtam kim anyat kāma-haitukam ॥८॥

**Sloka 8**

**ASATYAM APRATISHTHAM TE JAGAD AHUR ANISHVARAM  
APARASPARA-SAMBHUTAM KIM ANYAT KAMA-HAITUKAM**

**They say that the world is without truth, without basis (of dharma and adharma), and without God. They believe that the world is caused by sexual desire being born of sexual acts of men and women and nothing else.**

te': they;  
asatyam: without truth (truth of authority of the Vedas);  
apratistham: without basis (of dharma and adharma);  
jagad: the world;  
ahuhu: say;  
aneeshvaram: without the Supreme God;  
aparaspara sambhootam: born of sexual acts of men and women;  
kim: what;  
anyat: other;  
kama haitukam: caused by sexual desires.

Asatyam: Un-truth.

Satyam/Truth in the context of this sloka is not just "Truth" as such but the "Truth" as enshrined through the medium of our sacred texts: the Vedas. The Vedas are accepted to be the authority for all the Hindus. Even Lord Krishna quotes Vedas for whatever advice He gives Arjuna in this sacred text. The Upanisad masters say categorically that whatever they are saying through the medium of the Upanisad is from the Vedas.

This is because there has to be a yardstick to measure and the yardstick to measure the truth is the Vedas.

This authority of the Vedas for any actions to be conducted is not accepted by the asuric people. As far as they are concerned the world is real and the God is unreal. They totally believe in the impulses brought in by the sense organs and analysed by their mind. They do not make use of the intellectual capacity of reasoning.

"What I see is the truth, what I hear is the truth" they insist.

The Vedas look upon three fundamental expressions of the ultimate reality which govern the entire universe, which governed it in the past and which will govern it in the future.

These three are:

The Eternal Truth;

Dharma;

Avatara/Manifestation of God (with different forms and names at different periods, in different parts of the universe).

The asuric do not accept this principle.

Apratishtam: the basis for the Vedas is “Dharma and Truth” (Righteousness and Truth).

For any country there is a judicial system that has laid down the law for its citizens to follow. The judiciary is the foundation for any country. The stronger and the better the foundation, the greater will be the country in the eyes of the rest of the world.

The asuric do not believe in the dharma advocated in the Vedas. They strongly believe that what they do and what they say is correct. They develop their own opinion and make judgements on the actions of others.

Just imagine if every person had his/her own rules and regulations, without any law and order. What would the world be like and where would all of us be?

Sri Krishna stresses that He incarnates to uphold dharma, protect the righteous and destroy the evil. (slokas 7,8 chapter 4)

Aneeshwaram: Iswara is the Lord for the entire universe.

He, as the primordial energy supports the life on this earth with its various manifestations. The seeds can/will give crops only when there is energy in the soil. No farmer can say that he alone is responsible for the crops that grow in his land. There has to be a divine power that lets it happen. The asuras do not accept/believe in the higher divine power.

The Vedas attribute and accept the hand of the divine power in creation, sustenance and dissolution. But, the asuric believe that creation is only the result of procreation between the sexes, driven by their sensual desires. For them desire and their own desires are responsible for the creation of life.

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।  
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥९॥

etām dṛiṣṭim avaṣṭabhya naṣṭātmano 'lpa-buddhayaḥ ।  
prabhavanty ugra-karmāṇaḥ kṣhayāya jagato 'hitāḥ ॥९॥

**Sloka 9**

**ETAM DRISHTIM AVASHTABHYA NASHTATMANO 'LPA-BUDDHAYAH  
PRABHAVANTY UGRA-KARMAHAH KSHAYAYA JAGATO 'HITAH**

**Holding this view, these ruined souls of small intellect and fierce deeds come forth as the enemies of the world, for its destruction.**

etaam: this;  
drushtim: view;  
avashtabhya: holding;  
nashtamanaha: ruined souls;

alpa budhayaha: of small intellect;  
prabhavanti: come forth;  
ugra: fierce;  
karmanaha: deeds;  
kshayaya: for the destruction;  
jagato: of the world;  
ahitaha: enemies.

What are the views held by such people?

The views held by them are:

The world is without truth,  
Without basis (of what is dharma and what is adharma),  
Without God  
and

That the world is caused by sexual desire, the beings in it are born of sexual acts of men and women and nothing else.

Those who hold this view are the “ruined souls,” says the Lord.

Why?

Because of their actions these people bring about the destruction of the world. The word used to express this view is: “Jagato ahitaha”.

The acts conducted with a view of welfare are “Hitaha” and those contrary towards the welfare are “Ahitaha”.

Any individual or any group of people who are responsible for pain and suffering to fellow humans, other forms of life and destruction of nature are to be considered as enemies of the world.

What sort of actions do they conduct, that brings about the destruction of the world?

“Ugra karmani”: fierce deeds, says the Lord.

We see examples every so often of evil deeds committed by those who cause havoc in the world. Such acts not only bring suffering to others but also result in retaliatory acts which bring further pain and suffering.

The whole process becomes a vicious circle.

It is during such times the Lord says He will incarnate and bring about the destruction of the evil.

The Lord says: “nashtamano’lpa buddhayaha” meaning “these ruined souls of small intellect”.

“He” considers them as having a small intellect that has very little discriminative capacity.

A mature intellect is that which has matured because of its association with the Atman within, and a “small intellect” is on the contrary that which has grown because of its association with the senses and the physical world.

The greater the slavery to the senses, the smaller will be the intellect.

They have no belief in the concept of God and are fully egoistic. Because of this their actions which are selfish and contrary to “Dharma and Satya” tend to be fierce and harmful to others. Hence the Lord says that they come forth as enemies of the world.

One can say that such kinds of people are the asuras in human form on this earth.

Those who believe in their own power express “ego” in all their actions.

And contrary to it are

Those who believe in the superior power of the “Parabrahman” and express in their actions the attitude of surrender (saranagati) to that power.

Let us therefore not become enemies of the world but be friends of the world by following the motto of “Universal welfare” in all our actions.

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।  
मोहाद्गृहीत्वासद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥10॥

kāmam āśhṛitya duṣhpūram dambha-māna-madānvitāḥ |  
mohād gṛihītvāsad-grāhān pravartante 'śhuchi-vratāḥ ॥10॥

### Sloka 10

**KAMAM ASHRITYA DUSHPURAM DAMBHA-MANA-MADANVITAH  
MOHAD GRIHITVASAD-GRAHAN PRAVARTANTE SHUCHI-VRATAH**

**Enslaved with insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding on to evil ideas by delusion, they work with impure resolves.**

kamam: desires;  
ashritya: enslaved by, abiding in;  
dushpooram: impossible to satisfy;  
damba: hypocrisy, pretence, appear greater, over importance to oneself;  
maana: pride;  
madanvita: full of arrogance;  
mohaat: by delusion;  
gruheetva: holding on to;  
asadgrahaan: evil ideas;  
asuchivrataha: with impure resolves;  
pravartante: work, act.

What is so special about the way the asuric act?

Asuric people because of the “ego”, believing in themselves, giving greater importance to themselves are enslaved by “desires”. Their desires are insatiable and grow in number every day.

“Dushpooram”, the Lord says. The sense of contentment is not seen in them. They work hard to get a desire fulfilled without any consideration to see if the desires are according to “dharma”. If and when the desire is fulfilled, they fall prey to further desires. The cycle goes on and on. (and eventually it leads to their own destruction. Sloka 63, chapter 2 and sloka 37, chapter 3)

Each one of us has an inherent knowledge and intelligence and because of the same, the ability to get what we want. The intelligence is expected to mature as we get older by developing the wisdom from our actions and by correcting the faults.

The knowledge in the asuric on the other hand gets side tracked in the process of the fulfilment of desires.

The ego makes one feel superior and the evil quality of “Damba” dominates (sloka 4).



Hypocrisy, pride and arrogance follow the leader “Damba”. These qualities become our enemies in the path of spiritual progress (dambo maana madanvita).

What is the end result of falling prey to these qualities?

“Moha” (delusion), sets in and such an individual forgets himself and his true identity.

There is a famous saying “ignorance is the root cause of evil”. The evil actions by the asuric is stemming forth from ignorance of one’s own true inherent divine nature.

Asuchi vrataha: of evil resolve. There is nothing wrong in resolves (vrata) to conduct actions that are beneficial and are not harmful to anybody else (eg. mouna vrata, and Satyanarayana Vrata). These are “pure resolves”. On the contrary “impure resolves” are those actions that are undertaken with no concern for the welfare of others.

Purity of mind, speech and action has been stressed by the Lord so many times.

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।  
कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥11॥

chintām aparimeyām cha pralayāntām upāśhritāḥ ।  
kāmapabhoga-paramā etāvad iti niśhchitāḥ ॥11॥

**Sloka 11**

**CHINTAM APARIMEYAM CHA PRALAYANTAM UPASHRITAH  
KAMOPABHOGA-PARAMA ETAVAD ITI NISHCHITAH**

**And they are held by innumerable desires unending till death, thinking of sensual enjoyments as the goal of life, deciding that there is nothing more that matters.**

chintaam: thinking (of objects - desires);  
aparimeyaam: innumerable, limitless;  
cha: and;  
pralayantam: till death (or endless till the time of pralaya/dissolution);  
upasritaha: deciding that/holding on to;  
kamopabhoga: sensual enjoyments;  
parama: nothing more;  
etavad iti: that is all/thus;  
nischitaha: determined/deciding.

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।  
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्जयान् ॥12॥

āśhā-pāsha-śhatair baddhāḥ kāma-krodha-parāyaṇāḥ ।  
ihante kāma-bhogārtham anyāyenārtha-sañchayān ॥12॥

**Sloka 12**

## ASHA-PASHA-SHATAIR BADDHAH KAMA-KRODHA-PARAYANAH IHANTE KAMA-BHOGARTHAM ANYAYENARTHA-SANCHAYAN

**Bound by hundreds of ties of hope prompted by passion and anger, they seek wealth by unrighteous means, to satisfy their thirst for enjoyment.**

asha pasha: ties of hope;  
shatair: hundreds of;  
baddhaha: bound;  
kama: desire/passion;  
krodha: anger;  
parayanaha: their way of life;  
kama bhogartha: (accumulate) wealth to enjoy/fulfil desires;  
anyayena: unrighteous means;  
artha sanchayaan: seek wealth;  
ihante: strive.

In these two slokas we get six features of those people with a predominance of demonical nature.

They are:

Their desires have no end (continue till the time of dissolution/pralaya);

Their goal of life is sense-enjoyment (bhoga);

They deny anything higher;

They are bound by desires;

They are possessed of lust and anger;

They gather wealth by unlawful means for the purpose of enjoying sensual pleasures.

By becoming slaves to their passions/desires these people have no end to their thirst for sensual enjoyment. Instead of making full use of the special gift - a human birth - and striving for Liberation (Moksha), they occupy themselves fulfilling desires. Consequently their minds at the time of death are not on the Akshara Parabrahman but are preoccupied with the vasanas of unfulfilled desires.

They go through the endless cycle of births and deaths till the time of dissolution. Instead of learning the lesson of life and developing wisdom of the Supreme they are bound by their own passions and associated hatreds.

Thinking of objects is "cinta" and it is unending (aparimeyaam). They exhibit restlessness till their desire is fulfilled and become the victims to the associates of "Kama" like anger, greed, delusion, arrogance and enmity (Krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya).

Kamopabhoga parama, says the Lord. Their highest aim is to satisfy their lust.

Etavat iti nischitaha: their thoughts revolve round on, "this is it, I want it and I must get it." Their mind is not ready to grasp or concentrate on anything else till that aim/wish is fulfilled.

Because of this outlook in life, their journey of life drifts away and they are caught in the whirlpool of samsara. They do not have any time to think of the true purpose of life. Their desires bind them to the cycle of births and deaths. Their idea of "Yoga Kshema" is protecting their personal possessions, not protecting their spiritual wealth.

The spiritual seeker should keep in mind the advice by the Lord (sloka 42, Chapter 4) which is: "cut the knot of attachment with the sword of discriminative knowledge and burn it by the fire of knowledge".

When the aim is only to fulfil a desire (which we have studied before in the earlier chapters) the possible consequences in brief are:

The desire gets fulfilled and the mind goes in search of more,  
a desire to acquire something else that would give a greater feeling of satisfaction arises,  
or having acquired the object of desire, a worry concerning its potential loss.  
There is both passion and anger in the process of fulfilling desires.

The thirst to enjoy makes the person lose the capacity of discrimination and follow unrighteous means to fulfil the desire. They are prepared to cheat others, steal the object from others and are ready to hurt others in the process.

Desire and anger come to rule their life. Passion, anger and the loss of the capacity of discrimination, lead to the ruin of the individual.

Let us look at this section of the sloka carefully:  
kama bhogartha: (accumulate) wealth to enjoy/fulfil desires,  
anyayena: by unrighteous means,  
artha sanchayaan: seek wealth.

“Kama Artha sanchayaan: seek wealth and fulfilment of desires.

The purushartha (purpose of being born as human) on the other hand is to strive for “Moksha” and for this the three steps are:

Dharma  
Artha  
Kama.

The first step is to know what dharma is and learn it from the learned elders like parents and the guru. This is “dharma sanchayaan”.

The next step in life is to earn the livelihood and for it the basis is “dharma” (righteous means to earn). It is “Dharma artha sanchayaan”.

Only then the seeker can go for fulfilment of dharmic desires by the wealth he has accumulated. This is “dharma kama sanchayaan”.

At no point do our scriptures forbid one to enjoy life but they insist on lawful means to earn and enjoy (what is lawful and righteous also).

This gives the entitlement for the seeker to strive for Moksha which is the final step in “Purushartha.”

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।  
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥13॥

idam adya mayā labdham imam prāpsyē manoratham ।  
idam astīdam api me bhaviṣyati punar dhanam ॥13॥

**Sloka 13**

**IDAM ADYA MAYA LABDHAM IMAM PRAPSYE MANORATHAM**

## IDAM ASTIDAM API ME BHAVISHYATI PUNAR DHANAM

**“Now, this is gained by me, this desire I shall obtain, this is mine and this wealth also shall be mine hereafter”.**

idam: this;  
adya: today/now;  
mayaa: by me;  
labdham: gained;  
idam: this;  
prapsye: shall gain/obtain;  
manoratham: desire;  
asti: is;  
idam: this;  
api: also;  
me’: to me;  
bhavishyati: shall be;  
punar: again/hereafter;  
dhanam: wealth.

In this and the next few slokas to follow we get a graphic description of the person with “wants”.

Idam adya mayaa: “now this is gained by me”.

This refers to the result of his past actions in fulfilling a desire. It does not matter to him if he has followed fair or foul means to acquire the same. He gives the full credit for the success to himself and pats his own back. He forgets the Lord or does not consider the role of God who is “Phala data” (bestower of fruits of actions). Humbleness is not in his nature.

For example, if he passes in his exams, he is proud of the success and considers himself to be solely responsible. He forgets the teachers, parents and others who helped him. Suppose he has cheated, he has already forgotten it and considers himself to be a very clever person.

Idam manoratham prapsye: this desire I shall gain.

This is concerning the results of present actions to fulfil a desire. He is positive that he shall gain the desired result and is ready to follow foul means to get what he wants. If the actions hurts someone else it does not matter. What he wants is “I want it”. He has probably got a gang of crooked followers or yes men who will abide by his commands. Instead of being satisfied with what he has got he likes to go for more and more of the same or for something else.

Let us look at the scenario of a student who has become a graduate and found employment. First of all he has to concentrate on his work first and establish himself in the job.

Instead he starts planning to fulfil the desires like, “I want a house, I want a posh car, I want to go on expensive holidays etc.” He will start using the so called plastic cards and spend tomorrow’s money today. His insatiable desires will lead him to ruin in the course of time as he will fail to concentrate on the job ‘in hand’ as his attention will be on the fulfilment of his desires.

Idam asti: “this is mine”.

As soon as he gets a desire fulfilled he stamps his name on what he gets. Some of the things he gets, he could really be sharing with others but he does not do so. The children in a household are supposed to be taught the lesson of sharing toys, books etc with their siblings. Unfortunately in the present era of

small families the children in the household tend to develop the attitude of “this is mine and mine only” and do not have the art of sharing what they have got. Without being aware, this leads to the development of “ego” as the child enters the stage of adulthood.

Idam api punaha me’ dhanam bhavishyati: this wealth shall also be mine again.

Having got what he wants, the mind is already set on the fulfilment of another desire. There is no satiety.

In chapter 2, the Lord has already said that the sense objects should not provoke any ripples of desires in one’s mind. One can say that these types of demonical natured persons are of “asthita prajna” (not having steady wisdom).

Let us summarise the essence of this sloka in this way:

In relation to whatever we get:

“I got it” – it is wrong expression and attitude.

Better to say: “I received it”,

Still better would be: “I was blessed with what I got”,

Best attitude/frame of mind would be: “It is all His Grace that made it possible for me to get it.”

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।

ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी ॥14॥

asau mayā hataḥ śhatrur haniṣhye chāparān api |

iśhvaro ’ham aham bhogī siddho ’ham balavān sukhī ॥14॥

#### Sloka 14

**ASAU MAYA HATAH SHATRUR HANISHYE CHAPARAN API  
ISHVARO ‘HAM AHAM BHOGI SIDDHO ‘HAM BALAVAN SUKHI**

**“That enemy has been killed by me, and others also I shall destroy. I am the Lord, I am the enjoyer, I am capable of achieving (my ambitions). I am mighty and happy”.**

asau: that;

mayaa: by me;

hataha: killed;

shatrur: enemy;

hanishye: will destroy;

ca: and;

aparaan: other;

api: also;

iswaro’ham: I am the Lord;

bhogi: the enjoyer;

siddho’ham: I am capable of achieving (my ambitions);

balawaan: I am mighty;

sukhee: enjoyer.

This sloka has been written with the warriors in mind. The kshatriyas who were the warriors in the days gone by had this confidence in them. Duryodhana in this battle at Kurukshetra had this approach when he entered the battlefield. It shows total confidence in oneself which as a matter of fact enters into the zone of “over estimating one’s capacity.”

Asau mayaa hatau shatrur: that enemy has been killed by me.

Having killed an enemy, the confidence grows and the person feels he can take on many others and come out victorious. He goes with this frame of mind:

Ca aparān shatrūn hanishye meaning, I will now destroy others also.

He is now thinking of the results that are going to come in future and already deciding that he will be the victor.

Not just that,

He considers himself to be the Lord. He says, I am mighty and I am the Lord. He is so sure of achieving all his ambitions.

This is just straight forward “ego” talking. There is no humbleness and no expression of thanks to the higher power who blessed him with the victory.

First of all, let us not use the word “kill” anymore. It was all right to use such words by Arjuna because that was the way of life of those belonging to the ruling class 5000 years ago. Instead, the word appropriate for this period (even though it is wrong) is “destroy.” Businessmen, politicians of the day use this expression often.

An ambitious person, on climbing up one step of the ladder, is so full of confidence that he plans immediately to climb other steps and is ready to do so by hook or by crook.

The power of initial success intoxicates the demonical person. Under the influence of intoxication, he does not realise the danger to himself, his family, friends and others.

Whatever he wins, he plans to enjoy it all by himself. There is no thought of sharing.

One can say that such asuric minded people are really “diabolically fallen people on earth.”

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया |

यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ||15||

ādhyo 'bhijanavān asmi ko 'nyo 'sti sadṛiṣho mayā |

yakṣhye dāsyāmi modishya ity ajñāna-vimohitāḥ ||15||

### Sloka 15

**ADHYO 'BHIJANAVAN ASMI KO 'NYO 'STI SADRISHO MAYA  
YAKSHYE DASYAMI MODISHYA ITY AJNANA-VIMOHITAH**

**“I am rich, I am born in a great family, who else is equal to me? I will give, I will perform sacrifice. I will rejoice” thus (they are) deluded by ignorance.**

adhya: rich;

abhi janavan: born in great family;

asmi: am;

ko: who;  
anyo: other;  
asti: is;  
sadrusha: equal;  
mayaa: to me;  
yakshye: will perform sacrifice;  
dasyami: will give;  
modishye: will rejoice;  
iti: thus;  
ajnana: ignorance;  
vimohitaha: deluded.

Pride (rajasic) and ignorance (tamasic) are the outstanding qualities of the asuric. Because of this they cannot see the way forward and are leading themselves to self-destruction.

The proud feeling of:  
I am rich,  
I am born in a great family,  
Who is equal to me?  
I will give,  
I will rejoice,  
I will perform sacrifice.

One may be rich and born in a great family but the pride itself makes them become ignorant of the true aim of human life. They are ignorant of the Supreme Parabrahman who is the director of the stage play we are all part of.

We are expected to look upon the glory of birth in a rich family not as a point of pride on its own but as a blessing by the compassionate Lord. After all we really belong to only one kula (clan) and that is "Paramatma Kula".

Such asuric people have forgotten their heritage to the Lord.

Their pride is due to:  
Dhana mada: pride of wealth,  
Sthala mada: pride of position,  
Kula mada: pride of heritage.

The life led by such people is simply the life of "self-glory". Alas, we forget that we are expected to express the divinity within and bring out the glory of the "Self" within.

Such asuric people have forgotten to look up the ladder of spiritual evolution and are heading downwards, towards the life of hell below.

The rajasic nature in them only permits them to conduct acts of yajna and dana for the sake of glory and not in the spirit of "Sri Krishnarpanamastu" (as an offering to the Lord). When they donate to a charity, it is for name and with a business transaction in mind, expecting material returns for the act. They are not aware that the wheel held in the upper right hand of Vishnu is known as "Kala chakra." It is the wheel of time denoting that "Time (Kala)" not only takes away one's wealth and glory but also one's own life in the course of time.

**अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः |  
प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ||16||**

**aneka-chitta-vibhrāntā moha-jāla-samāvṛitāḥ |  
prasaktāḥ kāma-bhogeshu patanti narake 'śhuchau |16||**

### **Sloka 16**

**ANEKA-CHITTA-VIBHRANTA MOHA-JALA-SAMAVRITAH  
PRASAKTAH KAMA-BHOGESHU PATANTI NARAKE 'SHUCHAU**

**Bewildered by many fancies, caught in the snare of delusion, addicted to sensual enjoyment, they fall into foul hell.**

aneka: many;  
chitta vibhranta: bewildered by fancies;  
moha jalasam: snare of delusion;  
avrutaha: caught/surrounded by;  
prasaktaaha: addicted;  
kama bhogeshu: sensual enjoyments;  
patanti: fall;  
narake': hell;  
ashuchou: foul.

The fate of the asuric with the qualities expressed in the previous three slokas is pictured in this sloka.

Three qualities are highlighted to summarise the nature which make them fall into the foul hell. They are:

Bewildered by many fancies,  
Caught in the snare of delusion,  
Addicted to sensual enjoyments.

Their desires are innumerable and never ending and even before their desires are fulfilled their minds are already planning to fulfil other desires (again irrespective of whether they are dharmic or adharmic desires).

Because of the encouragement of so many desires, there is no single pointed concentration on any one task ahead. Hence the statement: “bewildered by many fancies.”

The important word is “Vibhranta” meaning “fancies”. There is a difference between an object of desire and an object of fancy.

When shopping during the sales, at times like Christmas and New Year, many do not have a clear idea of what they want to get. Or they plan to go for a particular item in the shopping mall but on seeing the fancy displays of so many articles on “Sale”, their minds begin to move quickly from one object to another and the end result is complete confusion.

They get deluded by the display of so many articles and this is “moha”.

By getting caught in its web (like the spider's) one loses the power of concentration and discrimination.

This is referred to as “caught in the snare of delusion”.

Why does this happen?



The desire to continually get what one wants, slowly makes an individual addicted to the feeling of possessing many fancy items. Like a fly falling into the trap of the spider's web, we get trapped in the "web of fancied objects" and find that there is no way out.

The fly that falls in the spider's web loses its life at the end. Those who fall in the trap of possessing the fancied objects, end up by falling into the hell.

In my general medical practice I have come across a special type of depression which the specialists label as "Post-Christmas depression". This develops because of the debt incurred in going for so many objects using the plastic/debit card. Many of the patients in the GP's surgery (doctor's consulting room) a month or two after Christmas show this symptom.

This addiction to sensual objects is "Prasaktaha Kama bhogeshu". The individuals get caught in the so called momentary pleasures of what they managed to get and dreaming of pleasures from the objects not possessed yet. Their enjoyment is "dream world enjoyment" only. The harm to themselves, their family, friends and society does not enter their minds.

What is the end result? The last quarter of this sloka gives the answer. It says: patanti narake'shuchou: fall into foul hell.

The word to note is "patanti" meaning "fall down". The one who climbs up will fall down if he is careless in his path.

The fact that we are born as humans, means that we have already climbed up so many steps of the spiritual ladder but we unfortunately do not recognise this. Those who are aware of, or who come to know of "Liberation" make attempts to climb the spiritual ladder and these people are called "sadhakas".

It is our actions that allow us to climb up or cause us fall down the spiritual ladder. We are responsible for our actions, our vigilance helps us to climb and any fall on the ladder is only "carelessness" on our part.

This chapter is a guide for us to learn the art of being vigilant at all times.

The asuric qualities do not help in our progress spiritually. The Lord is not there to push us down the path but to guide us to reach Him.

Let us remember that we say "I am in hell" when we are suffering with problems and say "I am in heaven" when all is well and we are enjoying life. We can build a heaven or construct a hell in this world and both are the result of our own actions. The Lord does not show favouritism to any single individual. "His Grace" is on all and He wants us all to reach His abode of Eternal Peace.

आत्मसम्भाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः |  
यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ||17||

ātma-sambhāvitāḥ stabdhā dhana-māna-madānvitāḥ |  
yajante nāma-yajñais te dambhenāvidhi-pūrvakam ||17||

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः |

मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः ॥18॥

ahankāraṁ balaṁ darpaṁ kāmaṁ krodhaṁ cha sanśhritāḥ |  
mām ātma-para-deheṣhu pradviṣhanto 'bhyasūyakāḥ |18॥

**Sloka 17**

**ATMA-SAMBHAVITAH STABDHA DHANA-MANA-MADANVITAH  
YAJANTE NAMA-YAJNAIS TE DAMBHENAVIDHI-PURVAKAM**

**Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with pride and intoxicated with wealth, they perform sacrifices only for namesake with great ostentation, contrary to the laws of the sastras.**

**Sloka 18**

**AHANKARAM BALAM DARPAM KAMAM KRODHAM CHA SANSHRITAH  
MAM ATMA-PARA-DEHESHU PRADVISHANTO 'BHYANSUYAKAH**

**Given to egotism, power, pride, lust and hatred, these malicious people hate Me in their own bodies and in those of others.**

atma sambhavitaha: self-conceited/glorifying themselves;  
stabdhaha: stubborn, devoid of humility (towards elders and the learned);  
dhana: wealth;  
maana: pride;  
madanvitaha: intoxicated/arrogant;  
yajante: perform worship/sacrifices;  
nama yajnes te': namesake;  
dambhena: great pride;  
avidhi poorvakam: contrary to the laws of the sastras.

ahankaram: egoism;  
balam: strength;  
darpam: pride;  
kamam: lust;  
krodham: anger;  
cha: and;  
samshritaha: possessing;  
maam: Me;  
atma paradeheshu: in themselves and in others;  
pradvishantaha: hating;  
abhyasuyakaha: envious.

The Lord emphasises on:  
Pradvisantaha: hating  
Atma sambhavitha: self-glorification.

What do they hate?

They hate the Parabrahman.

Why?

Because of ignorance.

What is it they are ignorant of?

They are ignorant of the nature of Parabrahman in themselves and in all others too.

What do they do because of ignorance?

They:

Atma sambhavitaha: glorify themselves.

What do they glorify?

They glorify their wealth.

This could be financial wealth or scholarly wealth and boasting of these, they forget that what they have is only due to “God’s grace”.

They forget the fact that they are alive only because “He” resides in them and others are alive because “He” resides in them too.

They may know a little of the Vedas and our Sastras but are still ignorant. They do perform yajnas but only for glorification and not to please the higher devas.

What is real “Yajna”?

Any act becomes a yajna when the act is dedicated to a higher power and not for one’s own personal gain. It should not be a ritual to show off with pomp and glory.

We have already learnt in chapters 3 and 4 that the results of yajnas are to be shared with all. But the ignorant do not take any notice of this command by the Lord. Sri Krishna does not advocate “ritual worship” but advocates the conduct of selfless work in the spirit of worship.

What they conduct the Lord says is only “Nama yajna” meaning “only for name sake” and this is not following the rules of the sastras.

All actions conducted by such people are contrary to the teaching of the sacred texts. Their actions are not for “universal welfare” but for “personal welfare” only.

Let us look at the present day politicians in some parts of the world. Instead of using their position for welfare of the community, they work to please only themselves, their family and their associates.

Stubbornness is expressed in a number of different ways. Not following the advice of learned elders, no humility in the presence of the learned/elders and not showing respect to others are some of the ways of expressing it.

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।

क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥ 19॥

tān ahaṁ dviṣataḥ krūrān sansāreṣhu narādhamān |

kṣhipāmy ajasram aśhubhān āsurīshv eva yoniṣhu ||19||

**Sloka 19**

**TAN AHAM DVISHATAH KRURAN SANSARESHU NARADHAMAN  
KSHIPAMY AJASRAM ASHUBHAN ASURISHV EVA YONISHU**

**Those who hate Me (and who are) cruel, impure in mind and thought, the worst among men, I hurl them ever into the wombs of demons only.**

taan: those;  
aham: I;  
dvishatam: hating Me;  
krooraan: wicked, cruel;  
samsareshu: in the path of samsara (births and deaths);  
naradhama: worst of men;  
kshipamy: hurl;  
ajasram: for ever;  
ashubhaan: impure/evil (thinking of evil deeds and carrying on evil deeds);  
asurishveva yonishu: in the wombs of devils only.

Taan: those, referring to the worst of the wicked type  
Aham: referring to Sri Krishna incarnated to uphold the justice and protect Dharma.

One may wonder why Sri Krishna has made such a statement and ask why the Lord who is said to be merciful is taking such a stance towards the asuric.

First of all, let us remember that He is referring to those with the qualities brought out in the last few slokas. He is not being personal and taking revenge on those who hate Him. There is no such thing as “revenge” in His dictionary.

When He says, “Those who hate Me”, we should not misunderstand the sentence but should read it as, “those who hate Dharma and Satya” (This is the Tatvartha). Such people, He says are “Naradhamas” and the worst form of humans on earth. After all, “He” is the personification of “Dharma and Satya”. Already in chapter 4 sloka 8 we have read about His promise to protect the righteous for the simple purpose of “Upholding Dharma.” In the process He has said that He would destroy the wicked. He is simply reiterating that promise.

One may then ask, why, “Hurl them” away?  
Let us look at a couple of scenarios from our day to day life.

Suppose we are walking along the street and we find something potentially harmful for our children. We would take the same and hurl it away so that it could not cause them harm. Similarly, soldiers in a war zone, searching for grenades, upon finding one, would hurl it away to a safe place or disconnect its electrical connections. By doing so both are protecting the common public from getting hurt. Hence, The Lord hurls away the wicked, to protect His loving children.

One may then ask, “Why hurl into wombs of the demonic?”  
By doing so, He is giving them an environment which will suit and help them to burn the pent up vasanas in their minds (Refer to chapter 6, slokas 40-45 that refer to giving opportunity to continue the spiritual practice into the next birth).

The entire purpose of giving us new births is to provide an opportunity for us to burn the vasanas (concerning desires and hatreds), purify the mind and when the mind is totally purified, re-unite with Him.

The good are given an opportunity to be born into a family of sadhus and the wicked are given an opportunity to be born in the wombs of the demonical. After all, the bad thought imprints also need a suitable outlet in which to be expressed.

Who are the worst among men?

The worst among men are those who are cruel and impure in mind and thought. They hate Dharma and Satya and the Lord in all His incarnations, this includes every form of life on earth, as He resides in these also.

The Lord, by this act, is fulfilling the role of the Chief Justice of the Universe, in a court of law whose boundaries cover the entire universe.

We are already blessed by the Lord because we are given the precious birth as humans. Let us make use of this blessing and conduct our actions in a way that does not hurt the innocent.

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।  
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥ 20॥

āsurīm yonim āpannā mūḍhā janmani janmani |  
mām aprāpyaiva kaunteya tato yānty adhamām gatim ||20||

**Sloka 20**

**ASURIM YONIM APANNA MUDHA JANMANI JANMANI  
MAM APRAPYAIVA KAUNTEYA TATO YANTY ADHAMAM GATIM**

**Entering into demonic wombs, and deluded, not attaining Me, birth after birth they thus fall into a condition still lower than that, O Arjuna.**

asureem: demonic;  
yonim: wombs;  
aapanna: entering/obtaining;  
moodha: deluded/ignorant;  
janmani janmani: birth after birth;  
maam: Me;  
aprapya: not attaining;  
eva: even/still;  
tato: then;  
yanti: fall into;  
adhamaam: lower;  
gatim: condition.

In chapter 6, we were given a step by step description of the fate of those who strive to attain the Supreme. The sincere seekers who have not achieved salvation will be born in the wombs of the yogis in the new birth and given an opportunity to climb higher and higher in their spiritual sadhana.

Contrary to it, we are now told that the asuric are going to be born birth after birth into the wombs of the demonic. Like a ball rapidly falling downstairs, step by step, we are told that the demonic fall down to lower worlds.

Why? One may ask? Has God no mercy, they question.

The Lord out of compassion is giving an opportunity for all to reach His abode. This is not possible if the minds of the individuals are filled with impure vasanas. To clear the impure vasanas from the mind there should be an outlet to express those qualities. By giving birth into the wombs of the demonic, birth after birth, such impure and cruel minded souls are allowed to empty their minds of such tendencies. One fine day, they too will realise the folly of falling prey to the pleasures of life and start walking in the spiritual path. This may take several births but they too will attain the Supreme in the end.

Let me give an idea of the births into the lower demonical wombs.

There are a total of 14 lokas (see introduction). The life in the bottom seven nether lokas is the life of hell. The Puranas say that the cruel are born as lower forms of life like reptiles, insects, etc.

The rule of thumb is that these lower forms of life are creatures of instinct and do not accrue negative points for their acts. For example, a snake does not get minus points for biting a sadhu.

After having gone through a number of births into the nether worlds, finally they come back to earth as humans.

As humans we have the choice of collecting negative or positive points. This depends on the actions we conduct. Actions contrary to dharma will carry negative points and actions according to dharma carry positive points.

Thus the asuric are given an opportunity to clear the negative imprints in their mind first and accumulate positive imprints which will take them finally to the abode of the Supreme.

This is a lesson for mankind and a call to wake up to the truth. There is a need to assess where we are in the spiritual path, what we are in this world and what our fate will be. The Gita gives us a mirror to look at ourselves. Whether we clean ourselves and make ourselves fit to receive the call of the divine, is up to us.

This is not just a message for individuals to wake up from delusion but also for the learned elders in the society to guide the young in the right moral path.

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।  
कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥21॥

tri-vidham narakasyedam dvaram nashanam atmanah |  
kamaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas tasmād etat trayam tyajet ॥21॥

**Sloka 21**

**TRI-VIDHAM NARAKASYEDAM DVARAM NASHANAM ATMANAH  
KAMAH KRODHAS TATHA LOBHAS TASMAD ETAT TRAYAM TYAJET**

**These triple gateways of hell: desire, anger and greed, are destructive of one's Self. Therefore one should abandon the triple evil.**

trividham: triple;

narakasya: to hell;  
idam: this;  
dvaram: gateways;  
nashanam: destructive;  
atmanaha: self;  
kamaha: desire;  
krodhaha: anger;  
lobaha: greed;  
tatha: and/so also;  
tasmaat: therefore;  
etad: these;  
tryam: three;  
tyajet: abandon.

Desire, anger and greed together are known in Sanskrit as "Dushtatraya" meaning three evils.

Why are they termed as evil?

We have discussed this issue a few times already.

Evil is an act that brings out pain and suffering to oneself or to others.

Desire as the leader leads the individual to destruction. (Chapter 2, sloka 63).

We have also discussed about "hell" in the last sloka.

How is it that one ends up suffering and feeling as though they are in hell?

Let us not forget that it is one's actions, those which are contrary to dharma, either in the past or present that lead one to the doorway of hell.

The hell is really a state of one's own mind. Our learned ancestors have beautifully woven a picture of the hell and given us a physical description of the same.

One may ask as to how one can avoid falling into hell?

Prevention is better than cure. The upbringing of young children by parents and society has an influence on the child in later life.

Bringing up the children, with an emphasis on "Satya and Dharma" is the initial step to take. To be able to do so, the parents/elders must themselves know about it first. They should know the fine art of parenthood. They must also set an example to children by their own actions.

The gurus, and scriptures are guides for the public, on the rules and regulations concerning right conduct.

How can one overcome these three evils of desire, anger and greed?

Desire: this can be overcome by learning the art of "dispassion" (vairagya).

One can start in simple ways like "I can do without it."

Think before succumbing to the objects of desires.

Realise that the happiness derived from objects of desire in the physical world, is only temporary and cannot be eternal.

Anger: this can be overcome by "Love."

Greed: this can be overcome by "detachment".

"Satsangatve nissangatvam, Nissangatve nirmohatvam" says Sri Shankaracharya in his famous "Bhaja Govindam".

satsangatve nissngatvam  
nissangatve nirmohatvam  
nirmohatve niscalatattvam

niscalatattve jivanmuktiḥ  
bhajagovindam bhajagovindam govindam bhajamudhamate

Through the company of the wise or the good, there arises non-attachment; from non-attachment comes freedom from delusion; where there is freedom from delusion, there is abidance in self-knowledge, which leads to freedom while alive.

Nishkama karma and karma phala tyaga lead the seeker towards detachment.  
Along with this, learning to live a life of contentment will take the seeker towards the goal.

Chapter 6, Sloka 35:

Abhyasena tu Kaunteya vairagyena cha juhvate.

Practice makes one perfect. By practice and dispassion one can control the mind, says Sri Krishna. By developing the intellectual eye of wisdom the seeker can find these three evils and abandon them before they trap him.

The trident of Lord Shiva is representative of the three pronged weapon of the Lord to kill the three evils.

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।  
आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥२२॥

etair vimuktaḥ kaunteya tamo-dvārais tribhir naraḥ |  
ācharaty ātmanaḥ śhreyas tato yāti parāṁ gatim ॥२२॥

**Sloka 22**

**ETAIR VIMUKTAH KAUNTEYA TAMO-DVARAIS TRIBHIR NARAH  
ACHARATY ATMANAH SHREYAS TATO YATI PARAM GATIM**

**The man totally freed from the triple gateways to darkness, O Kaunteya, practices what is good for him and attains the highest goal.**

etair: these/from this;  
vimuktaha: totally freed;  
tamodwarais: gateways to darkness;  
tribhir: three/triple;  
naraha: man;  
acahraty: practices;  
atmanaha: for him;  
sreyas: good;  
tato: and then;  
yati: attains;  
param gatim: highest goal.

Having given a graphic description of the fate of the asuric, the Lord out of kindness, immediately goes on to reassure Arjuna. He says that it is possible to be free from the gateways to hell.

He gives two remedies to be taken together for the ills.



a) Free from the triple evils of desire, anger and greed. It is not just “freed from” but “totally” freed from. “Muktaha” is freed and “vimuktaha” is totally freed. Any one of these three evils is enough to make one ignorant of the Truth. The three combined together will lead one to “total darkness.”

b) Acharaty atmanaha sreyaha: “practice what is good for him.”

First rule is “do not be bad”;

And the second rule is, “do what is good”.

Dropping the bad qualities must go hand in hand with practicing what is good.

When we try to correct children from doing wrong, we should not just be saying, “don't be a bad boy/girl”, we should also be saying “be a good boy/girl”.

By freeing oneself from the triple evils, one can move from tamas to rajas and then by practicing what is good, one will move from rajas to satva and from satva to shuddha satva.

It is not just what is good for the physical body but also what is good for the subtle body.

Attempts should be made to drop the asuric qualities and to live a life of divine qualities. After all let us not forget that this chapter deals with the qualities of both of these.

We should learn to question our thoughts before they are converted into actions. Eliminate bad thoughts and actions, nurture good thoughts and then convert them into good actions is the message in this sloka.

One has to strive for Liberation.

The age old practice is to pray to God and ask for liberation.

It is not wrong to pray but it should be done along with the practice of doing what is good.

The important word is “tamodwarais” - gateways to darkness. “Tamas” we have studied in detail in chapter 14 is “darkness.”

Darkness in spiritual terms is “ignorance.”

How to overcome “darkness”?

“By using the light” will be the answer.

In the spiritual world, “the light” is the “Light of Knowledge”.

By correct knowledge of what is “Nitya and anitya” (eternal and transient), which comes from the analysis of events, realising and accepting one's own faults, the blessings from the gurus and knowledge of the sacred texts, Tamas is cleared.

Only by the practice of what is good, will the individual attain the highest goal of life.

The results of good practice take their own time and do not come instantly but they will come.

The process can be compared to the unfolding of a bud into a flower.

By becoming free from the three evils, one can transform the seed of goodness into a flowering bud.

By developing the 26 divine virtues the bud can be converted into a beautiful flower that is fit to be offered to the Lord.

When we offer flowers to the Lord, it is only a symbolic gesture.

We are expected to offer the intellectual flowers of divine virtues, to the feet of the Lord.

To be healthy, one needs to not only stop bad habits that ruin the health but also practice good habits that are good for health. Stopping eating unhealthy food should go hand in hand with the eating of good and wholesome food.

For freedom from bondage, we must practice what is good, both physically and intellectually.

यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।  
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥23॥

yaḥ śhāstra-vidhim utsṛijya vartate kāma-kārataḥ |  
na sa siddhim avāpnoti na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim ॥23॥

### Sloka 23

**YAH SHASTRA-VIDHIM UTSRIJYA VARTATE KAMA-KARATAH  
NA SA SIDDHIM AVAPNOTI NA SUKHAM NA PARAM GATIM**

**He, who casts aside the scriptural injunctions and acts under the pressure of desires does not attain perfection nor happiness, nor the supreme goal.**

yah: who/he;  
sastra: scriptures;  
vidhim: injunctions;  
utstrujya: casts aside;  
vartate: acts;  
kama karataha: under the influence of desires;  
na: not;  
saha: he;  
siddhim: perfection;  
avapnoti: attains;  
sukham: happiness;  
paraam gatim: supreme goal.

He, who casts aside scriptural injunctions: one may wonder what are the scriptural injunctions and why should one follow them.

This is indirectly making a declaration that one should not develop one's own philosophy in life to attain the Supreme Goal, which is "Moksha."

There should be a rule to govern the way the senses influence the thoughts and actions. The sastras and the gurus are to lead us in the spiritual path. In this context, Jagadguru Sri Krishna is leading the way for all of us.

Let us understand what are the scriptural injunctions.

Our ancient learned masters were able to foresee many thousands of years ahead and could visualise the nature of human life in the millenniums to come. They could foresee the many ills which can result from the modern way of living and so gave us guidelines to save individuals and society from harm.

They brought out the voluminous collection known as “Brahma Vidya” which deals with “Eternal Truth and Dharma”. They have given us the means to unite with our inner Self and this is “Yoga Sastra”.

The Vedas and Upanisads are called as Brahma Vidya and they teach Yoga Sastra.

In the sacred text, The Srimad Bhagawadgita, each chapter ends with the statement: “Iti Srimad Bhagawadgitasu Upanisadsu brahma vidyayam yoga sastre Sri krishnarjuna Samvade” followed by the name of the chapter.

(Thus ends ... from Srimad Bhagavadgita, which is Upanishad, Brahma Vidya and Yoga Shastra, in the form of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.)

The books that explain the Brahma Vidya Yoga sastras are called as “Prakarana granthas” and the three great Acharyas have given us the “Prakaranas.”

So, whatever Vedantic philosophy we profess to follow, it will always be in line with what the sastras say.

“Do not work under the pressure of the desires” is the command. The desires, as we have understood and experienced in our life do not give us ever lasting happiness.

The only happiness that will last forever is achieved by attaining the Supreme Goal where the term “happiness” is replaced with “Peace” which is “Bliss/Ananda”.

This can come only by perfection in practicing a life of “Satya and Dharma”.

Hence the Lord says, “No perfection, no happiness and no chance of attaining the Supreme Goal” for those who fall prey to the desires and lead the asuric way of life to fulfil desires.

Asuric behaviour is acting counter to the teaching of the sastras. The asuric act as they wish and in a way, come to make a philosophy of it. This “philosophy” is really just an attempt to justify their own uncontrolled passions and desires.

The true nature of each one of us is “Sat, Chit, Ananda.” But, alas, “Nama and Roopa” bring in the “ego” and we fall victims to the worldly pleasures.

When we buy a gadget from a shop we expect to experience comfort/happiness on using it. Every manufacturer, as a matter of fact, gives a guarantee to his product but the guarantee is conditional. The condition being: that we “read and understand the literature that comes with the gadget, use it only as per the instruction of the manufacturer and do not misuse the instrument.” The warranty holds good only if we follow the guidelines on using it.

Similarly, the God has given us the body, so that we can fulfil our role in society and derive happiness from our lives on earth. He has also given us the sastras which are truly the guidebooks for all and it is up to us, in regards as to how we use or misuse the body. The sastras are only the guides.

By wrongly using the body we can bring out a “Frankenstein” monster into this world, destroy ourselves and our society.

This sloka is therefore one way of saying to the mankind, “follow the sastras”.

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ |  
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहाहसि ||24||

**tasmāch chāstram pramāṇam te kāryākārya-vyavasthitau |**

**Sloka 24**

**TASMACH CHASTRAM PRAMANAM TE KARYAKARYA-VYAVASTHITAU  
JNATVA SHASTRA-VIDHANOKTAM KARMA KARTUM IHARHASI**

**Therefore, scriptures should be your authority in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having known the commandments of the scriptures you should work here.**

tasmaat: therefore;

sastram: scriptures;

pramanam: authority;

te': they;

karyakarya vyavasthitou: (read as karya akarya) in determining what ought to be done and ought not to be done;

jnatva: having known;

sastra vidhanoktam: what is prescribed by the laws of the sastras;

karma: action;

kartum arhasi: you should do.

The chapter concludes with the sloka which is really the answer for the “request for help/guidance” put forward by Arjuna in chapter 2, sloka 7:

kārpaṇya-doṣopahata-svabhāvaḥ  
pṛcchāmi tvāṃ dharma-sammūḍha-cetāḥ |  
yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṃ brūhi tan me  
śiṣyas te 'haṃ śādhi māṃ tvāṃ prapannam ||

O Krishna, my mind is overpowered by taint of pity.  
I am ignorant of the right action. I am confused.  
I ask you to teach me decisively what is good for me.  
I am your disciple, I take refuge in you.

Arjuna, the representative of Rajas was ready to fight the Kauravas and help his brother regain the kingdom and rule righteously. But, alas, the enemy he was facing was led by his own beloved grandfather and guru.

Taking Krishna as his guru, he therefore requested guidance in determining what he should do and what he should not do.

What are the sastras?

Sanas trayate iti sastraha. – those that command you.

Those commands with the intention of protecting us from harm are the sastras.

The Mother gives birth to the child and protects it from harm. She is the first guru for the child but in the strictest sense not a real guru. The true guru protects the ‘sisya’ from the world of samsara (repeated births and deaths) and he uses the sastras to command and protect.

God has sent us into this world and given us the sastras to read, listen and understand. We need to assimilate this knowledge and put it into action.

He has given us the sastras to help protect mankind and indirectly to protect all the forms of life He created.

So Sri Krishna uses this command and tells Arjuna not as Krishna, the cowherd boy but as Krishna, the Jagadguru.

He says, lead your life using the sastric knowledge, convert the knowledge into actions and thereby protect yourself and nature as a whole.

The body is the car and the sastras are the manuals we need to follow, to drive the body in this world.

When faced with a real dilemma on correct action, the real gurus of the Aryan race never gave their own opinion but always quoted the sastras as the final authority. Sri Krishna in His role as the guru for Arjuna and in His wider role as Jagatguru is giving the answer to his disciple Arjuna and indirectly commanding all of us, (the Arjunas of the world) to be ready to fight for dharma.

“Know the commands of the sastras”, He tells Arjuna.

What are the commands?

The slokas in chapter 3 on Karma Yoga, chapter 4 on Jnana Yoga and slokas in the subsequent chapters leading up to this chapter give the commands of the sastras.

“Know what I have said and quoted, understand it clearly and then act”, says the Lord.

“How could Arjuna grasp the entire concept of the sastras in a short period and that too in the middle of the battlefield” would be another question asked by some.

Arjuna was not a junior school student under Krishna but a Post-Graduate student.

The Post-Graduate professor does not give elaborate guidance or answers to his student because his student is already advanced in his studies and is clever enough to grasp the correct meaning without a great detail of explanation.

We might have read the Gita but we are not Post-Graduate students in relation to the scriptural studies. We have a long way to go, in understanding the “Tatvartha” (meaning in essence) of the words used.

For Arjuna it was the battlefield,

But for us, “it is the battlefield of life.” We have to go through so many experiences, in a long series of births and deaths. At every moment we should work according to the sastras and follow and uphold the “Dharma and Satya”. Let us not forget the famous mantra, “Karmanye vadhikaraste” in chapter 2.

“Karyakarye vyavasthitou” says Gitacharya. Determine on what you have to do.

We have read about “Karma, Vikarma and Akarma” in chapter 3 and we have to act accordingly. Our duties for all the stages of life are given in the sastras and are known as the “Purushartha”.

„Karyakarye vyavasthitou“ sagt Gitacharya. Entscheide über das, was Du zu tun hast.

Karma kartum iha arhasi: you should work here, says Sri Krishna. The important word is “Arhasi”. We have discussed in detail about the meaning of the word “Arhata” in sloka 47, chapter 2.

We all have been given suitable roles to play on this stage of life and are authorised to do so. It is up to us to know the rules and regulations concerning our role and then conduct such actions as are appropriate.

How can we learn the sastras?

Gurus, texts and learned elders should be the guides. Any study needs all these three and spiritual study is no exception. In addition, God gives us learning experiences in life and tests us every so often. We do not know when He is going to test us but should be ready to face the tests at any time.

Faith in the God principle and faith in oneself will lead us all towards the attainment of “Eternal Bliss”.

The next chapter is appropriately “Sraddhatraya Vibhaga Yoga” teaching us the nuances of “Faith” and then finally we have “Moksha Sanyasa Yoga” to conclude the sacred philosophy.

Let the sastras be your road maps in the journey of life is what we must understand from this sloka. The importance of understanding the road maps clearly cannot be exaggerated. To reach the destination, one needs, “good roads, a road map, knowledge of the road map and a vehicle to take him to the destination” (in the present day, we need a good navigating tool - sat nav).

Destination: “Moksha” -

Needs road maps: Sastras;

Good roads: the society has taken over the role to provide the roads;

Knowledge of the road map: given by gurus, texts, learned elders;

Vehicle for the journey: our physical body.

The vehicle has to be road worthy and the body also has to be road worthy. The body refers to the physical body and the mind.

A thorough knowledge about possible obstacles or friends, who can assist in our journey, is an important pre-requisite.

Let us keep the map, know where we are in relation to our destination and progress in our journey.

What else do we need for the journey?

This chapter has told us that the only companions in our journey are our qualities. Dividing them broadly into daivi and asuri qualities, it has told us what the problems are, of having asuric qualities as our companions.

Sraddha/faith is needed and we are now going to be taken to that chapter.

Let me end this chapter with a quote from Sri Ramakrishna:

“What particular sastra do you follow” was the question put forward by a devotee.

The answer was: “I follow no sastra whatever. I plead with the deity residing in my heart for directions and I act and live as guided by that Being.”

Being a great master, he is reiterating the fact that he, Ramakrishna is acting as the servant of the King within (Atman) and obeying all commands, at all times.

**Iti Śrīmadbhagavadgītasūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyāṃ yogaśāstre**

**Śrīkṛṣṇārjuna-saṃvāde daivāsurasampadvibhāgayogo nāma ṣoḍaśo’dhyāyaḥ**

Thus ends the sixteenth chapter, “DAIVASURA SAMPAT-VIBHAGA-YOGA“, from Srimad Bhagavadgita, which is Upanishad, Brahma Vidya and Yoga Shastra, in the form of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.