

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

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

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

**May He protect us both (the teacher and the pupil)  
May He cause us both to enjoy (the Supreme)  
May we both exert together (to discover the true inner meaning of the scriptures)  
May our studies be thorough and fruitful.  
May we never misunderstand each other.**

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

The word "**Yoga**" is derived from the word "Yuj" which means "Unite."  
Study of every chapter assists the seeker to unite with the Lord and hence the use of the word "Yoga."

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

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

## Chapter 18: MOKṢA-SAMNYĀSA YOGA

### INTRODUCTION

We have now entered into the most complicated subject matter concerning the theme of “Moksha”. Depending upon how the message from the last 17 chapters has been assimilated, it can be very easy to understand this chapter or very hard.

Why, one may ask?

The Sanskrit language in which it is composed, is a subject alien to many.

- 1) There are only a few communities, comprising of hardly a few thousand people who can speak and communicate with each other in Sanskrit.
- 2) The vast Vedas and Upanisads are compressed into 701 slokas and presented to us as “The Srimad Bhagawadgita.” A number of “Guhya bhashyas” (words with a depth of meaning not easy to grasp) are used in the text.
- 3) It needs the blessings of a “Sadguru” and the capacity for deep intellectual analysis.
- 4) We are so immersed in the worldly affairs that we have no time to spare to study the texts available.
- 5) Modern advances have dropped us into a competitive world and we are in the so called “rat race” of life.
- 6) With the great advances in the science of communication (we are communicating these days, across the world with a click of a button), we are forgetting or have lost the art of communicating with the Supreme Power which has made all of this possible. The more we work at communication technology in the material world, the more we are taken away from the Supreme.

One can keep on adding to this list and giving excuses for not studying the text.

Not just studying the text but,

- Understanding the text,
- Analysing the scriptural advice that is given to be part of this society against how we are living now.

Implementing the salient advice given by the Lord Himself is not possible for majority of us.

So, we need a good guide to explain the text to us.

The guide is bound to be difficult as it is the summary of a great and vast philosophy of life.

We need a teacher who knows our limitations and is willing to lead us in the right path.

That teacher has to be “Guru”. As the word implies, Guru is he who is heavy with the spiritual knowledge he is carrying. Sri Krishna, the Lord Himself, incarnated to be the Jagadguru.

Let us revert back to this chapter, Moksha Sanyasa Yoga.

Among many titles given to this text, the two titles of Yoga Sastra and Moksha Sastra stand prominent.

As it teaches the various ways to unite with the Supreme, it is correctly called as Yoga Sastra.

We have already been given 17 chapters each with the title of “Yoga” attached to it.

Moksha Sastra: as it is the path to “Moksha” one can say it is “Moksha Sastra.”

Really speaking it is not “Moksha Sastra” at all. When we look at the meaning of the words for the title of this chapter, Moksha Sanyasa Yoga, it is clear that the Lord wants us to drop the thought of even attaining Moksha. (Moksha - Liberation; sanyasi - Renounce)

So what is Gita then?

I would say that it is the spiritual tool to clear the ignorance in man. It is the text for liberation from ignorance which is causing bondage.

What is “The ignorance” we are talking about?

The ignorance of attachment to the body, the family, the objects around us in this world and the results of association with the objects such as name and fame, happiness and sorrow, victory and defeat and many more.

All of this is due to one simple error of judgement.

Instead of realising that we are the spark of immortal, immutable, all-knowing, all pervading, formless, beyond gunas, (nirakara, nirguna) all powerful “Parabrahman”, we give importance to the physical body with a name and form. The strong sense of ego in us has made us forget the Atman within and instead associate with the physical body and the physical world around.

Our ignorance is due “Ego”.

The appropriate scriptural words to explain this are:

Avarana

Vikshepa.

Avarana: Maya/delusion has made us develop “non-apprehension” of reality. The maya is enveloping us all round and this is “Avarana”. Because of it we do not perceive our true nature. Spiritual ignorance makes us live in darkness and not visualise/realise the spark of the divine light within.

Vikshepa: (Mis-apprehension of reality as a result of the inherent gunas within.) By association with the ego we misapprehend and misrepresent what is seen. What is not real and not eternal is considered as real and permanent.

The two great errors in judgement keep on taking us in the wrong direction.

Our learned elders have presented us the “Sanatana Dharma” made up of “Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha” and have directed us all towards “Moksha” as the ultimate aim in life.

Moksha, many of us consider as “Liberation” from the worldly existence and union with the Parabrahman. The majority are looking for entry into this “unknown place” which is “Eternal Bliss.”

But, in reality Moksha is liberation from attachment to ego and realising one’s own true identity as “The spark of Parabrahman”.

Hence the title of “Tat Tvam Asi”, an aphorism selected from Chandogya Upanisad, Sama Veda.

“Thou Art That” boldly declares the Sama Veda and Sri Krishna is reiterating this Truth.

Accordingly, “Moksha Sanyasa Yoga” would then mean:

Renunciation of the thought of Moksha (Moksha sanyasa) and union with the “Real You” (Yoga).

Clear the ignorance and enter the “Timeless Zone” is the message from the Lord to the Arjunas of this world. “Do not get limited by time, space and causation and transcend beyond”, is the command by the Lord.

We are inside the “Time Zone” which is going to get blown or shattered when the divine light of knowledge dawns, dispelling the ignorance and revealing our true divine nature. That explosion will reveal the wonder of divinity which is beyond comprehension.

A spark of this Divine energy is inside each of us as the “Atman”. It is covered by the five great elements which together form the “Pancha Koshas”.

The “Pancha Koshas” are the five sheaths enveloping the Atman within:

Annamaya kosha, Pranamaya kosha, Manomaya kosha, Jnanamaya kosha and Anandamaya kosha. (The reader is referred to Tatva Bodha of Jagadguru Shankaracharya, Chinmaya Mission).

Moksha is entry from the “Time Zone” (the world we are in) into “Timeless Zone” (the world of Parabrahman) with no return back into the “Time Zone”.

We should be able to apprehend the reality of “Atman” within us as the spark of “Parabrahman” and this is true Moksha from ignorance.

The Gita teaches us the art of dropping (sanyasa) this ignorance and how to unite with the Supreme reality.

In simple words we can say that Moksha is really the union with the “Eternal Truth” and detaching from “Untruth.”

To summarise:

In a spiritual sense we are always free as the Atman within and by realising the presence of the Atman all around.

In a physical sense, we are bound to the body by attachment due the ignorance which is “Maya”. Maya is the bundle of gunas of Satva, Rajas and Tamas which hides the light of knowledge.

By getting released from Maya, we are ever free souls.

How to get released from Maya?

- A strong desire to attain “Mumukshatva” (release from Maya),
  - Blessings of Guru,
  - Practice of the teachings of the sacred texts by sravana, manana and nidhi dhyasa (listening, recollecting, concentrating),
  - Faith in the God, the sacred texts, the Guru and in oneself,
- And
- Devotion.

Let us not forget that by having been born as humans on this earth we are already blessed and are on the path to Moksha. (Because of our inherent intellectual capacity of reasoning).

In this chapter Sri Krishna will reiterate what has already been said.

Reverse the cycle of samsara and break the shackles, by burning away the vasanas.

This is to be done by;

- Selfless work - Nishkama Karma,
- Not letting new vasanas enter - Karma Phala Tyaga.

Developing the attitude of:

- I am not the doer,
- I am not the enjoyer,

- I am not the sufferer.  
(These three constitute true Sanyasa.)

Tyaga:

The vasanas (gunas) make us get attached to the body, mind and the world around. Renouncing these is Tyaga.

Renounce the kshetra and realise you are the “Kshetrajna”, as we have learnt in chapter 13.

Renouncing Kshetra is the same as renouncing the Ego. Kshetra, the field, is our ego (because we have got strongly attached to it) and this has to be renounced to experience the “Peace”.

अर्जुन उवाच ।

सन्न्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् ।

त्यागस्य च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन ॥१॥

arjuna uvācha |

sannyāsasya mahā-bāho tattvam icchāmi veditum |

tyāgasya cha hṛīṣhīkeśha pṛithak keśhi-niṣhūdana ॥1॥

**Sloka 1**

**ARJUNA UVACHA**

**SANNYASASYA MAHA-BAHO TATTVAM ICCHAMI VEDITUM**

**TYAGASYA CHA HRISHIKESHA PRITHAK KESHI-NISHUDANA**

**Arjuna said:**

**O mighty armed, I desire to know what sanyasa is and what tyaga is, in essence. Tell me of them separately, O Hrishiksha, the slayer of Kesi.**

sanyasasya: of renunciation;  
mahabaho: mighty armed;  
tatvam: the truth in essence;  
icchami: I desire/I wish;  
veditum: to know;  
tyagasya: of tyaga;  
cha: and;  
Hrishiksha: O Hrishiksha;  
prithak: separately;  
keshi nishudhana: the slayer of Kesi.

Arjuna starts this chapter with the most pertinent question, the answer to which he was not clear of. So many times, Krishna had used the word sanyasa and tyaga but the real import of the words was not clear.

This is the correct approach for any student. The student should be bold enough to tell the master what he has not understood and what he would like to get a clearer understanding of. The guru who wishes the welfare of his disciple and wishes to lift him to the higher spiritual planes, welcomes questions to

clarify any points that are not clear. The enthusiasm of the teacher is enhanced when the disciple comes out with pertinent questions.

It was a sincere question from a sincere student and not in any way a criticism of the guru. At the same time the student should not be showing off his knowledge in front of other students. We have studied the 17 chapters so far and I am sure many of us are still unclear of the meaning of these two words. Poet Veda Vyasa has simply put the question in the mouth of Arjuna on our behalf.

It is interesting to note that Arjuna has used three superlatives to address Krishna. They are:

Mahabaho

Hrishiksha

Keshi nishudhana.

Let us analyse the significance of these three superlatives used.

Mahabaho: mighty armed.

Arms are symbols of strength.

The doubt as to which of the two he should follow, either tyaga or renunciation was bothering Arjuna. His mind was not clear on the right action to follow; it was oscillating between taking up tyaga or taking sanyasa. This doubt was becoming too heavy for his mind. The only one spiritually strong enough to lift the heavy weight off his mind, was Krishna and hence he addressed Krishna as “Mahabaho.”

Hrishiksha: it means “master over senses”.

The senses, in this context: intellect, mind and the sense organs are so strong that they forcibly drag the seeker away from his path. They can bring contact with any one of the millions of objects in the world, which can bring the experience of happiness. After all we are all in search of happiness every moment of our life.

The greatest of victories is that of victory over the senses because it is the only means by which man can evolve from the human to the divine. We need to get that happiness which does not fade in the course of time.

Where to find the happiness that can remain constantly with us?

The message from the picture of Gitopadeshnam which we have discussed in detail before (introduction) should help us in this conflict. The senses have a role to play in taking us to the abode of eternal happiness. We have to work in the world we are in and face many obstacles in life. Just by sitting in a corner we cannot reach the destination “Moksha”.

The horses (senses) of the chariot of life for us should take us to the destination and they should be mastered by the Lord of Yoga (Yogeshwara).

Reference to tyaga and sanyasa is to be found in the following stanzas:

Chapter 3 - sloka 30

Chapter 4 - sloka 20

Chapter 4 - sloka 41

Chapter 9 - sloka 28

Chapter 12 - sloka 6

Chapter 12 - sloka 12

Chapter 12 - sloka 16

Chapter 14 - sloka 25

Krishna, the Yogeswara is the only source for us, to attain freedom from attachment to this world. As Yogaroodha, Krishna is already riding over the horse (senses) and has full control over the horses (senses). He does not let the horses (senses) stray in their path.

Keshi nishoodhana: slayer of the demon Kesi.

Keshi was an asura during the period of Krishna. He was intent on swallowing up Krishna. He takes the form of a horse and encounters Krishna. With great valour Krishna fights the asura and kills him.

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं सन्न्यासं कवयो विदुः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥२॥

śhrī-bhagavān uvacha ।

kāmyānām karmaṇām nyāsam sannyaśam kavayo viduḥ ।

sarva-karma-phala-tyāgam prāhus tyāgam vichakṣhaṇāḥ ॥2॥

Sloka 2

SHRI-BHAGAVAN UVACHA

KAMYANAM KARMANAM NYASAM SANNYASAM KAVAYO VIDUH

SARVA-KARMA-PHALA-TYAGAM PRAHUS TYAGAM VICHAKSHANAH

**The Lord said:**

**The sages understand samnyasa as the renunciation of all desireful actions. The learned declare tyaga as the abandoning of all fruits of actions.**

kamyanaam: desireful;

karmanaa: actions;

nyasam: renunciation;

samnyasam: samnyasa;

kavayo: the sages;

viduhu: understand;

sarva karma phala tyagam: the abandonment of fruits of all actions;

vichakshanaha: the learned ones/wise.

Arjuna wanted to know in essence what tyaga was and what was considered as samnyasa.

Sri Krishna does not give a direct answer to this question but starts off with what the experts/sages/learned ones consider these two to be.

Even though Arjuna had been to gurukula ashrama and had also heard Sri Krishna so far, (in the preceding 17 chapters) he still was not clear on what these two important words really meant. We can see how difficult therefore it is for us, the ignorant, to understand the sacred text.

Sri Krishna says:

Sages understand Samnyasa as the renunciation of all desireful actions

And

Tyaga as the abandoning of the fruits of all actions.

If we closely analyse this we can see that:

Samnyasa is about the “present” and Tyaga is about the “future” in relation to the actions conducted/to be conducted.

Both are related to “actions”.

The subject matter concerning action (karma) has been discussed in detail in chapters 3 and 4. We have read that karma is divided into four broad categories, “Nitya karma, naimittika karma, kama karma and nishiddha karma.”

It is evident that both the tyagis and samnyasis are expected to work but not expected to conduct any nishiddha karma (forbidden actions).

There has been a misconception that samnyasa is abandoning all possessions, wearing ochre robes and leading a life of renunciation. As a matter of fact this misconception is held even now by many.

Kamyana karmanaam nyasam:

The sages say that samnyasa is renouncing all kama karmas. It implies that samnyasi should be conducting actions but with no worldly or heavenly desires. The sanyasi should be fulfilling his role in the society of which he is a part of. His actions should reflect “Nishkama karma.”

Renouncing family, possessions etc. going to centres of pilgrimage and wishing to go to heaven, comes under actions to fulfil heavenly desires. This does not make the person a samnyasi.

A true samnyasi should not even have a desire to go to heaven. Let us not forget that this chapter is “Moksha Sanyasa Yoga”.

Sarva karma phala tyagam prahur tyagam: renouncing the fruits of all action, is the karma phala tyaga the Lord is referring to.

Tyaga is renouncing the fruits of nitya, naimittika and kama karmas. (Kama karmas create new bondage that leads to rebirth and takes one away from the path of Liberation). The attitude with which one does not work for the fruits of actions is “tyaga”.

These are the views of learned, says the Lord.

Let us not forget that any action conducted with a view to getting desires fulfilled (in future) reduces the efficiency of the work carried out in the present.

This frame of mind can come only when the seeker overcomes “ego”.

Dropping of “I” ness in action, is samnyasa.

त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः |  
यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ||3||

tyājyaṁ doṣha-vad ity eke karma prāhur manīṣiṇaḥ |  
yajña-dāna-tapaḥ-karma na tyājyam iti chāpare ||3||



### Sloka 3

#### **TYAJYAM DOSHA-VAD ITY EKE KARMA PRAHUR MANISHINAH YAJNA-DANA-TAPAH-KARMA NA TYAJYAM ITI CHAPARE**

**Some learned people declare that action should be abandoned as an evil. Others declare that acts of yajna, dana and tapas should not be abandoned.**

tyajyam: should be abandoned;  
doshavad: as evil;  
ity: thus;  
eke': some;  
karma: actions;  
prahuhu: declare;  
maneeshinaha: philosophers;  
yajna dana tapah karma: acts of yajna, dana and tapas;  
na: not;  
tyajyam: should be relinquished;  
ity: thus;  
cha: and;  
apare: others.

In reply to this question Sri Krishna starts off by saying, what the opinion of the wise and learned sages was on this subject.

Some learned people, Krishna says, consider that there is an inherent evil in every action and so actions in general should be abandoned. This is the view of Samkhya philosophers. These philosophers consider that "Soul" is the only true part of us. They consider that the Atman within each of us, is the eternal witness to bodily actions and that we should consider the upadhi (instrument)/body as non-existent. They also consider that the physical body leads to actions, actions lead to the accumulation of vasanas and vasanas keep one drowned in the ocean of samsara. So, actions are evil, this is their opinion.

Some others strongly believe that acts of yajna, dana and tapas should not be abandoned. They advocate conduct of actions as per the spirit of the sastric injunctions.

There is a total contradiction between the two schools of thought. The first group are advocating "karma sanyasa" and the second group are indirectly advising conduct of actions in the spirit of "Karma phala tyaga."

By listening to this we can come to the conclusion that even about 5300 years ago, there were differences of opinion on important matters like these and that there were different schools of thought. The understanding of the sacred texts was divided on certain matters.

Let us leave that aside and consider such opinions.

Abandon all actions because there is an inherent evil in it. Is it correct?  
No, definitely not, we will say.

Example: while cooking on an open fire, the food gets cooked and so good comes out of it. On the other hand little moths and insects around get attracted to the fire used for cooking and thereby get destroyed.

There is an inherent good and evil in any action.

We cannot stop cooking because cooking helps to cook the ingredients, so that we can eat the food.  
We need to eat for survival.

While walking along the road a number of tiny animals will get trodden upon and die.  
Can one consider that walking is evil and stop walking?

A surgeon cuts open the body to cure an illness.  
Is cutting open the body an evil act?

Let us put aside our opinions on this issue.  
What does the Lord say?  
We will get the answer to it in the next few slokas.

निश्चयं शृणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।  
त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः सम्प्रकीर्तितः ॥४॥

niśhchayaṁ śhṛiṇu me tatra tyāge bharata-sattama ।  
tyāgo hi puruṣha-vyāghra tri-vidhaḥ samprakīrtitaḥ ॥४॥

#### Sloka 4

**NISHCHAYAM SHRINU ME TATRA TYAGE BHARATA-SATTAMA  
TYAGO HI PURUSHA-VYAGHRA TRI-VIDHAH SAMPRAKIRTITAH**

**O best of Bharatas, hear from Me, the final decision about Tyaga. O best of men, Tyaga has been declared to be threefold.**

nischayam: final decision;  
shrunu: hear;  
Me': My;  
tatra: there;  
tyago: about tyaga;  
bharatasattama: best of Bharatas;  
tyago: tyaga;  
hi: verily;  
puruṣavyāghra: best of men;  
trividhaha: threefold;  
samprakertitaha: has been declared.

On important questions by the student covering important topics, the teacher has a duty to give a firm and definitive answer. There is no question of beating around the bush and evading the answer. Firm and definitive answers make an everlasting impression on the minds of the students. One has to be a true master to give such a definitive answer.

Sri Krishna, as Jagadguru is the perfect master to give the correct answer to Arjuna.  
It is also important to know that he, who is not a master on the subject under discussion, has no right to make such definitive assertions.

Krishna uses two superlatives while addressing Arjuna. He says:

Best of Bharatas,  
Purushavyaghra.

Bharata is he who is in search of the light of knowledge. Arjuna was in search of spiritual knowledge. Vyaghra is tiger. The tiger is a very determined animal. Krishna wants Arjuna to be as determined a person as a tiger and take correct action, while fighting for dharma in the war of righteousness.

No doubt Arjuna was a very strong warrior but these words of praise would have boosted his morale. Thinking that his guru considers him as the best, he would put his best foot forward in the battle.

Tyaga, Krishna says is of three types. We have studied about the three gunas of satva, rajas and tamas in chapters 14 and 17. We will now get a detailed description of the three types of tyagas.

Let us take the sacred text, the Gita, as the blessings from the master of yoga and the guiding light to dispel our ignorance.

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।  
यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥5॥

yajña-dāna-tapaḥ-karma na tyājyaṁ kāryam eva tat |  
yajño dānaṁ tapaś chaiva pāvanāni manīṣhiṇām ||5||

### Sloka 5

**YAJNA-DANA-TAPAH-KARMA NA TYAJYAM KARYAM EVA TAT  
YAJNO DANAM TAPASH CHAIVA PAVANANI MANISHINAM**

**Acts of yajna, Dana and Tapas should not be abandoned, they should be performed indeed.  
Yajna, Dana and Tapas are purifiers even for the wise.**

yajna: dedicated acts;  
dana: charitable deeds;  
tapas: acts of purification;  
karma: actions;  
na: not;  
tyajyam: should be abandoned;  
karyam eva tat: that should be performed indeed;  
paavanaani: purifiers;  
maneeshinaam: for the wise.

Taking up the theme of tyaga the Lord has made some emphatic points in this sloka. Concerning acts of yajna, dana and tapas, He says:

- a) Na tyajyam: should not be abandoned;
- b) Karyameva tat: should be performed indeed.

He has used both negative and positive assertions to emphasise the point. He stresses that they should not be abandoned and that they should be performed indeed.

In the last chapter we have a description of three types of  
Yajnas - in slokas 11, 12 and 13,  
Tapas - slokas 14, 15 and 16; 17, 18 and 19  
Dana - slokas 20, 21 and 22.

Satvika Yajna, Dana and Tapas are a must for all, even for the wise, we are told.  
They should be performed because they are the purifiers.

This takes us to the topic of “Vasanas” which has been dealt with so many times in the last 17 chapters.

The present birth has had a past and in many cases a future to face also.

The vasanas are considered as “sins” because they lead to rebirth. Instead of an upward path toward Moksha, the individual comes back to earth.

In sloka 37, chapter 4 we have discussed about:

Sanchita

Prarabdha and

Aagami karmas.

“Purifiers even for the wise” is better understood, if we reflect on the three types of karmas.

One may be wise now in this present birth and well respected. Even he has a duty to conduct satvic yajna, dana and tapas.

He who is wise now may not have been so wise before. He might have committed acts contrary to the sastras and entertained many desires/hatreds. He would have those impure vasanas in his mind. Unless he clears them he has no scope of progressing in his sadhana. Conducting satvic yajna, dana and tapas will clear those accumulated vasanas. The present is a stepping stone for making rapid progress in the spiritual journey. The wise realise this and conduct satvic actions.

Sage Valmiki who composed the famous epic Ramayana, was we are told, a hunter in his past.

Following the advice of Sage Narada, he takes recourse to tapas and meditates on the name of “Rama” and comes out of tapas as the sage we know now.

If it is so even for the wise, how much more essential it is for us, the ignorant folks.

Out of genuine compassion for us all, his children, He is guiding us on the path to clear our past and reach Him. He has created us and also created the universe we live in. Ultimately, He wants us all to unite with Him. In the process, He wants us to be useful citizens conducting acts of welfare as His servants on this earth.

Therefore, there is a need to conduct yajna, dana and tapas.

Yajna is dedicating the results of all good actions to Him,

Dana is acts of charity,

Tapas is to clear the accumulated vasanas.

Do we want to be the slaves of our beloved master and conduct acts of welfare or

Do we want to be slaves to the indriyas and remain attached to our bodies?

Between the two, which is better?

We all are fighting to abolish slavery but we are becoming slaves ourselves and enjoying the life of slavery.

What a paradox of behaviour!

The sincere seekers have to build a so called cocoon for themselves, conduct these acts and come out of the shackles of life as “Liberated men”.

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।  
कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥6॥

etāny api tu karmāṇi saṅgam̐ tyaktvā phalāni cha ।  
kartavyānīti me pārtha niśchitam̐ matam uttamam ॥6॥

### Sloka 6

**ETANY API TU KARMANI SANGAM TYAKTVA PHALANI CHA  
KARTAVYANITI ME PARTHA NISHCHITAM MATAM UTTAMAM**

**But, even these acts should be performed leaving aside attachment and the fruits, this is My certain and best opinion, O Partha.**

etanyapi: even these;  
tu: but;  
karmaani: acts;  
sangam: attachment;  
tyaktva: leaving aside;  
phalaani: fruits;  
cha: and;  
kartavyanee: should be performed;  
ti: thus;  
Me’: My;  
mataha: opinion;  
nischayam: for certain;  
uttamam: the best.

Etaan: “Even these acts”: it refers to: yajna, dana and tapas.

These three constitute “karma” or actions we should be performing as per the scriptural injunctions.

The entire text of Srimad Bhagawadgita is aimed at guiding the seekers in the performance of such acts which bring about universal “Peace, Prosperity” and establish “Dharma”.

Sangam tyaktva phalaani cha (The philosophy of “Karmanyevadhikarasthe” sloka 47, chapter 2).

We are attached to the sensual world and detached from the spiritual world.

We have to reverse the play and

Get attached to the spiritual world and learn to detach from the physical world.

Once we learn to recognise the demon “ego” and recognise its harmful effect on us and the world we live in, we can move forward and make attempts to detach from it and kill it totally. This then reveals our true identity: “Tat Tvam Asi.”.

“This is My certain and the best opinion”: This philosophy is the best philosophy for one and all. “He” has made this observation in many ways throughout the sacred text and now is adding the words: My certain opinion and the best opinion.

Opinions can vary on the same subject and by the same person depending upon the time and place. But, this, eternal Truth has no limitations of time, space or causation and it is true at all times. Not as Krishna, the cowherd boy, but as “Jagadguru”, we have been given this authoritative statement. It is our duty, as the spiritual seekers to accept it and implement it on a 24/7 basis. This is because His wish is only, “Loka Kalyana”.

One can amass wealth and become the richest in the world but the glory that lives on even after ones departure from the physical world, comes only from the good acts of yajna, dana and tapas.

The Lord Himself has set an example, the entire wealth “Sree” (Lakshmi) is His and always with Him. He has given us all the wealth of foods, fruits, water etc that are needed for our survival. That is why “He” is said to be in constant “Tapas” and has sacrificed Himself in the “Yajna.” (Purusha Sooktam)

So, the lesson for us is:

Conduct dharmic actions (chapter 3 and 4) but drop the two evils in the actions conducted. They are: The feeling of “I am the doer,” and “I will get this reward for my actions.”

Let us not forget that Sri Krishna has given this advice and His personal opinion out of compassion to mankind. We have to develop the faith, believe in Him and implement His advice in all our daily activities on a 24/7 basis.

नियतस्य तु सन्न्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।  
मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥7॥

niyatasya tu sannyāsaḥ karmaṇo nopapadyate ।  
mohāt tasya parityāgas tāmasaḥ parikīrtitaḥ ॥7॥

### Sloka 7

**NIYATASYA TU SANNYASAH KARMANO NOPAPADYATE  
MOHAT TASYA PARITYAGAS TAMASAH PARIKIRTITAH**

**Verily the renunciation of obligatory actions is not proper. The abandoning of the same from delusion is declared to be tamasika.**

niyatasya: obligatory;  
tu: verily;  
sanyasa: renunciation;  
karmano’: actions;  
na: not;  
upapadyate: is proper;  
mohaat: out of delusion;  
tasya: that/of the same;  
parityaga: abandoning;

tamasaha: tamasika;  
parikeertitaha: is declared.

Renunciation of obligatory duties: what are these?

The duties we are obliged to do are obligatory duties. There should be strict adherence to dharma in the conduct of the obligatory duties.

Who are we obliged to?

We can start writing down the names of those we are obliged to and the list becomes endless. We should therefore broadly divide these into two sets of duties:

Spiritual duties for being part of the Paramatma and  
Moral duties/social duties for being part of the world we live in.

This is because we are not only part of the Parabrahman (the Self within us) but also part of the family and of the world. We may belong to the Advaita school and do not believe in the body but as long as the body exists we are part of the world and we have duties to the life on this earth. The society has given us protection in one form or other (like providing educational institutions, medical facilities, cleanliness of the streets, providing clean water etc) and we are directly or indirectly obliged to the system.

Spiritual duties:

We are the children of the Lord, whatever name we may give Him. As children we should be obliged to Him. He has given us the life on this earth and an opportunity to clear the stored vasanas and return back to Him. Our actions should reflect this obligation.

Deva Yajna (worship of the Parabrahman):

Dedicating the results of good actions as “Sarvam Sri Krishnarpanamastu. Shivarpanamstu etc” are part of our spiritual duties.

Study of the sacred texts is part of the spiritual duties.

To be servants of the Lord and to conduct actions for welfare of life on this earth is a spiritual duty and this is Deva yajna too.

Regular daily worship, visits to the temples, visits to the centres of pilgrimage etc. are also part of the spiritual duties.

Moral duties:

Rishi yajna: duties to the spiritual masters of the past and the present, visits to the ashramas, taking part in the charitable activities of such institutions etc. are part of the rishi yajna.

Pitru yajna: is the moral duty to remember the dear departed elders of the family and conduct annual rites on specified days.

Nara yajna: duty to welfare of the needy of the society is nara yajna,

Bhoota yajna: duty to the welfare of other forms of life, protection of environment is bhoota yajna.

We have a moral duty to conduct all these.

Abandoning these duties either wantonly or out of ignorance of the sastras becomes tamasika, the Lord declares. (Sloka 24, chapter 16 - let the sastras be your authority on what ought to be done and what ought not to be done).

Abandoning these duties and taking up sanyasa ashrama becomes a tamasic act.

Let me make it clear that the statement does not refer to spiritual masters who have taken up sanyasa ashrama (eg: Sri Shankaracharya). They have not abandoned their duties because they consider all of us, as members of their family and conduct yajna, dana and tapas for the welfare of life on earth.

One may ask why should it be tamasika if it is done out of ignorance of the sastras?

The answer is:

Our judicial system of which we are familiar with clearly says: “ignorance of the law is not an excuse” and he/she who breaks the law out of ignorance of the law is also guilty.

Similarly, saying that we do not know the sastras is not an excuse. The parents and elders have a duty to teach the same to the children.

Once we grow up and develop the knowledge, we should spend some part of the day in study of the scriptures and sacred texts or Puranas or great epics like Mahabharata/Ramayana.

Abandoning the above duties becomes a tamasic act.

In summary:

Let us be servants of the Lord and perform dedicated acts to Him and

Be servants of the society we live in, by performing dedicated acts to bring about a happy mutual co-existence of life on earth.

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्यजेत् ।

स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥८॥

duḥkham ity eva yat karma kāya-kleśha-bhayāt tyajet ।

sa kṛitvā rājasam tyāgam naiva tyāga-phalam labhet ॥८॥

**Sloka 8**

**DUHKHAM ITY EVA YAT KARMA KAYA-KLESHA-BHAYAT TYAJET  
SA KRITVA RAJASAM TYAGAM NAIVA TYAGA-PHALAM LABHET**

**He, who abandons action from fear of bodily discomfort because it is painful, thus performing rajasika tyaga, obtains not the fruits of abandonment.**

dukham: painful;

ity: thus;

eva: even;

yat: which;

karma: action;

kaya klesha bhayat: fear of bodily discomfort;

tyajet: abandons;

sa: he;

kritva: performing;

rajas: rajasika;

tyagam: abandonment;

naiva: not even;

tyagaphalam: fruits of abandonment;

labhe't: obtains.

We will understand this sloka if we look at Arjuna in relation to the war of righteousness at Kurukshetra.

First of all, he did not want to fight because he thought it was an act of sin to fight with a view to kill Bhishma, Drona and the friends who were on the opposite camp.

This is tamasika tyaga and was entirely due to ignorance of the sastras.



He did not want to fight because such an act would result in mental agony for killing his own beloved people (How could I live having killed my own people, he said to Krishna?). This comes under rajasika tyaga (kaya klesha bhayaat).

“I will not go to hell if I do not kill the respected elders”, says Arjuna to Krishna. This was the fruit of action Arjuna would have preferred by the act of “tyaga”.

No, you are wrong on all these points is the reply from the Lord. On the contrary, if you decide not to fight and let Duryodhana rule the kingdom you may have to go to hell, Krishna indirectly points out to Arjuna.

After all it was a war of righteousness and Arjuna had a moral duty to fight for righteousness and kill unrighteousness.

Krishna had already given the most powerful mantra in the form of sloka 3, chapter 2 “KLAIBYAM MAA ... “ He had asked Arjuna “Utthishta” (to get up) and fight for righteousness. “Titikshatva” (endurance) was the quality Arjuna had to show.

We see some people or hear about them who look at worldly life as full of troubles and do not have the strength to withstand those troubles. They develop what one calls an “escape mentality” and take renunciation. They become the so called sanyasis. This so called sanyasa is of rajasika type and they will not get the fruits of this sanyasa in the form of Moksha.

In a way, withstanding bodily and mental discomfort and conducting the obligatory duties is itself an act of satvika tyaga.

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।  
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥९॥

kāryam ity eva yat karma niyataṁ kriyate 'rjuna |  
saṅgam tyaktvā phalam chaiva sa tyāgaḥ sāttviko mataḥ ॥९॥

### Sloka 9

**KARYAM ITY EVA YAT KARMA NIYATAM KRIYATE 'RJUNA  
SANGAM TYAKTVA PHALAM CHAIVA SA TYAGAH SATTVIKO MATAH**

**Whatever action is done, O Arjuna, merely because it ought to be done, abandoning attachment and desire for fruit, such abandonment is regarded as Satvika.**

karyam: ought to be done;  
iti: thus;  
eva: even;  
yat: which;  
karma: action;  
niyata: obligatory;  
kriyate: is done;  
sangam: attachment;

tyaktva: abandoning;  
phalam: fruit;  
cha: and;  
eva: also/even;  
sah: that;  
tyagaha: abandoning;  
satvika: satvika;  
mataha: opinion.

Sri Krishna stresses so many times on the need for action. He does not advocate laziness or abandonment of actions. Let us not forget that when He says action, He means “dharmic” action. Whatever action is conducted, in accordance to the sacred Vedic texts becomes dharmic action. Any action contrary to the sastras is not dharmic action.

What do the sastras say about actions then?

Sastras say that actions should not be with a selfish motive but should be carried out simply for welfare of life on earth.

We have discussed about the obligatory duties in sloka 2 of this chapter and slokas 3 - 8 elaborate on the theme. It is essential that the reader (seeker) intellectually analyses the contents of slokas 2-8 to understand this sloka.

We are two in one: the Atman and the ego. Of these two, the recognition that the Atman is our true identity is correct and as a result, any action that has even a trace of “ego” is contrary to our true divine nature.

Our sacred texts say and the Gita says “It is the only way to justify our actions provided the texts have been understood clearly”.

Sloka 14, chapter 5:

“NA KARTRUTVAM NA KARMANI LOKASYA PRABHUHU -.”

The Lord does not create agency or action or union with the fruits of action. But nature leads to action.

The word “agency” refers to “I” (ego), “action” refers to our daily actions and “fruits of action” refers to the results of actions conducted.

We have created the agency “ego” and developed the “kartrutvam” (doership) bhavana. We therefore associate the results to be the results of our efforts.

So, the Lord says:

- a) Do not develop attachment to the body or the world around, (consider body as the medium/upadhi for service to the master),
- b) Conduct dharmic actions as it is for our survival on this earth,
- c) Conduct dharmic actions as the servants of the master,
- d) Conduct dharmic actions with no desire/expectation of fruits of actions,
- e) Only results of such dharmic actions be offered/attributed to the Lord in the sense of “Sri Krishnarpanamastu”,
- f) Accept the results of actions that are (contrary to the sastras) painful and develop the capacity to withstand such pains/sorrows.

Then only such actions become “Satvika”. Fulfilling the duties to the God within (Atman) and to the nature all round (as representation of God on earth) will take us in the upward path to Liberation. This is the command from the master who has sent us to this world.

The ignorant (tamasic) neglects duties as a result of delusion,

The passionate/active (rajasic) abandons them because of fear of bodily pain,  
The pure (satvic) understands the values of the dharmic duties and does not abandon them.  
This is the gist of the three types of tyaga.

न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।  
त्यागी सत्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः ॥10॥

na dveṣṭy akuśhalaṁ karma kuśhale nānuṣhajjate ।  
tyāgī sattva-samāviṣṭo medhāvī chinna-sanśhayaḥ ॥10॥

### Sloka 10

**NA DVESHTY AKUSHALAM KARMA KUSHALE NANUSHAJJATE  
TYAGI SATTVA-SAMAVISHTO MEDHAVI CHINNA-SANSHAYAH**

**The satvika tyagi possessed by purity, intelligence and with all doubts cut asunder, does not hate any disagreeable action nor is (he) attached to an agreeable action.**

na: not;  
dveshta: hates;  
akushalam: disagreeable;  
karma: actions;  
kushale: an agreeable one;  
na: not;  
anushajjate: is attached;  
tyagee: the renunciate;  
satva samamavishto: possessed by purity;  
medhavi: intelligence;  
chinna: cut asunder;  
samshayaha: doubts.

The pre-requisites to conduct actions by a satvika tyagi:

Purity

Intelligence

Clearing all doubts before undertaking any action.

While conducting actions:

Does not hate if the action to be conducted is disagreeable;

Does not feel elated/happy when conducting good actions.

This is the summary of this sloka.

Let us take these individually and analyse them.

a) Purity.

Purity in thought, actions and speech has been discussed in chapter 17.

Physical and mental purity should be maintained at all times.

Purity comes when there are no impure vasanas stored in the mind. The Seeker has to constantly examine the thoughts he has stored and discard those that are not good for him or for the nature/society and are contrary to the sastras.

b) Intelligence.

One has to be intelligent enough to understand what he has to do, why he has to do it and to make sure it fits in with the sastras. A true seeker is intelligent enough to know his/her true divine identity and knows the dangers of a preponderance of ego in actions. He uses his “Medha Shakti” (power of intelligence) to keep constantly the satvic temperament.

c) All doubts cut asunder.

True seeker has no doubt on the nature of the God. He has understood it by the study of the sacred texts, teaching by the guru and by personal experiences in his life. He has no doubt that the ego is false and Atman is real. He has no doubt about the presence of the same God principle in all. He knows rajasika and tamasika thoughts hinder his progress. He has no doubt about what constitutes karma, vikarma and akarma. He knows what Purusha is and what constitutes Prakriti.

It is natural for doubts to crop up in the mind about the actions to be conducted. How should one clear them?

With a clear knowledge of the actions to be conducted, obtained from authoritative sources, self-analysis of the pros and cons of the actions and with faith in oneself, one can clear these doubts. Sometimes it will be so pleasing to do a job and sometimes it does not feel pleasing. One cannot stop the task because it is not pleasing. It is true for all types of duties one has to conduct on a 24/7 basis. Duty is to conduct the work to the best of one’s capacity and not let personal feelings interfere with the work.

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्माण्यशेषतः ।  
यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥11॥

na hi deha-bhṛitā śhakyam tyaktum karmāṇy aśheṣhataḥ ।  
yas tu karma-phala-tyāgī sa tyāgīty abhidhiyate ॥11॥

**Sloka 11**

**NA HI DEHA-BHRITA SHAKYAM TYAKTUM KARMANY ASHESHATAH  
YAS TU KARMA-PHALA-TYAGI SA TYAGITY ABHIDHIYATE**

**Indeed, for an embodied being, it is not possible to give up actions completely. He who abandons the desire for fruits of action is called a “tyagi”.**

na: not;  
hi: indeed;  
dehabhruta: embodied being;  
shakyam: possible;  
tyaktum: give up;  
karmany: actions;  
sheshataha: completely;  
yas tu: who, but;  
karma phala tyagi: abandoned desire for fruits of action;  
iti: thus;  
tyagi: tyagi;

abhidhiyate: is called.

Who is an embodied being?

The Atman, spark of Paramatman (Parabrahman), is the “Pure consciousness or Chaitanya” within each of us. It is the life force within each form of life. Paramatman is the life force for the entire universe known to us and beyond of what we know.

On developing association with the mind/intellect equipment the Atman takes cognition of the world of objects and gains experience of it. It is then the “Jivatma” which is the “Embodied Being” referred to in this sloka by the Lord.

The mind is the seat of vasanas from the past and the centre for new vasanas which are gained through association with the world of objects.

The vasanas involuntarily drag the individual (jivatma) towards the conduct of actions. These could be pure tamasic, rajasic or satvic or a combination of the three.

Hence the Lord says, “For the Jivatma it is not possible to give up actions completely.”

Each one of us has to conduct involuntary actions (circulation, breathing, digestion etc) and voluntary actions for being part of the world we live in. We have to conduct the ordained/obligatory duties. (Chapter 3)

Actions are the only means to take us upwards on the spiritual path. If our actions do not meet the criterion for climbing up the path, we will either stagnate or fall down to lower levels of existence.

Is there no way to attain union with the Parabrahman - “Moksha”, one may ask.  
Yes, is the answer.

“He”, the Lord has made this point abundantly clear so many times already and is re-iterating it now. “He” says: conduct “Karma Phala Tyaga”.

We have to conduct actions that fit in with the Vedic injunctions and not work for “Fruits of actions”. This is “Tyaga”.

What happens when the Atman becomes the Jivatman?

The omniscient Atman when it reflects on to the mind and associates with the vasanas in it develops the sense of “I” (individuality). The jivatman is the individuality that is created.

The bundle of thought imprints in the mind is known as the “Vritti” of the mind. For all of us, these are mainly imprints from the objects of the world around.

Whatever material knowledge is obtained by contact (via the sense organs) with the world around is known as “Vritti jnana.” It is only a subjective knowledge and is related to the concept of “time, space and causation” and is subject to change.

On the contrary “Atma jnana” is not subject to “time, space and causation” and is not subject to any change.

When there is a change in the direction of thoughts towards Brahman it becomes “Brahmakara vritti.”

When there is total union with the Paramatman it becomes “Akhanda Brahamakara vritti” which is the “uninterrupted flow of Supreme Consciousness” this results in the culmination of Self-Realisation.

This is “Jivanmukti”.

Just to re-iterate:

Tyaga is not simply a physical act of renunciation but, is a mental attitude/frame of mind. Thoughts that lead to desires/hatreds should not be encouraged.

Whatever action is conducted must be conducted with no sense of “I” ness. There should be no of feeling of “this is mine”. By working without any concern for the reward from such actions, the individual is not bound by the actions and their subsequent results. That person is a Tyagi.

अनिष्टमिष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् ।  
भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु सन्न्यासिनां ङक्वचित् ॥12॥

aniṣṭam iṣṭam miśraṁ cha tri-vidham karmaṇaḥ phalam ।  
bhavaty atyāgināṁ pretya na tu sannyāsināṁ kvachit ॥12॥

**Sloka 12**

**ANISHTAM ISHTAM MISHRAM CHA TRI-VIDHAM KARMAṆAH PHALAM  
BHAVATY ATYAGINAM PRETYA NA TU SANNYASINAM KVACHIT**

**The threefold result of actions: disagreeable, good and mixed accrue after death to those who have no spirit of tyaga, but, never to the tyagis.**

anishtam: disagreeable;  
ishtam: agreeable/good;  
mishram: mixed;  
cha: and;  
trividham: threefold;  
karmanaha: of action;  
phalam: result;  
bhavati: accrues;  
atyaginaam: to those who have no spirit of tyaga;  
pretya: after death;  
na: not;  
tu: but;  
sanyasinaam: to tyagis;  
kvachit: never.

The reaction to any action conducted will fall into one of the three following categories:

Ishtam: agreeable/good,  
Anishtam: disagreeable/evil,  
Mishram: mixed.

When there is a sense of doer-ship or “I” ness in an action (with the accompanying desire for the fruit of action), the individual experiences one of the above three reactions.

Thoughts - past,  
Actions - present,  
Results - future.

The past (vasanas) resulted in the present (action) and the present contributes to the future (phala).

Happiness or sorrow is the future for us depending on the results of the present actions. It is our own actions of the past that have led to the experience we are experiencing now.

If our actions are bad, the reactions will be bad and we will experience sorrow/pain. It is like experiencing life in hell.

If our actions are good the reactions will be good and we will experience happiness. It is like experiencing life in heaven.

For mixed types of actions the reaction will be mixed. This is the life on this earth where we are experiencing both heaven and hell.

For whatever good we have done in the past, we are given the birth as humans.

We are told that he who abandons the desire for fruits of action but still conducts all ordained duties will not experience any of the three types of reactions.

The Lord has used the adjunctive “kvachit” (never). It is the secret (guhya) bhasha in this sloka. He means that at no time should one have desire for the fruits of actions. Even one simple deviation from this rule is enough to fall down from the heights climbed up spiritually.

It is therefore said to be easy to:

climb up from tamasic to rajasic,

rajasic to satvic

but

to climb up from the heights of satva to shuddha satva and merge with the Parabrahman is extremely difficult.

Let us renounce the sense of doer-ship (Kartrutva bhavana) in all our actions.

The experience of hanging on to the sense of doer-ship will drown the individual in the whirlpool of samsara.

Action-result-reaction will become an endless chain that impedes the progress in the spiritual path. A true seeker has to keep this point in mind and conduct all obligatory duties in the spirit of tyaga as described in this sloka.

पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।

साङ् ख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥13॥

pañchaitāni mahā-bāho kāraṇāni nibodha me |

sāṅkhye kṛitānte proktāni siddhaye sarva-karmaṇām ॥13॥

**Sloka 13**

**PANCHAITANI MAHA-BAHO KARANANI NIBODHA ME**

**SANKHYE KRITANTE PROKTANI SIDDHAYE SARVA-KARMANAM**

**Learn from Me O’ mighty armed, the five aspects for the accomplishment of all actions, as declared in the Samkhya philosophy, which is the end of all actions.**

panchaitani: five aspects (pancha: five; etani: these);  
mahabaho': mighty armed;  
karanaani: causes;  
nibhodha: learn;  
Me': from Me;  
samkhye: in the samkhya philosophy;  
kritante': end of all actions; (kruta: actions; ante': end of);  
proktani: declared/said;  
siddhaye': for the accomplishment of;  
sarva karmanaam: all actions.

From now onwards Sri Krishna is going to take up the theme of all actions conducted/to be conducted for attaining "Siddhi" (success).

For the spiritual seeker "Siddhi" is "Liberation" and many consider it as "Moksha".  
The Lord, has taken up the task of describing in detail about "Action".  
We will be told that there are five aspects for every action and if there is a happy co-ordination in all the five aspects, the end result will be "success."

Samkhye': as per the "Samkhya philosophy". This could be interpreted as:  
"Samkhya philosophy" of the Sage Kapila Vasudeva (refer: Kapilopadsha) or  
the philosophy of Vedanta.  
One would probably agree with the second view that it is the philosophy of Vedanta.

The philosophy of Vedanta is in three broad sections:  
Karma Kanda  
Upasana Kanda  
Jnana Kanda.

Karma Kanda deals with ritualistic actions under the guidance of the guru,  
(This has been discussed in the introduction).

The Lord says:  
Five aspects/factors for the accomplishment of all actions (as taught in the Sankhya) which is the end of action.  
The word "action" is to be understood as "actions described in the Karma Kanda portion of the Vedas."

To enter into the Upasana Kanda section of the Vedas, one must complete Karma Kanda and one can say this is the end of all actions.

Actions take place at the level of the body and the mind. Transcending this level with "Atma Jnana" (by losing body consciousness) results in this "ending of all actions" and this is the meaning for the word "Kritante".

The Vedanta philosophy teaches "Atma Jnana" and so the word "Kritante" is said to be according to the Vedanta philosophy.

It is not the "end of all actions" as such but the beginning of the lessons concerning the loss of body-identification, whilst still conducting all obligatory actions.

Kritante has to be clearly understood as, "not end of all actions" but,  
"End of all wants from conduct of actions."



This is the Upasana to undertake in the second level of progress in the spiritual journey.

(Second half of sloka 33, chapter 4:

SARVAM KARMAKHILAM PARTHA JNANE' PARISAMAPTATE.

All karmas in its entirety, (meaning for the word kritante' used in this sloka) O Partha, culminate in knowledge.)

One has to undertake actions in the spirit of "Pancha Maha Yajnas" (Deva yajna, Rishi Yajna, Pitru Yajna, Nara Yajna and Bhoota Yajnas - chapter 3) and undertake all activities that fulfil the above five requisites.

The student who wants to enter into college has to complete the studies necessary, prove his/her competency and only then, will he/she be eligible to enter the college.

In this instance, entering the college is like completing karma kanda and entering upasana kanda.

The world we live in is to be considered as the training ground of the Jivatman who has lost his identity as the Atman and in the process become attached to the mind/intellect. He would like to regain his lost memory and unite with the Atman (Which he is at all times).

As Jivatman he has to learn the lesson of life,  
conduct the five yajnas,  
get eligibility to go beyond the stage of "karma" and  
reach the stage of "Upasana".  
This is the first goal for him.

One more explanation for the word "Kritante":

The "end of all actions" as a result of the destruction of all stored vasanas (vasana kshaya).  
By this process the seeker will be eligible for Moksha.

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।  
विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥ 14॥

adhiṣṭhānam tathā kartā karaṇam cha pṛithag-vidham |  
vividhāśh cha pṛithak cheṣṭā daivam chaivātra pañchamam ||14||

**Sloka 14**

**ADHISHTHANAM TATHA KARTA KARANAM CHA PRITHAG-VIDHAM  
VIVIDHASH CHA PRITHAK CHESHTA DAIVAM CHAIVATRA PANCHAMAM**

**In the accomplishment of karma, the five factors are: (1) the seat (body); (2) the doer; (3) various senses; (4) various functions; (5) presiding deity.**

adhishtanam: the seat/body;  
tatha: also;  
karta: doer;  
karanam: the senses;  
cha: and;

pritagvidham: various;  
vividhaha: various;  
prithak: different;  
chesta: functions;  
daivam: the presiding deity;  
cha: and;  
eva: even;  
atra: here;  
panchamam: the fifth.

What is involved in an action?

We conduct actions at all times, but alas,

We do not really understand as to what is involved in the act of “Action”.

Sri Krishna has given us an anatomical description of the various agencies involved in “action.” It is like a family unit, where every member has a role to play for the smooth running of the unit.

1) Adhishtanam: The seat/Body: without the body no action is possible.

It is the reception/Ashraya in which everything for the conduct of actions is contained. In the conduct of actions, it is the initial condition to be fulfilled. The body with all the various anatomical parts is the central unit, it is like an office building where different sections of the office are located. The various experiences like happiness, sorrow; attachments and aversions; friendship and hatred cannot be expressed without the medium of the body.

2) Karta: The agent/doer: it is “The performer” of actions.

Each body is an individual unit and the agency that constitutes “the individual” has to be the person with a name, form and position in the society.

That which feels the experiences is the agent.

Karta is the ego and the agent.

3) Karanam: The various senses: the senses, mind and the intellect are the instruments for action by the karta.

The five sense organs that receive the impulses and communicate with the physical world around constitute the various senses.

The mind (which is considered as the sixth sense and the band master for the senses) makes it possible for the action to be conducted.

4) Prithak chestasha: various bodily interactions that result in action.

Various bodily interactions:

The five organs of action that make it possible to conduct the actions.

The five Pranas (Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana and Udana - sloka 14, chapter 15) give the energy for the various bodily actions (circulation, respiration, digestion, excretion, reproduction).

5) The presiding deity: each sense organ has a named deity for it to function (like the sun for eyes).

Each of these devas that preside over each sense organ not only bless the organ to function in its speciality but also make a note of actions conducted with that sense organ from birth to death.

The Atman/soul which has identified with the mind/intellect equipment and become the jivatman, is the presiding deity. Without the blessings of the presiding deity the results will not become possible.

Let us take the example of farming. Farming is an action/karma and one can associate these five constituents in it. They are:

The seat/body for the farming is the mother earth,

The agent/doer is the farmer,

The various senses are the farm workers,

Various functions are the actions undertaken from tilling the land, sowing the seeds, protecting the seedlings as they sprout, collecting the produce and taking it to the market for consumption by the public,

The presiding deity is “Parabrahman” who has organised the system of seasons and the pancha maha bhootas (earth, water, fire, air and the space) on which the farmer depends for the crops.

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।

न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः ॥15॥

śharīra-vāṅ-manobhir yat karma prārabhate naraḥ ।

nyāyyaṁ vā viparītaṁ vā pañchaite tasya hetavaḥ ॥15॥

### Sloka 15

**SHARIRA-VAN-MANOBHIR YAT KARMA PRARABHATE NARAH  
NYAYYAM VA VIPARITAM VA PANCHAITE TASYA HETAVAH**

**Whatever action a man performs with his body, mind and speech, whether right or opposite, these five are the causes.**

shareera: body;

vak: speech;

mano’bhihi : by mind;

yat: whatever;

karma: actions;

prarabhate’: performs;

naraha: man;

nyayyam: right;

vaa: or;

vipareetam: opposite/extreme;

vaa: or;

panchai’tet: these five;

tasya: it’s;

hetavaha: causes.

Whatever actions we conduct, are conducted through the mediums of Mind, Body and Speech or a combination of these.

The purity of these three has been discussed in slokas 14, 15 and 16 of the 17th chapter.

The actions in relation to the mind, should be classified as the precursor for all actions. No actions can be performed without thoughts and the mind is the store house of these thought imprints.

Mind is said to be the seat for subtle actions (thoughts and feelings) and the physical body the seat for gross actions. Gross manifestations of the subtle thoughts are the words and deeds expressed by the body/speech.

One can conduct good or bad actions, which can be good or bad for the self, good or bad for others or good or bad for nature. But whatever the type of action, there will be the five factors (the seat, the doer, the various senses, the various functions and the presiding deity) which have been discussed in the last verse.

We can make this body a “Dharma kshetra” (abode of righteousness) or “Adharma Kshetra” (abode of unrighteousness) by our actions. Reading the sacred text is to convert the field into “Kurukshetra” and undertake a holy war to uphold righteousness.

The car which needs fuel to run can be used for both good and bad purposes and it all depends upon the driver of the car. An ambulance can take a seriously ill patient to the hospital, a fire engine can reach the place to tackle the fire and save lives. On the other hand it can be used to deliberately injure people or properties.

If we can look at,  
The fuel as the energy to run the car,  
The car as the body,  
Driver as the mind,  
We can understand the comparison between the mechanical vehicle and the human body.

Of course it cannot be a complete comparison.

This is because,

The fuel for the car gets exhausted after some time, because it has been used as the power to drive,  
Whereas the energy from the Atman is with us from birth to death and it does not get burnt out after conduct of any actions.

Just as the car can be used for both good and bad purposes,

Our body can also be used by us for conduct of both good and bad actions.

It is up to us to realise this truth and see that we do not conduct actions contrary to the sastras and harm others.

तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः ।  
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥16॥

tatraivam sati kartaram ātmānam kevalam tu yah |  
paśhyaty akṛita-buddhitvān na sa paśhyati durmatih ||16||

**Sloka 16**

**TATRAIVAM SATI KARTARAM ATMANAM KEVALAM TU YAH  
PASHYATY AKRITA-BUDDHITVAN NA SA PASHYATI DURMATIH**

**This being so, whoever on account of untrained understanding, thinks the Self alone as the doer, he of perverted intelligence, sees not.**

tatra: there;  
evam: thus;  
sati: being;  
kartaram; doer/as the agent;  
Atmaanam: Self;  
kevalam: alone;  
tu: verily;  
yaha: who;  
pashyati: sees;  
akruta buddhitvaan: owing to untrained understanding;  
na: not;  
sah: he;  
pashyati: sees;  
durmatih: of perverted intelligence.

Those who attribute all actions to the Atman within are of wrong understanding, the Lord is re-iterating. It has been made clear so many times already that the Atman as such is only a witness to all actions and not the doer. There are bound to be mistakes and painful results from some actions we conduct and there are bound to be some good results from other actions.

The only factors that contribute to “action” are the five factors given in sloka 14. Mistakes/faults in any of the five, bring about wrong results that may be painful to withstand.

Why should this happen?

We have not read or understood the scriptures.

Indirectly the Lord is advocating us all to read the scriptures and/or listen to the scriptures from experts. He wants us to find the guru to lead us in the right path.

Not following this advice and blaming the Lord amounts to “Durmati” or “perverted intelligence.”

Please refer to sloka 19, chapter 2 (YA ENAM VETTI HANTARAM ...) and see the similarity between the two.

यस्य नाहङ् कृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।  
हत्वाऽपि स इमाल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥17॥

yasya nāhankṛito bhāvo buddhir yasya na lipyate |  
hatvā ‘pi sa imāl lokān na hanti na nibadhyate ॥17॥

### Sloka 17

**YASYA NAHANKRITO BHAVO BUDDHIR YASYA NA LIPYATE  
HATVA ‘PI SA IMAL LOKAN NA HANTI NA NIBADHYATE**

**He, who is free from the egoistic notion of “I am the doer”, whose intelligence is not tainted, though having slain all the beings, he does not slay nor is he bound.**

yasya: who;  
na: not;

ahamkruto: I am the doer;  
bhavo: notion;  
buddhir: intelligence;  
yasya: whose;  
lipyate: tainted;  
na: not;  
hatva: having killed;  
api: even;  
sah: he;  
iman: these;  
lokan: people (in the world);  
na: not;  
hanti: slay;  
na: not;  
nibhadyate: is bound.

Refer to second half of the sloka 19, chapter 2. (UBHOU TOU NA VIJANEETO ...)

This sloka is to be looked upon as a word of advice to Arjuna concerning his action in the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Arjuna was hesitant to fight the respected elders and did not feel justified to fight and kill the soldiers in the opposite camp. The Lord is indirectly saying, that his intelligence is tainted with impurity/wrong notions about the results of actions.

As has been discussed before, the main criterion for the conduct of correct action is: absence of the sense of doer-ship and freedom from attachment to the objective world.

When actions are performed in the sense of duty that fits in with the sastric injunctions there is no binding of either sin/punya from such actions. To dispel the despondency in Arjuna, Krishna is reiterating the facts about dharmic actions.

The same rule applies to the battlefield in our mind. We should be ready to kill the impure thoughts to make progress in the spiritual path. We should undertake all obligatory duties with no sense of “doer-ship” and with no desire for fruits of action. Atma Jnana is not just in realising and respecting the Atman within but in recognising the same Atman in all forms of life and nature.

On this stage called “life”, we are all actors and are allocated particular roles and such roles should be conducted with no sense of “I”.

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।  
करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥18॥

jñānam jñeyam pariñātā tri-vidhā karma-chodanā |  
karaṇam karma karteti tri-vidhaḥ karma-saṅgrahaḥ ॥18॥

**Sloka 18**

**JNANAM JNEYAM PARIJNATA TRI-VIDHA KARMA-CHODANA  
KARANAM KARMA KARTETI TRI-VIDHAH KARMA-SANGRAHAH**

**Knowledge, the Knowable and the Knower form the threefold impulse to action. The organs, the action, the agent form the threefold basis of action.**

jnanam: knowledge;  
jneyam: knowable;  
parijnata: knower;  
trividha: threefold;  
karma: action;  
chodanaa: impulse;  
karanam: the organs;  
karma: action;  
karta: the agent;  
iti: thus;  
trividhaha: threefold;  
karma: action;  
sangrahaha: basis of.

Karma chodana: The impulse to action is nothing but that which makes us act/conduct an action. This is the basis for any action. If we analyse on this basis we will understand the first half of the sloka.

a) Parijnata: knower: desires lead to actions.

It is us who harbour the desires. In any action conducted, we, the individuals are “Parijnata” (knowers of the actions referred to in this sloka).

b) Jneyam: Knowable: What is that we would like to know?

We would like to know about the objects in the world. Some of these objects become temptations and the temptations make us conduct actions. The world around us is about the knowable objects that tempt us and make us develop desires.

This is “the Knowable” (Jneyam) aspect of the impulse for action. We act forced by the strength of desires entertained by us.

c) Jnanam: The knowledge.

When we get the object we desire to possess and experience the pleasure/pain arising from it, the impression of that experience stays in the memory. This, the experience is “The Knowledge” (Jnanam) referred to in this sloka.

In summary, we, (Parijnata) can say that we act by the strength of desires/temptations (Jneyam) from the stored memories of experiences (jnanam).

Knowledge (Jnanam): memories, experiences.

Known (Jneyam): experiences gained from contact with the objects.

Knower (Parijnata): experiencer of desires/temptations.

In Vedantic terms the word used by the masters to bring all the three words together is “Triputi” (triad of knowledge). This in brief is “Karma Chodana” (Impulse for action).

The threefold basis for action (karma sangraha):

This is the theme of the second half of the sloka.

When there is an impulse for action there should be a field to act in and this is Karma Sangraha. This is also three fold.

These are:

a) Karta: Parijnata. The knower of the experience of desires, enters into the field of activity to conduct the action to fulfil the desires. This is the ego which becomes the agent.

b) Karma: The reaction to fulfil the desire to get the fruits (of such actions) becomes the action which is “karma”.

c) Karanam: To conduct the actions the mind/intellect equipment uses the organs of action (karmendriyas). These constitute the “Karanam.”

The instruments of action: Karanam;

Reaction: Karma;

Agent: ego - Karta.

Jnanam, Jneyam and Parijnata constitute the “triad of knowledge” and Karta, Karma and Karanam constitute the “triad of karma”.

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।

प्रोच्यते गुणसङ्ख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ॥19॥

jñānam karma cha kartā cha tridhaiva guṇa-bhedataḥ ।

prochyate guṇa-saṅkhyāne yathāvach chṛiṇu tāny api ॥19॥

**Sloka 19**

**JNANAM KARMA CHA KARTA CHA TRIDHAIVA GUNA-BHEDATAH  
PROCHYATE GUNA-SANKHYANE YATHAVACH CHRINU TANY API**

**Knowledge, Action and Actor are declared to be three-fold according to the gunas in Samkhya Sastras. Hear them as they have been declared.**

jnanam: knowledge;

karma: action;

cha: and;

karta: actor/agent;

tridha: of three kinds;

eva: only;

gunabhedataha: according to the distinction of the gunas;

prochyate: said/declared;

gunasamkhyena: in the science of the gunas;

yathavat: duly;

shrunu: hear;

taani: them;

api: also.



The subject matter taken up in the last sloka is now going to be explained in detail by the Lord. He says that, based on the gunas, Knowledge (Jnana), Action (Karma) and Actor (Karta) can be of three types.

We have had a detailed discussion on the gunas in chapter 14 and 17.

This description given by the Lord is based on “Sankhya Sastra”. The author of this philosophy is “Kapila Vasudeva” who is considered to be an incarnation of Lord Visnu.

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते |  
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ||20||

sarva-bhūteṣhu yenaikam bhāvam avyayam ikṣhate |  
avibhaktam vibhakteṣhu taj jñānam viddhi sātṭvikam ||20||

### Sloka 20

**SARVA-BHUTESHU YENAIKAM BHAVAM AVYAYAM IKSHATE  
AVIBHAKTAM VIBHAKTESHU TAJ JNANAM VIDDHI SATTVIKAM**

**In all beings separated into different categories, that knowledge which sees “ One inseparable reality”, know that to be Satvika Jnana.**

sarvabhooteshu: in all beings;  
yena: by which;  
ekam: one;  
bhavam: reality;  
avyayam: indestructible;  
ikshate: sees;  
avibhaktam: inseparable;  
vibhakteshu: in the separated;  
tat: that;  
jnanam: knowledge;  
viddhi: know;  
satvikam: satvika.

This sloka is about the description of what constitutes “Satvika (pure) Jnana”.

Jnana (knowledge) can be of three types: Satvika, Rajasika and Tamasika and there can be any combination of these three.

“Sarva bhooteshu yenaikam”: In the spiritual context “Jnana” (knowledge) is all about the existence of “The One” (and the only One) in all beings, without which the beings have no existence. Broadly speaking this is all about “unity in diversity”. The physical world constituted of a multitude of forms of life, is said to be alive because of the “Life energy” (Consciousness) which is flowing in each of them. Irrespective of the religion, sex, caste, creed etc. it is the same “Life energy” that is flowing in all.

There is a subtle message in this important expression used by the Lord.  
It is:

“Please do not look down upon others who are weaker than you and who are different to you.”  
At the same time, please do not feel inferior/weak/poor etc. Remember that the God’s energy is inside you too. Please make use of this inner strength to sustain yourself and do the God’s work to the best of your ability”.

When the same life energy is flowing in all, the way to interact with anyone is by showing “Love, affection and respect”.

It is a reminder for us all not to harm (ahimsa) any form of life either physically or verbally.  
This is the attitude of the men/women of satvika temperament.

On the other hand hurting others (himsa) is hurting the God residing within.

Avyayam: The divine energy within and all round is indestructible. (sloka 23, chapter 2 - NAINAM CHINDANTI SHASTRANI ...) This is satvika knowledge.

Each one of us is “Sat, Chit, Ananda (Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss) with a name and form”. Name and forms are different but the “Sat, Chit, Ananda” is common to all.

Avibhaktam: The divine energy is indivisible.

The nearest example one can use to understand the Supreme Parabrahman is the “Space”. The innumerable buildings that occupy the space appear as though they are (apparently) dividing the space. But in reality the buildings are only superimpositions on the space and when the buildings are demolished the space they occupied merges with the universal space. One cannot divide the “Space”.

The Atman is unlimited like the Space. The Space holds the entire universe in it but nothing can contain the Space. It contains everything but is not tainted by anything. It is the subtlest of the five gross elements. Hence the Vedanta compares the Atman to the Space.

Similarly the life force inside each one of us is the same indivisible divine life energy.

This knowledge comes from making proper use of the intellectual eye of wisdom.  
This is “Satvika Jnana” which is nothing but “Brahma Jnana” (Atma Jnana).

Seeing the ocean in the waves is knowledge and seeing the one string that holds the various flowers/gems on a chain is knowledge (Chapter 7, sloka 7 - MATTA PARATARAM NANYA ...).  
Looking at the quality of an object is far superior than looking at its form, shape or other physical features.

The highest level of perception is when one can see the same life energy in all and realise that it is the foundation for all.

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्विधान् ।  
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥21॥

prithaktvena tu yaj jñānam nānā-bhāvān pṛithag-vidhān |  
vetti sarveṣhu bhūteṣhu taj jñānam viddhi rajasam ॥21॥

**Sloka 21**

## PRITHAKTVENA TU YAJ JNANAM NANA-BHAVAN PRITHAG-VIDHAN VETTI SARVESHU BHUTESHU TAJ JNANAM VIDDI RAJASAM

**That knowledge by which one sees in all beings various entities of different kinds as different from one another, know that knowledge as rajasika.**

prithaktvena: as different from one another;  
tu: but;  
yat: which;  
jnanam: knowledge;  
naana: different;  
bhavaan: entities;  
prithagvidhaan: of distinct kinds (different from one another);  
vetti: knows;  
sarveshu: in all;  
bhooteshu: in beings;  
tat: that;  
jnanam: knowledge;  
viddhi: know;  
rajasam: rajasika.

In contrast to the satvika knowledge, men of rajasika knowledge do not have the vision of “Universal oneness.” This applies to the majority of us because we look not at “Sat, Chit, Ananda” (Truth, Knowledge, Bliss) but look at “nama, roopa” (Name, form). Name and form take priority over the acceptance of the presence of divinity within.

The social class as “Brahman, Kshatriya, Vysya, Sudra” by the Hindus, “Class 1,2,3,4 and 5” by the western society is because of this outlook. (No doubt it is a system that evolved taking into consideration the professional capacity of the individual and has a place in helping society to meet its needs but this should not be the case for the spiritual seeker). The problem is not just looking at the people as different but in treating them differently.

Instead of the love and respect to all individuals we may show disrespect. We forget that by doing so we hurt the Lord within. Sloka 18, chapter 5 is on the same theme. (VIDYA VINAYA SAMPANNE BRAHMANE’ GAVI HASTINI)

The political unrest we are witnessing of late is due to the predominance of this rajasika knowledge in many. We are seeing unrest because of differences in religion, race, nationality, political identity etc.

Sri Ramakrishna says:  
Seeing unity is knowledge and seeing diversity is ignorance.

यत्तु कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन्कार्ये सक्तमहैतुकम् ।  
अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च ततामसमुदाहृतम् ॥२२॥

yat tu kṛitsna-vad ekasmin kārye saktam ahaitukam ।  
atattvārtha-vad alpaṁ cha tat tāmasam udāhṛitam ॥२२॥

## Sloka 22

### YAT TU KRITSNA-VAD EKASMIN KARYE SAKTAM AHAITUKAM ATATTVARTHA-VAD ALPAM CHA TAT TAMASAM UDAHRITAM

**“That knowledge by which one clings to one thing only as if it were the whole, without reason, without foundation in truth, and trivial”, that is declared to be tamasika.**

yat: which;  
tu: but;  
kritsnavat: as if it were the whole;  
ekasmin: one single;  
karye: thing;  
saktam: attached;  
ahaitukam: without reason;  
atattvarthavad: without foundation in truth;  
alpam: trivial;  
cha: and;  
tat: that;  
tamasam: tamasika;  
udahrutam: is declared.

The two important words in this sloka are:  
Ahaitukam and atattvarthavad. These stand out prominently in the tamasika.

It is accepted fact that there should be a proper and clear reason for any action and the reasoning has to have the foundation of “Truth”. The Vedas are the foundation for “Truth” and are based on reason. The great masters Shankaracharya, Ramanujacharya and Madhvacharya have written “Brahma Sutras” (texts that systematically expound Vedanta philosophy) which are logical explanations of the Vedas.

There should be a strong foundation of the “Truth” (as enshrined in the Vedas/Upanisads) in any action.

This is missing in the tamasika.

The tamasika is fanatical in his faith and devotion too. His attitude is:  
“Whatever I hold on to and see is right and everything else is wrong.”

The satvika sees the “One in all”;

The Rajasika sees multiplicity and difference but at least respects difference;

The tamasika because of ego and ignorance does not respect others or himself and sees only his own restricted point of view.

What tamasika holds on to is very trivial but for him it is the whole and nothing else. By being blindly attached to wealth and possessions, he gets deluded by the wealth and does not see anything else. He does not realise that health, wealth, position in society are all limited by time and sooner or later they part with him or he has to part with them. For him the entire world is for his pleasures and no one can question his authority/superiority.

The vision that comes by making use of the eye of wisdom (satvika) is broad,

The vision relying only on the mind is limited (rajasika) and

The vision of the tamasika, is only that which comes from the five sense organs. He does not make use of either his mind or the intellect to analyse what is seen. Hence, the Lord says that his vision is “Alpam”.

Holding the view that all religions are but varied manifestations, of expressions of love and faith to the one Supreme Parabrahman is satvika,  
Recognising the different religions/sects/denominations and seeing the God with so many different names in each is rajasika.  
Not recognising anything else but holding on to the view, “what I hold on to and what I see is right and everything else is wrong” is tamasika.

नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।  
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यतत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥23॥

niyatam saṅga-rahitam arāga-dveṣhataḥ kṛitam |  
aphala-prepsunā karma yat tat sāttvikam uchyate ॥23॥

**Sloka 23**

**NIYATAM SANGA-RAHITAM ARAGA-DVESHATAH KRITAM  
APHALA-PREPSUNA KARMA YAT TAT SATTVIKAM UCHYATE**

**Ordained by the sastras, the action, performed by one not desirous of the fruit, without attachment, free from desire and aversion is called “satvika karma.”**

niyatam: ordained by the sastras;  
sangarahitam: without attachment;  
araga dveshataha: free from desire and hatred;  
krutam: is performed;  
aphala prepsuna: by one not desirous of the fruit;  
karma: action;  
yat: which;  
tat: that;  
satvika: satvika.  
uchyate: is said.

After describing the “Jnana” and dividing it into three types, we are now going to be led to the subject of “Karma”. The Lord is taking the path of describing these in relation to the three inherent gunas.

The entire preaching to us, the humans with an intellect, is on the topic of Karma. We have had an elaborate description of the topic several times already. This is because it is only through correct action that the life in this universe can be sustained with “Peace and Prosperity”.

Failure to follow the dictates of “correct action” leads to unrest among the citizens of this universe.

For this, there is a need for one set of rules which can remain the correct rules at all times. Our Vedas stressing on the “Eternal Dharma” as the basis for any action to be conducted either by individuals or by society, prioritise this and stress on “Karma based on Dharma”.

The Vedas are to lead us in the path to Moksha by supplying the knowledge on “Righteous action” and the Puranas are to lead us towards Moksha by the means of “Bhakti” (devotion).

Niyatam karma: ordained duties. (Refer sloka 8, chapter 3).

The duties of men vary according to their station in life. Arjuna had a duty to be an efficient warrior and uphold dharma. He had to do so with zeal and enthusiasm. Failure to do so was his fault. But he gets good marks because he asked for clarification on what constituted “Niyata Karma.”

Sangarahitam (free from attachment) and Aphala prepsuna (not desiring fruits of actions).

Every action has a result but the attitude towards the fruits that are going to come, is more important. If the feeling is “it is mine and mine only to enjoy”, selfishness predominates. Where should the results go?

We have already dealt with it and the answer is “Sri Krishnarpanamastu” (offer only the results of good actions at the feet of the Lord and withstand the painful results of wrong actions). With this frame of mind, the mind should not be allowed to daydream, imagining life with the fruits of action. Hence, the command “Sangarahitam.”

Work has to be done for the sake of work and not with attachment to the work (results of actions).

Aragadvesham: There should not be desire or hatred in the action conducted.

Desires breed selfishness and this leads to restlessness in activities. As long as it is “Niyata karma” ordained by the sastras, the work undertaken must be carried out with zeal and enthusiasm. The past including past births has a bearing on what life is today. Good actions today will bring good fruits tomorrow.

We have been given the four way path for the conduct of any work.

- 1) No sense of doership,
- 2) With no love or hatred to the job but with zeal of “one’s own duty”,
- 3) Without looking for the fruits of action,
- 4) As per the sastras.

This is “Satvika karma”.

Why should one perform Satvika Karma?

- 1) It will purify the mind of the existing vasanas.
- 2) It will not lead to accumulation of new vasanas.
- 3) It confers real (satvic) knowledge.
- 4) It leads to Moksha.
- 5) It results in Universal Welfare.

So, let us learn the art of saying:

We are blessed to have had an opportunity to do this work and  
Not show pride, by saying “we did it.”

Our own body is an example to learn from but we do not take notice of its workings. All parts of the body conduct their ordained duties to the best of their capacity and thereby work at keeping the body healthy. Every part of the body has as important role to play towards the welfare of the body.

यत्तुङ्कामेप्सुना कर्म साहङ्कारेण वा पुनः ।

क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम् ॥24॥

yat tu kāmepsunā karma sāhankāreṇa vā punaḥ ।

**Sloka 24**

**YAT TU KAMEPSUNA KARMA SAHANKARENA VA PUNAH  
KRIYATE BAHULAYASAM TAD RAJASAM UDAHRITAM**

**That action which is done by one longing for its results, with egotism, or with great effort is considered rajasika.**

yat: which/that;  
tu: that;  
kamepsuna: longing for the desires;  
karma: action;  
sahankarena: with egotism;  
vaa: or;  
punaha: again;  
kriyate: is performed;  
bahulayasam: with great effort;  
tat: that;  
rajasam: rajasika  
udahrutam: is declared.

What constitutes rajasika action?

- a) That action which is carried out with craving for the results;
- b) Conducted with ego;
- c) Feeling/attitude of great effort put in the work.

The salient feature that stands prominently in rajasic action:

- a) Absence of “Oneness” (part of unit, part of society etc);
- b) Predominance of “I” ness in actions.

The best example one can give for this nature is “politicians.” One can see every aspect of the rajasic tendency in them.

Let us not forget that life is not just in achieving a particular position (which is limited by time, space and causation) but in experiencing the “Peace” within oneself. This can come only to he, who has a pure “Satvic” mind.

While it is true that the rajasic conduct actions and crave for the results of such actions, it does not mean that there should not be any desire in actions.

There are basically two kinds of desires:

- a) Desire for spiritual progress and desire for welfare of others;
- b) Worldly desires for personal pleasures.

It is the second type of desires that belong to the rajasic category and are to be avoided. For all spiritual seekers the first type of desire is a must and will help them to make spiritual progress.

Sloka 28, chapter 4: on “Dravya Yajna”:

Offering wealth is a form of yajna approved by the sastras. Acquiring wealth by honest means and utilising it for public welfare is one of the tools for spiritual progress. Having a desire to earn for the

purpose of “Dravya Yajna” is satvic and should be encouraged, provided the wealth is earned by righteous means.

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनपेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।  
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यततामसमुच्यते ॥25॥

anubandham kshayam hinsam anapekshya cha paurusham |  
mohad arabhyate karma yat tat tamasam uchyate ॥25॥

**Sloka 25**

**ANUBANDHAM KSHAYAM HINSAM ANAPEKSHYA CHA PAURUSHAM  
MOHAD ARABHYATE KARMA YAT TAT TAMASAM UCHYATE**

**That action which is undertaken from delusion without regard for the consequence, loss, injury and ability is declared tamasic.**

anubandham: consequence of action;  
kshayam: loss;  
himsa: injury;  
anapeskha: without expecting/regard for;  
paurusham: one’s own ability;  
cha: and;  
mohad: from delusion;  
arabhyate: start, undertaken;  
karma: action;  
yat: whatever;  
tat: that;  
tamasam: tamasika;  
uchyate: is declared.

Action undertaken from delusion:

To start off, the delusion is that which makes the individual forget his/her divine status. It is that which makes him/her forget that they are really the Atman/spark of divinity and get attached to the physical body and the world around.

Next in order, the delusion is that which makes the individual forget his/her position in the society. This could be the result of alcohol, drugs etc. A momentary lapse is enough to ruin the life/career of the individual.

We, as humans are expected to behave like humans with divine instinct and not with animal instinct. The Lord has given us the intellect to reason out and undertake correct actions and to realise the dangers/problems from the conduct of wrong actions.

From the spiritual point of view the goal of life is Moksha, which is gained by acquiring knowledge and implementing the actions to be conducted according to the dictates of the Sastras.



Deluded by the stored vasanas the individual forgets the true goal of life and falls prey to the sense objects. He falls down to lower and lower levels of existence.

He who is rajasic and holds a respectable position in the society, may fall prey to the power of ego due to the position achieved. He may even fall down to the tamasic level and become addicted to drugs/alcohol or gambling etc. Irrespective of his position in society, he takes actions under the influence of maya and suffers the consequences. Loss of money, honour, illness or injury could be the irrevocable losses derived from such actions.

There are those who go out to celebrate success and get very drunk. They get deluded and forget who they are and what their duty is. They suffer the consequences.

Without regard for the consequences:  
They are not aware of what dangers lie ahead from such actions.  
They do not foresee the dangers ahead from such actions.

There are instances where in the spur of the moment people take decisions like giving notice of resignation from work, without considering the consequences for them and for their family. A moment of indiscretion may ruin the life of an individual.

Himsam:  
It can be injury to oneself, injury to close associates, injury to nature, injury to the state etc.

We have examples of instances where mass rioting takes place. People damage public property. The losses that come out of such actions are to be considered as “Himsa.”

What does the Lord want us to do?  
Before doing any work, The Lord wants us to:  
Think what we are/who we are,  
Think where we are and what our position in the society is,  
Think of all the possible consequences of actions undertaken in haste.

The rajasika knows that he is doing a wrong act but still wants to do it,  
Whereas, the tamasika does not even know that what he is doing is wrong.

मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।  
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥26॥

mukta-saṅgo 'naham-vādī dhṛity-utsāha-samanvitaḥ |  
siddhy-asiddhyor nirvikāraḥ kartā sāttvika uchyate ॥26॥

**Sloka 26**

**MUKTA-SANGO 'NAHAM-VADI DHRITY-UTSAHA-SAMANVITAH  
SIDDHY-ASIDDHYOR NIRVIKARAH KARTA SATTVIKA UCHYATE**

**An agent who is free from attachment, non-egoistical, endowed with firmness and enthusiasm,  
and unaffected by success or failure is called satvika.**

muktasanga: who is free from attachment;  
anahamavaadi: non-egoistic;  
dhruti utsaha samanvitaha: endowed with firmness and enthusiasm;  
siddhi asiddhiyor: in success or failure;  
nirvikaraha: unaffected;  
karta: agent;  
satvika: satvic;  
uchyate: is called.

What constitutes “an action”?

- a) Knowledge about the action (what is to be done),
- b) Actual action which is going to be conducted and
- c) Feeling behind the action (what is to be done).

The feeling behind actions can be satvika, rajasika and tamasika.  
This sloka is about satvika feeling.

This feeling depends upon which aspect of the body is involved in the action.  
If the divinity is projected in actions the feeling will be satvic.  
If the jivatman is projected with ego it becomes rajasic and  
If there is no expression of either Atman or jivatman it becomes tamasic.

The agent who conducts action is the “karta.”  
The Satvika karta expresses the divinity in actions.

Four qualities highlight the satvika nature. They are:

- a) Muktasanga: free from attachment.

It is “detachment in attachment”. Really speaking, it is “detachment in attachment to the body/physical world”.

Without worrying about the past and concentrating on the present, he who is free from attachment, will carry out his actions and at the same time will not be attached to the fruits of such actions that are going to come (future). He would rather be a slave to the master within (divinity) and not to the sense organs which bring in the pleasures of the world. He views the body as, “The temple of God” and acts as the servant of the Lord.

- b) Anahamvadi: Satvika karta does not have the sense of individuality in his actions, he is constantly established in the vision of universal “one-ness.”

The surgeon who conducts an extraordinary feat, performing the best surgery to a patient will be satvic if he realises the hand of God within and does not attribute the success to his cleverness.

- c) Dhrutyutsaha samanvitaha: endowed with firmness and enthusiasm. The firmness expressed is “Dhruti.”

With determination one is able to overcome the obstacles in the path and achieve success. Every part of the action one conducts will demonstrate how much enthusiasm (utsaha) he has in the work.

This means tireless self-application in the field of work.

We can say that Mahatma Gandhi fits in with this quality. He was determined and enthusiastic in doing his very best to get freedom for millions of Indians. His enthusiasm was so great that it encouraged millions to strive for the same goal.

d) Siddhya sidhyo nirvikara: not affected by the success or failure.

We are only agents to fulfil our role in this world and we should do so with the feeling that all the results are the Grace of the Lord.

When an archer shoots an arrow on to a target:

If the arrow fails to reach the target, it is not the fault of the arrow,  
When the arrow reaches the target the credit does not go to the arrow.  
We should act as though we are the arrows in the hands of the Lord.

Quote: George Washington:

“When I conduct an action I do so with the feeling that everything depends on me. When I complete the work I sit back with the feeling that the result of the work depends totally on His Grace.”  
This is true satvika feeling behind any action.

This is because the Lord takes into account our actions from the past and graces us with the results from those actions.

An excellent act from the past can result in a good result for today’s action even though today’s action may not have been totally correct.

On the other hand bad action in the past can be an important factor for the result of today’s action. Even though today’s action may have been excellent, surprise, surprise, the results can be very bad.

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।  
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥27॥

rāgī karma-phala-prepsur lubdho hinsātmako ‘śhuchiḥ |  
harṣha-śhokānvitaḥ kartā rājasaḥ parikīrtitaḥ ॥27॥

**Sloka 27**

**RAGI KARMA-PHALA-PREPSUR LUBDHO HINSATMAKO ‘SHUCHIH  
HARSHA-SHOKANVITAH KARTA RAJASAH PARIKIRTITAH**

**Passionate, desirous of the fruits of action, greedy, cruel, impure, moved by elation and despair, such an agent is called rajasika.**

raagi: passionate;  
karmaphalaprepsu: desirous of the fruits of action;  
ubdhaha: greedy;  
himsatmakaha: cruel,  
ashuchi: impure;  
harsha shokanvitaha: moved by joy and sorrow;  
kartaa: agent;  
rajasaha: rajasik;  
parikeertitaha: is called.

How does a rajasika agent move about in this world?  
6 qualities of a rajasika karta are enumerated in this sloka.

As a matter of fact the majority of us belong to this category and so it is beneficial if we can look at these qualities and see how many of them are expressed by us.

If we want to be spiritual seekers, then it is up to us to see if we can get rid of all or at least some of these qualities.

Raagi: passionate.

Karmaphala prepsu: desirous of fruits of action.

The more one aspires for the fruits of actions, the greater will be the passion to work for and get the fruit. The more we are attached to such an outlook the stronger will be our passion in those actions.

Slow and steady progress is always beneficial in any field of work, including the efforts put in to climb up the spiritual ladder.

Desire for fruits of action is bound to reduce the efficiency of the present work.

This is because:

We have accumulated so many vasanas over several births and it takes time to clear the same without adding new vasanas.

Due to the materialisation of the results of past actions (of which we have no knowledge of), every so often we do experience pain. The resulting pain hinders us from continuing to be passionate in our efforts.

Continuing to discharge our daily duties and facing equally the pains and pleasures that may come that day is the correct way to undertake any actions.

It is also a fact that one cannot keep the same enthusiasm in the work all the time.

For example: An engineer after his graduation will be so passionate to start with and wants to make use of all that he has learnt as a student. But, because he has to work for nearly 30 or 40 years of his life, he may not be able to keep up the strong passion all of this time.

Therefore it is beneficial to keep calm and peaceful in the discharge of all duties and keep the thought of the divine in the mind at all times.

Similarly, students who enter University for Higher Studies, will be very passionate in their studies initially but this passion can be hard to sustain throughout the entire course of their study.

The mythological story of Shabari in Ramayana is a good example of how to be dedicated to work without being passionate about it. Every morning she would pray for Rama to be her guest that day, look out for signs of his arrival and keep fruits ready for him to eat on arrival. She did this every day for many years. Finally, one fine day Rama came and blessed her.

Lubdha: greedy.

The more the passion and desire for the fruits of action, the greater will be the greed. Desiring quick results from actions and maximum profits is a characteristic of the rajasic.

Hybrid plantation is one such example. Even though it has helped by meeting the increasing needs of the public, the system has taken so much out of the land because the energy in the soil is rapidly utilised and it is possible that the land will become barren in course of time. The farmer who made great profits to start off will find the profits diminish rapidly.

Many a time's indigestion is due to greediness in eating too much of certain types of food.

Himsatmakō': cruel.

He who is greedy and passionate does not care about the feeling of others. To grab the maximum for himself he does not hesitate to bring pain to others. As a matter of fact the Lord says that by such actions we are hurting the "Atman" within.

Asuchi: impure.

As a result of the above characters, more and more rajasic vasanas accumulate in the mind and this makes the individual impure in the spiritual sense.

Harsha shokanvitaha: moved by joys and sorrows.

Greed, passion, desire for fruits of action bring in joys and sorrows.  
Expectation of profits from work and not getting the profits expected, makes one get depressed.  
Acquiring profits as expected brings in joy that clouds the mind and the efficiency of work gets weaker.

The Sense of balance is lost and this eventually results in harm to himself and to others who depend on him.

It is time for us to be:

Pure,

Not so passionate,

Not to work expecting the fruits of action,

Not to be greedy,

Not to hurt others,

And to develop equanimity towards the results of actions: sloka 38, chapter 2: sukha dukhe same' krutva ....

अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।  
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥28॥

ayuktaḥ prākṛitaḥ stabdhaḥ śhaṭho naiṣkṛitiko 'lasaḥ |  
viṣhādī dīrgha-sūtrī cha kartā tāmasa uchyate ॥28॥

**Sloka 28**

**AYUKTAH PRAKRITAH STABDHAH SHATHO NAISHKRITIKO 'LASAH  
VISHADI DIRGHA-SUTRI CHA KARTA TAMASA UCHYATE**

**One who is unsteady, vulgar, obstinate, cheating, malicious, lazy, despondent, procrastinating,  
such an agent is said to be tamasika.**

ayuktaha: unsteady;

prakrutaha: vulgar;

stabdhaha: obstinate;

shato': cheating;  
naishkrutikaha: malicious;  
alasaaha: lazy;  
vishadee: procrastinating;  
cha: and;  
karta: agent;  
tamasa: tamasic;  
uchyate: is said.

Ignorance of "Truth" is the character of "Tamasika" and we have studied about it in chapter 14. How is it expressed in daily actions?

7 characters of the tamasic agent are given to us by the Lord in this sloka.

Ayuktaha: is the opposite to "yuktaha" which means satvic in nature and centred on "Atman" and steady on the contemplation of the "Truth".

Ayuktaha is contrary to this, hence the mind is not steady on the "Truth" but unsteady and wandering in nature. Due to the absence of self-control, self-discipline and dedication they cannot concentrate on a single task for very long.

Prakrutaha: vulgar.

The intellect in tamasika fails in its control over the mind because of the animal instincts stored in the mind. Kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, matsarya are the impulses that drag the chariot of life away hither and thither unless the reasoning capacity has control over these impulses.

Such an individual does not know when to stop actions like drinking, taking drugs etc. They even use abusive, vulgar language.

Therefore, it is up to each one of us to transform the lower instincts in us and transcend to higher divine instincts.

Stabdhaha: obstinate.

Tamasika does not listen to the good advice and refuses to change their ways for the better. It is because they do not realise that what they are doing is wrong.

Shato': cheating.

By such conduct they are actually deceiving their own consciousness, their family, friends and society. To cover up their own faults/mistakes they stoop down to the level of putting the blame on others. They do not care about the results of harmful actions on others including their own loved ones.

Why all this? They do not know that they are harming themselves by such actions.

Naishkritkaha: malicious.

He who wilfully creates hatred and enmity among people.

Alasaha: lazy.

There is no enthusiasm in any of their undertakings. They do not show any enthusiasm in discharging their ordained duties. At home there is no enthusiasm to look after and fulfil the obligations to the beloved ones. They are physically awake but mentally sleepy and so lazy in all their undertakings.

Vishadee: despondent.

They are not optimists but pessimists. By over indulgence in tamasic activities like excessive sleep, drugs etc., they waste all their energy and even though it is their mistake they put the blame on others. They have no strength to carry out their obligatory duties to family/society and do not shoulder any responsibilities in their life.

Arjuna's despondency made him lose his physical strength in the middle of the battlefield. The Gita starts with the subject of Arjuna's despondency and tells us how even this can be turned to our good if we take shelter and ask for guidance from the master. Even this can become "Yoga" to unite with the Supreme. (Chapter 1)

Deerghasutree: procrastinating.

When one takes long time to start a job and once started to complete it, (a task which an average person could do so in a short time), such a person is said to be "procrastinating."

At the end, the task he completes (if he completes) is not going to be good to him or to others. He takes a long time to come to any decision.

He has no consistency in his application to what he does.

In contrast, Rajasika conducts actions for their own benefit even if it harms others.

The Satvika conducts actions which are beneficial to others and is ready to sacrifice his personal interests.

On this basis there are three types of people:

Deerghadarshi: far-sighted. Anticipating dangers and preparing to overcome them is the sign mark of "deerghadarshi".

Praktakala jnana: These realise the danger when faced with them personally and act promptly to overcome them.

Dirghasutri: does not realise the dangers, falls into the net and suffers.

(This is the description given by Bhishma in Shantiparva of Mahabharata).

Sri Ramakrishna gives the following example of:

A fisherman who puts out a net to catch the fish:

Three types of reactions are expressed by the fish in the area he selected to fish:

One group of fish just fall in the net, stay there without putting any efforts to escape,

Second group are those who are struggling to escape,

Third group are those who manage to jump out of the net or do not get caught.

First group are those who do not strive for liberation and are caught in the web of samsara,

Second group are those who are struggling to escape from the whirlpool of samsara,

Last group are those who achieve "Moksha".

We can say that the tamasika agent loses the battle of life without fighting to get out of it.

बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु ।  
प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनञ्जय ॥29॥

buddher bhedaṁ dhṛiteśh chaiva guṇatas tri-vidhaṁ śhṛiṇu |  
prochyamānam aśheṣheṇa pṛithaktvena dhanañjaya ॥29॥

Sloka 29

**BUDDHER BHEDAM DHRITESH CHAIVA GUNATAS TRI-VIDHAM SHRINU  
PROCHYAMANAM ASHESHENA PRITHAKTVENA DHANANJAYA**

**Hear O Arjuna, the threefold division of intellect and firmness according to the gunas. I will declare it to you fully and distinctly.**

buddher: of the intellect;  
bhedham: division;  
dhruteshu: of the firmness;  
cha: and;  
eva: also;  
gunatas: according to the gunas;  
trividham: threefold;  
shrunu: hear;  
prochyamanam: I will declare;  
asheshena: fully;  
pruthaktvena: distinctly.

After describing “Jnanam, Jneyam, Parijnata; karanam, karma and karta” (slokas 18, 19), Sri Krishna is telling Arjuna that he will describe the threefold division of the “Intellect and Firmness (buddhi, dhṛuti) according to the gunas”.

Conduct of actions and the determination to conduct actions form the common foundation for the knowledge, the action and the agent.

Buddhi is the intelligence to grasp what is happening/what is around us; to distinguish between the good and the bad and between right and wrong.

Dhṛuti is the capacity to keep an idea in the mind from the beginning to end (of conduct of actions). It is needed for continuous self-application in the task ahead. Also, to not let the mind wander away and get distracted from the present. It is the firmness of the mind which does not waver from its task of executing a work undertaken.

प्रवृत्तिञ्च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।  
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्तिबुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥30॥

pravṛtitiṁ cha nivṛtitiṁ cha kāryākārye bhayābhaye |  
bandhaṁ mokṣhaṁ cha yā vetti buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī ॥30॥



### Sloka 30

#### **PRAVRITTIM CHA NIVRITTIM CHA KARYAKARYE BHAYABHAYE BANDHAM MOKSHAM CHA YA VETTI BUDDHIH SA PARTHA SATTVIKI**

**O Arjuna, that buddhi which knows what is pravritti and what is nivritti, what ought and what ought not to be done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation, is satvika.**

pravruttim: path of action;  
nivruttim: path of renunciation;  
cha: and;  
karye akarye: what ought to be done and what ought not to be done;  
bhaya: fear;  
abhaya: fearlessness;  
bandham: bondage;  
moksham: liberation;  
cha: and;  
yaa: that;  
vetti: knows;  
buddhih: intellect;  
saa: that;  
satvikee: satvika.

We, the humans and the animals both have the sense organs, organs of action and the mind.

There is a difference in which the actions are executed by us the humans.

That difference is the capacity to reason and analyse what is received by the mind and to decide what is the right action to undertake.

This capacity is known as “The Intelligence” and the part of the body that has this capacity is known as “Buddhi”.

It is really not a separate organ from the mind but that part of the mind which has this capacity of reasoning.

The animals do not have this capacity, they only have a minimal capacity to reason out what is received. If we do not use this instrument of reasoning we are said to be acting like animals.

The two words “Pravritti and Nivritti” have two different meanings.

a) Actions that are to be pursued are pravritti and those that have to be avoided are nivritti.

b) Pravritti means “path of action” (karma marga) and “Nivritti” means “path of renunciation” (Moksha).

Arjuna initially did not make use of his intelligence, he wanted to withdraw from the battlefield and give the kingdom to Duryodhana. It would have been nivritti from his duty. It would not have been satvic buddhi.

But, he then used his intelligence, requested for guidance on right action from Sri Krishna, decided to take up his weapon of action and discharge his duties. This would lead him to the path of Moksha. This decision by Arjuna was satvic.

Bhaya/abhaya: “Fear and fearlessness.”

Arjuna was frightened to fight and kill Bhishma, Drona and others on the battlefield. He thought he would go to hell for such an act and suffer. He was frightened for his future.

Krishna by giving Arjuna the nectar in the form of the Bhagawadgita made Arjuna use his intelligence properly and discharge his duty to protect “Dharma”.

He dispelled the fear in Arjuna’s mind.

Arjuna then without fear fought the battle and the Pandavas won the battle.

This knowledge with which Arjuna overcame fear and became fearless to fight the battle of righteousness is “satvika.” (Refer to sloka 1, chapter 16 that describes the divine quality of “Abhaya”).

Fear is the source of evil in the path of progress to achieve final salvation. By getting attached to the various possessions in our life we develop the fear of losing those possessions.

Satvika intelligence knows what is good (Nivrutti) and lets us carry on our ordained duties without fear. It helps us to clear the stored vasanas in our mind and thereby we become eligible for Moksha.

One can say that it acts like a weed killer, killing bad instincts in us.

However it also acts like a nourisher for the intellectual buds of wisdom to blossom, these become the beautiful intellectual flowers, which are to be offered to the Lord.

The satvic intelligence is the best instrument given to us by the blessings of the Lord to take us in the path of Moksha. Without fear we must make use of it, carry out what ought to be done and refrain from what ought not to be done.

By making correct use of the instrument of intelligence the satvic person is on the path to Liberation. He knows that if he does not use it correctly he will be bound to the world and have to undergo many more births and deaths.

He clearly understands what bondage is and what Liberation is.

यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।  
अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥31॥

yayā dharmam adharmam cha kāryam chākāryam eva cha ।  
ayathāvat prajānāti buddhiḥ sā pārtha rājasī ॥31॥

**Sloka 31**

**YAYA DHARMAM ADHARMAM CHA KARYAM CHAKARYAM EVA CHA  
AYATHAVAT PRAJANATI BUDDHIH SA PARTHA RAJASI**

**O Partha, that intellect by which one understands erroneously what is dharma and adharma,  
and also what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, is rajasika.**

yaya: that;

dharmam: dharma;  
adharmam: adharma;  
cha: and;  
karya cha: ought to be done;  
akaryam eva cha: and also what ought not to be done,  
ayathavat: erroneously;  
prajanati: knows;  
buddhihi: intellect;  
saa: that;  
rajasee: rajasik.

The sastras clearly describe what is dharma and what is adharma.  
It is for us, the humans to understand it, implement it and progress spiritually;  
Or Understand it wrongly and consider what we are doing is according to dharma;  
Or Do not understand it all and do what we fancy;  
Or Do not bother to know about dharma/adharma and act according to our likes and dislikes.

The rajasic fall in the last three category of this division. Why do they act like that?

Because their rajasic nature makes them passionate, they are full of desires/hatreds and they accordingly try to justify their actions to fulfil their desires. We have the perfect examples of King Dhritarashtra and Duryodhana. Passionately attached to his sons, King Dhritarashtra felt he was justified in letting his sons act contrary to dharma to get full control of the kingdom. Passionately longing to rule over the kingdom, Duryodhana did not want to know dharma and did what his mind fancied, using his power to go for whatever he wanted. They were fully aware of what they were doing. They belonged to the rajasic category.

In a way one can say that Bhishma belonged to the rajasic group. His understanding of dharma was that he should keep the promise he gave to his father and irrespective of atrocities committed by Kauravas, fight for them, in order to maintain this promise.

Before the actual start of the war, Arjuna belonged to the rajasic category. He felt he was justified in abandoning the fight against his cousins and pursuing Sanyasa ashrama dharma. After receiving the teachings of the sacred text from Lord Krishna directly, he decided to fight and uphold dharma. Then his actions and intentions became satvic.

The word used to express this character in this sloka is: “Ayathavat”. It means “erroneously”. To get what it wants and what it likes: Rajasika forgets what is good and what is evil, does not analyse the correct (sastric) meaning of dharma and adharma and considers that fulfilling personal desires is dharma. This erroneous judgement by the mind is called “Ayathavat.”

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता ।  
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥३२॥

adharmam dharmam iti ya manyate tamasāvṛitā |  
sarvārthān viparītānś cha buddhiḥ sā pārtha tāmasī ॥३२॥

**Sloka 32**

**ADHARMAM DHARMAM ITI YA MANYATE TAMASAVRITA**

## SARVARTHAN VIPARITANSH CHA BUDDHIH SA PARTHA TAMASI

**O Partha, that intellect which, clouded by tamas, sees adharma as dharma, and all things perverted, is tamasika.**

adharmam: adharma;  
dharmam: dharma;  
iti: thus;  
yaa: which;  
manyate: thinks/sees;  
tamasa: in darkness;  
avruta: enveloped;  
sarvarthaan: all things;  
vipareetaan: perverted;  
cha: and;  
buddhihi: intellect;  
saa: that;  
tamasee: tamasika

The tamasika intellect is perverted intelligence - vipareetartham, says the Lord.

There is a popular saying: “Vinashakale vipareeta buddhi” meaning: “Perverted intelligence heralds the beginning of destruction.” Why? The intellect gets a totally wrong picture of the reality and the judgement is opposite to what the reality should be.

When we go to the fairgrounds we come across stalls where there are mirrors placed of different shapes which reflect different pictures of the same individual. Some mirrors are so wonky that there is a totally different picture reflected. When the mirror is covered with greasy material, it does not show the reflection of the person standing in front. Both the examples highlight the tamasic nature, one which is perverted and the other is totally clouded.

Instead of being the instrument of discrimination between right and wrong; dharma and adharma the intellect acts as the instrument with total indiscrimination. Such individuals consider evil as good and good as evil; they follow their own way in life and do not pay heed to the sacred texts and the learned elders. They do not believe in God and consider lust to be a pleasure to indulge in and instead of trying to understand the correct way of living, they do not bother. They consider studying the scriptures and listening to the discourses a waste of precious time and say that such acts are for the period of life when one is retired and reaching old age.

Because of this they not only ruin themselves but ruin others also. I have come across and/or heard of a few students who spend most of their precious time in playing cards/gambling till late in night, drinking alcohol excessively or indulging in drugs. These students not only do not complete their studies but also waste their precious time in life and suffer later on.

**धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः |  
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ||**

**dhṛityā yayā dhārayate manaḥ-prāṇendriya-kriyāḥ |  
yogenāvyaabhichāriṇyā dhṛitiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī ||33||**

### Sloka 33

#### **DHRITYA YAYA DHARAYATE MANAH-PRANENDRIYA-KRIYAH YOGENAVYABHICHARINYA DHRITIH SA PARTHA SATTVIKI**

**O Partha, that unswerving fortitude which, by Yoga, holds the functions of the mind, prana and bodily organs is called satvika.**

dhrutya: firmly;  
yayaa: which;  
dharayate: holds;  
manaha: the mind;  
pranendriya kriyaha: functions of prana and bodily organs;  
yogena: by yoga;  
avyabhicharena: unswerving;  
dhrutihi: fortitude;  
saa: that.

“Dhriti” - will/resolution.

It is the capacity by which one undertakes a task, by keeping an ideal constantly in mind and pursuing it to completion, without allowing any obstacles to hinder progress. In other words it is simply a constant application on an idea/action without being disturbed / getting side tracked by other ideas/actions.

We have studied so far that there are three major forces within us to face the battle of life. These are: the mind, the sense organs and the organs of action and their leader is “The intellect.” When the leader, the intellect which is pure, controls these three forces firmly and lets them carry out the command generated from it, it becomes “Satvika dhriti.” The Spiritual seeker with firmness works at yoga/union with the Atman and Paramatman. The mind with its stored vasanas and the sense organs that bring in impulses from outside can easily disturb this firmness. But the seeker has mastered the art and does not let worldly impulses disturb his power of yoga sadhana.

The capacity to keep unswerving firmness is expressed as “Avyabhicharena” in this sloka. No sensuous disturbances to side track the seeker is the meaning of this important word. Sri Krishna wanted Arjuna to have that firmness and fight the Kauravas in the war of righteousness. He did not want Arjuna to let his emotions rule over his determination to fight for upholding Tat Tvam Asi dharma. After listening to the discourse, Arjuna developed the clarity of the mind, exerted extreme firmness and allowed the organs of action to carry out their task. He was instrumental in uprooting the evil Kauravas.

Arjuna had knowledge and the strong capacity to conduct actions but this was unfortunately masked by emotions (which were due to the sense of attachment to family and friends). Knowledge said that he should fight. After getting clarification from the master of yoga, detachment from attachments was possible. This is the satvika dhriti/firmness referred to here.

Mahatma Gandhi, Swami Vivekananda and Nelson Mandela are a few of the examples that fit in with this satvika determination. The students entering into a professional course of studies should show this firmness in their resolve to become successful graduates.

**यया तु धर्मकामार्थान्धृत्तुया धारयतेऽर्जुन ।**

प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ||34||

yayā tu dharma-kāmārthān dhṛityā dhārayate 'rjuna |  
prasāṅgena phalākāṅkṣhī dhṛitiḥ sā pārtha rājasī ||34||

**Sloka 34**

**YAYA TU DHARMA-KAMARTHAN DHRITYA DHARAYATE 'RJUNA  
PRASANGENA PHALAKANKSHI DHRITIH SA PARTHA RAJASI**

**O Partha, but that dhṛuti by which one holds fast to duty, wealth and desire, owing to attachment and craving for the fruits of action, is rajasika.**

yayaa: that;  
tu: but/by;  
dharma kamarthaan: duty, wealth and desire;  
dhrutyaa: by firmness;  
dharayate: holds on;  
prasangena: from attachment;  
phalakankshee: craving/desirous for fruits of action;  
dhrutee: firmness;  
saa: that.

Dharma kamarthaan dhrutyaa: holds fast to duty, wealth and desires.

The four fold aim (Purushartha) advocated by the sastras for the Hindu is:  
Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. The final aim is “Salvation.”

In this sloka the Lord has beautifully brought out this theme. He says that the rajasika undertakes the first three “Dharma, Artha and Kama” but is missing the fourth. He puts forward with full determination (prasangena) all his efforts towards fulfilling personal desires and the accumulation of wealth. His attachment to the physical world is so strong that he wants to enjoy it fully and works hard towards it.

The word dharma used in this sloka refers to: Vrutti dharma - professional duties; Kula dharma: duties to the clan and duties to the family and other similar duties. They all come under the category of “Righteousness at the social plane of one’s existence.”

Each one of us has to conduct actions for being part of the social unit we belong to. What he (the rajasika) has earned from his efforts (by following dharma) is considered by him to be for his own personal enjoyment. His desires are plenty and he works with passion to fulfil them. His boat of life drifts away without reaching the final destination of Moksha. As we have discussed in chapter 2, instead of “Sreyas” (what is good) his actions are for “Preyas” (what is pleasing).

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च |  
न विमुञ्चति दुर्मथा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ||35||

**yayā svapnaṁ bhayaṁ śhokaṁ viṣhādaṁ madam eva cha |**

**Sloka 35**

**YAYA SVAPNAM BHAYAM SHOKAM VISHADAM MADAM EVA CHA  
NA VIMUNCHATI DURMEDHA DHRITIH SA PARTHA TAMASI**

**O Partha, because of which a stupid man holds on to sleep, fear, grief, despair, arrogance, that dhṛuti is tamasika.**

yayaa: by which;  
swapnam: sleep;  
bhayam: fear;  
shokam: grief;  
vishadam: despair;  
madam: arrogance;  
eva: indeed;  
cha: and;  
na: not;  
vimunchati: let go of;  
dhurmedo: stupid;  
dhṛuti: firmness;  
saa: that.

Five features of tamasika dhṛuti are brought out in this sloka.

**Svapnam:**

Even though it really means “dream” the scholars have taken it as meaning “sleep” in their translation of the word here. Waking State, Dream State and Deep Sleep State are the three states we pass through every day. Dream state is just before the deep sleep and is usually taken as being part of the sleep state by many. In the dream state we can make involuntary movements of the limbs and can talk aloud sometimes. We can even express fear in relation to a dream which is taking place in our minds.

In the case of tamasika (which is characterised by ignorance) even while awake he/she acts as one would do in dream state. He/she is in a state of day dreaming and is not conscious of the surroundings. Such people have no control or firmness in any of their activities. We can say that tamasika is not awakened to the reality and not aware of truth. Normally when we wake up we let go of the dream state and say, “Oh, it was all a dream” and get back to reality. In the tamasika, when he is awake he does not let go of his fancied imaginations and is oblivious to the reality. Hence, the Lord says, tamasika holds on to sleep.

**Bhayam shokam: fear, grief.**

The imaginary scenarios he is projecting in his own mind bring out the fear and grief. Again, this is due to being oblivious to the reality. For no reason he expresses fear and grief.

**Vishadam: despair.**

Because of his attachment to the dream state and not being illumined by the light of knowledge, he expresses despair in his actions.

Madam:

There is a sense of arrogance in his behaviour because he is still attached to the dream state and not awake to the reality. Overdose of alcohol or narcotics can bring out these features in an individual but even though there are no drugs or alcohol in his system these features are expressed in one of Tamasika.

This is because of intellectual blindness. The Lord calls them as “Durmedha” meaning “of perverted intelligence”. When the instrument of intelligence is wasted what comes out of such an individual is “perverted behaviour.”

Shoka: grief.

It is expressing sorrow in relation to some event in the past. It refers to “past.”

Vishada: despair.

It is for something that is regarding the future.

Mada: arrogance which denotes the “present” situation.

Because of grief over the past and despair at the future, he behaves conceitedly in the present. The individual projects a false value to the present and lives in a dream world.

The great epic Mahabharata gives us the example of the blind king “Dhritarashtra” and highlights the tamasic feature in him. His grief was due to the blindness (that prevented him from becoming the emperor) and he was in despair about the future of his beloved children. He was wishing that Duryodhana would be the future Emperor and he was frightened that this would never happen. This brought out the arrogance and conceit in him and he turned a blind eye to the atrocities of his sons. Instead of reprimanding them for the wrongs they carried out on the Pandavas, he supported them. We should therefore learn to: Forget the grief from the past, Hope for the best in future and Work with enthusiasm now for a better future.

Dharma/righteousness always brings out success in the end. Faith in this statement should take away the grief, fear and arrogance in all our undertakings. Determination or dhruti is to achieve the final goal of “Peace” and not for enjoying the “present.”

सु खं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शणु ु मे भरतर्षभ ।  
अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान दु ्तं च निगच्छति ॥36॥

sukham tv idānīm tri-vidham śhṛiṇu me bharatarṣhabha |  
abhyāsād ramate yatra duḥkhāntam cha nigacchati ॥36॥

**Sloka 36**

**SUKHAM TV IDANIM TRI-VIDHAM SHRINU ME BHARATARSHABHA  
ABHYASAD RAMATE YATRA DUHKHANTAM CHA NIGACCHATI**

**O Arjuna, now hear from Me, of the three-fold pleasure, in which one finds delight by practice and attains the end of pain.**



sukham tvidhaneem: (Sukham tu idaneem): happiness indeed now (idaneem - now);  
trividham: three-fold;  
shrunu: hear;  
Me': from Me;  
abhyasad: by practice;  
ramate: delight;  
yatra: in which;  
dukhantam: end of sorrow;  
cha: and;  
nigachati: attains.

We have so far studied about the three types of knowledge, jnanam: (slokas 20, 21 and 22), karma: (slokas 23, 24 and 25); and the knower (karta: slokas 26, 27 and 28); and about buddhi (slokas 30, 31 and 32) and dhruti (slokas 33, 34 and 35).

If we make a comparison to the medical field, these five can be looked upon as the “anatomy and physiology” of any work we undertake.

It is also necessary to look into that which is the impulse for action. What makes man work? This impulse is “seeking for pleasures” and it becomes the psychology of work. From time immemorial man has been in search of the “happiness” which does not elude from his grasp quickly. The impetus for life is the feeling of happiness. In other words man wants to have the feeling of “being happy” at all times and does not want anything that takes away that feeling.

We all know that happiness is a relative state of experience which has a peak and also has a dip. Sooner or later the strength of the feeling becomes less and in many cases it can even end in a feeling of sorrow. The happiness we experience is only a relative experience and it varies from person to person and at different times in the same person. The opposite of it is also true. The sorrow is also a relative state of experience. The difference is the feeling of happiness evaporates quickly and the feeling of sorrow tends to stay for a longer period.

Our learned elders have given us an answer. They said that “the absolute happiness” one is in search of, is not to be found anywhere else but to be found/realised within oneself. They named this state as “Ananda”. This realisation comes from acquiring the knowledge of “The Atman and The Paramatman”. This is “Jnana” (real knowledge) they said.

The true masters say that in the path of experiencing the absolute happiness the problem is “you”. They say, “You are the problem and you are the solution”. You are the problem because of “ignorance” of your true divine nature. You, yourself is the solution for the problem. You have to realise the divinity within you. You are: “Sat, Chit, Ananda”, they say. They said that “Jivatman” having been given a name and form brings to prominence the “Nama, Roopa” (name, form) and this is the cause of fleeting pains and pleasures.

Sukha (happiness) is of three types, Sri Krishna tells us in this shloka. Satvika sukha comes when the mind is pure. To make the mind pure we need to develop the 26 “Daivi qualities” (Chapter 16, slokas 1, 2, 3) and drop the 6 asuric qualities. (sloka 4, chapter 16).

Towards this we need to have constant practice/abhyasa of working at understanding the sacred text clearly. Sraddha, Bhakti (Faith, Devotion) along with the blessings and guidance from the Guru aid in the spiritual unfolding of divinity within.

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमतो ऽमृतपामम् ।  
त्तसुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥३७॥

yat tad agre viṣham iva pariṇāme 'mṛitopamam |  
tat sukham sāttvikam proktam ātma-buddhi-prasāda-jam ||37||.

**Sloka 37**

**YAT TAD AGRE VISHAM IVA PARINAME 'MRITOPAMAM  
TAT SUKHAM SATTVIKAM PROKTAM ATMA-BUDDHI-PRASADA-JAM**

**That pleasure which is like poison at first but in the end is like nectar, born of purity of one's own mind, (due to Selfrealisation), is declared to be satvika.**

yat: which;  
tad: that;  
agre: at first;  
viṣham: poison;  
iva: like;  
pariname: in the end;  
amrutopamam: like nectar;  
tat: that;  
sukham: happiness;  
sattvikam: satvika;  
proktam: is said;  
atma-buddhi prasada-jam: born of purity of one's own mind.

In the search for happiness, there is one group who work hard, diligently and truthfully to experience it. Such people find that the efforts to experience such happiness can be very hard but still they pursue their task. This sloka is referring to such people. The initial efforts are hard, requiring great determination and can feel like poison at first but the end result is like nectar, says the Lord.

The important word in the sloka is “viṣham iva”. The hard work is not poison but “like poison”, says Krishna. The final result does not come overnight. We all have come into this world carrying a bundle (sanchita) of thought imprints from the past. While the mind is trying to express those thought imprints through actions, the day to day life also demands many actions on our part. After a long time, every one of us will eventually realise the futility of running after worldly pleasures.

The farmer who toils day in and day out for months will experience the pleasure of bumper crops towards the end (and is also ready to face the calamities that he comes across every so often). The students who sincerely put their efforts towards studies and do not get carried away by the abundant pleasures around, will experience the pleasure of passing the exams and managing to find a good career. The mother who carries the baby within her womb for 40 weeks, works at making the baby learn the art of living, so that the baby grows to become a useful member of society. All these efforts

will feel painful and hard at first but with purity of the mind and perseverance one can experience the happiness at the end. Such kinds of happiness are “satvika”.

Killing of one’s own ego is very hard but this is what the Lord is implying in this sloka. If we look back at our childhood we can recollect that learning alphabets and numerals was extremely tough. Probably it would have taken 2-3 years to learn the alphabets and numerals. See where we are now? The joy arising out of spiritual discipline, the joy experienced by the mind and the intellect, the peace and tranquillity experienced is the “Prasadam” for our efforts. In “Yoga Vasishta”, Maharshi Vashishta instructs Rama who was in a momentary state of despair, that the freedom from sorrow and suffering is not to be found anywhere in the world but is to be found directly inside one’s own mind.

The disciplined efforts needed in understanding what is Jiva, Jivatman, Atman and Paramatman take many years and innumerable births and deaths of experiences. It is like the poison, the Lord speaks of and realising the Atman as spark of Parabrahman is the Nectar/Amrita – the Prasada. The effort is to develop “Atma Buddhi” and the result is the “Prasada” from His Grace.

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमतो ऽ पमम |  
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृत म ॥३८॥

viṣhayendriya-sanyogād yat tad agre ’mṛitopamam |  
pariṇāme viṣham iva tat sukham rājasam smṛitam ||38||

### Sloka 38

**VISHAYENDRIYA-SANYOGAD YAT TAD AGRE ‘MRITOPAMAM  
PARINAME VISHAM IVA TAT SUKHAM RAJASAM SMRITAM**

**That pleasure arising from contact of the sense organs with the objects, which is like nectar at first but in effect is like poison, is declared to be rajasic.**

vishayendriya: sense organs with the objects;  
samyogat: contact;  
yat: which;  
tad: that (pleasure);  
agre: arising (at first);  
amrutopamam: like nectar;  
pariname’: in effect;  
vishamiva: like poison;  
tat: that;  
rajasam: rajasika;  
smrutam: is declared.

One can see the contrast between the satvika and rajasika happiness by analysing in depth the meaning of the two verses. Both the groups have the common factor of “pleasure” and “poison” but the subtle difference between the two is highlighted by Sri Krishna so beautifully.

We have learnt that the satvika find the path of spirituality is like poison at first but like nectar at the end. In contrast, the rajasika finds the pleasures arising from contact with the physical world so

attractive and gets caught in the trap of the same. Eventually he finds the end result of such pleasures (that are momentary) are like poison. Why?

The rajasika by nature has a craving for the constant fulfilment of desires (for material possessions), it is this fault that ruins him eventually. Satisfaction (Trupti) is not to be seen in such an individual. It is true that our tendencies are due to the samskaras we are carrying forward but it cannot be an excuse. The scriptures and the Gita are clear about this issue and advocate “Constant practice” and enquiry into the desires that crop up in the mind. “Analyse your thoughts before you turn them into actions” is the command of the Lord.

History has so many examples of such people who not only ruined themselves but ruined the lives of millions. Alexander the Great was a powerful warrior and was intent on conquering many lands. After conquering more than half the world, he made his way back home. It is said that on the way back he became seriously ill and realised his end had come. He summoned his ministers and gave them his last wish. It was to build a coffin for him which would have 2 holes on the sides for his hands to be projected out of the coffin. On enquiring the reason for such an unusual request, he said: “Let the whole world know that Alexander the Great who conquered the world is going out of this world empty handed.” (I would like to say that there is another version of this story which credits a Muslim Emperor instead of Alexander the Great with this example.)

“Lift yourself up from being a stone man to God man on earth and learn to work as a servant of the Lord” is His message. Learn the theory of the scriptures and convert the theory with practical application, that is the means for acquiring the nectar of life.

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।  
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥३९॥

yad agre chānubandhe cha sukham mohanam ātmanah |  
nidrālasya-pramādottham tat tāmasam udāhṛitam ||39||

**Sloka 39**

**YAD AGRE CHANUBANDHE CHA SUKHAM MOHANAM ATMANAH  
NIDRALASYA-PRAMADOTTHAM TAT TAMASAM UDAHRITAM**

**That pleasure which arising from sleep, idleness and heedlessness causes delusion during its enjoyment and in sequel is said to be tamasika.**

yat: which/that;  
agre: at first;  
cha: and;  
anubandhe: in the sequel;  
cha: and;  
sukham: happiness;  
mohanam: delusion;  
atmanaha: of the self;  
nidra alasya pramadhottham: arising from sleep, laziness and heedlessness;  
tat: that;  
tamasam: tamasika;

udahrutam: is said.

That which clouds the intellect and hides the spiritual personality inside each one of us is “ignorance”. This “Spiritual ignorance” is “tamas.” How does this quality express itself?

The Lord gives us three examples. They are, He says: Nidra, Alasya and Pramada.

Nidra: state of sleep.

In any one day, we go through the three states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep states. When fully awake we are conscious of the world we live in. In dream state we are not conscious of the physical world but live in a dream world created in our own mind. The stored vasanas in the mind project forth the imaginary world on to the mental screen and this causes delusion. In deep sleep state we are not aware of the world around and there is no dream world. We are, in this state, totally dead to the physical and mental world. We are totally ignorant of all surroundings. The thieves may rob the entire house and we will not know about the theft. In relation to the spiritual life we lose total contact with the “Divinity within” and we do not cognize the Atman/Divinity existing all around at all times.

Alasyam:

There are periods when we show a delay in reaction to the dangers lurking round the corner. These periods could be caused by the consumption of alcohol or the intake of narcotic drugs etc. The individual loses the capacity to think properly and also loses the capacity to think ahead. There is failure to come to correct judgements. To put it in simple words: whatever reaction the tamasika takes is “too late.”

Pramada:

Because of this quality, the tamasika shuts his sense organs and the mind against the warning issued by the intellect. Children have the blessings of their mother/father/carer who warn them of the dangers in life such as fire, deep water etc. They are encouraged to develop the capacity to save themselves from dangerous situations in life. For us, the Atman within us is the mother/father/carer and he is continuously warning us of the dangers ahead. Unfortunately, in a tamasika, this message from within is blocked totally and this leads them to dangers, in their day to day life.

During moments of enjoyment of sensual pleasures we are deluded of our inner divine nature. This delusion will remain until the end of such enjoyments, says the Lord. It is true that we have seeds of divinity within and also seeds of ignorance. The human life from birth is to wipe off the ignorance and to nourish the divinity within. The tamasika fails in his duty to clear the seeds of ignorance. He is unfortunately nourishing the ignorance with wrong manure like alcohol, drugs etc.

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।  
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैरक्मुत्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥४०॥

na tad asti pṛithivyām vā divi deveṣhu vā punaḥ ।  
attvaṁ prakṛiti-jair muktam yad ebhiḥ syāt tribhir guṇaiḥ ॥४०॥

**Sloka 40**

**NA TAD ASTI PRITHIVYAM VA DIVI DEVESHU VA PUNAH**

## SATTVAM PRAKRITI-JAIR MUKTAM YAD EBHIH SYAT TRIBHIR GUNAIH

**There is no being on earth or in heaven among the devas, who is free from the three gunas arising from prakriti.**

na: no;  
tad: there;  
asti: is;  
pruthivya: in the earth;  
divi: in heaven;  
deveshu: among the devas;  
vaa: or;  
punaha: again;  
satvam: being;  
prakrutijair: born of prakriti;  
muktam: free from;  
ebhih tribhir gunaih: from these three gunas;  
yad syaat: what is/who is.

After describing the:

Knowledge: 20, 21 and 22,

Action: 23, 24 and 25,

Agent: 26, 27 and 28,

Buddhi: 30, 31 and 32,

Dhrti (firmness): 33, 34 and 35,

Sukha (happiness): 37, 38 and 39,

concerning the impulse for action at anatomical, physiological and psychological angles, Sri Krishna gives His concluding remarks on “Karma”.

First of all He asserts that there is no being free from the three gunas. We should by now be clear that the gunas are the precursor of action which is “karma”. The gunas are the imprints on the mind. They are born of “Prakriti” (Prakrutijair) says the Lord in chapter 14.

There are three worlds we are familiar with: The Heaven, the Earth and the Nether worlds. The heaven where there are heavenly enjoyments to experience as a result of conducting dharmic/good actions, the earth, the present abode, (this birth is to make changes in the texture of thought imprints) and the nether worlds which are abodes of pain (to suffer as a consequence of conducting adharmic actions). The physical death is only the death of the gross body. Depending upon the quality of thought imprints the subtle body traverses to the other worlds. “There is no being on earth or in heaven among the Devas” who is free from the gunas.

How does one attain freedom, one may ask? The answer is: Freedom/Liberation is the birth-right of all. He who attains to this state enjoys freedom in this life itself and for him, there will be no such thing as going to heaven. This is real “Moksha Sanyasa” which is the title of this chapter.

If we look at it in depth, Lord Brahma, the Creator is also doing his karma of creation and is not free from karma. The sastras ascertain that at the close of this present “Kalpa” (period of earth’s life span) He, Lord Brahma, according to the theory of “Krama Mukti” (gradual Liberation) is not born again and he transcends the three gunas. A new Brahma then takes over the role of creation in the next kalpa to come.

There is one school of thought that does not describe the three worlds as separate entities but says that the earth is the place of both heaven and hell. When one is blessed with happiness he is said to be in

heaven and when suffering, he is said to be in hell. The fact remains that everyone has to follow the path of karma and this path provides us with our destiny.

ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शू द्राणां च परन्तप ।  
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर् णैः गु ॥41॥

brāhmaṇa-kṣhatriya-viśhām śhūdrāṇām cha parantapa ।  
karmāṇi pravibhaktāni svabhāva-prabhavair guṇaiḥ ॥41॥

#### Sloka 41

**BRAHMANA-KSHATRIYA-VISHAM SHUDRANAM CHA PARANTAPA  
KARMANI PRAVIBHAKTANI SVABHAVA-PRABHAVAIR GUNAIH**

**O Parantapa, the duties for the different castes, brahmanas, kshatriyas, vaishyas and sudras are determined according to their nature born of prakriti.**

brahmana: brahmana;  
kshatriya: kshatriya;  
vishaam: vasya;  
shoodra: sudra;  
cha: and;  
parantapa: referring to Arjuna (scorcher of enemies);  
karmani: by actions/duties;  
pravibhaktaani: separately determined;  
swabhava: nature;  
prabhavair: born of;  
gunaih: prakruti.

We can presume by this statement from Sri Krishna that there was in existence the fourfold caste system, even 5000 years ago.

Sloka 13, chapter 4 Jnana Yoga: “Chaturvarnam mayaa srushtam.” (The four fold caste system created by Me.) We have a re-iteration of that statement in this sloka.

Swabhava: the nature of any person is the “swabhava” of that person.

“Bhava” is the nature and “Swa” refers to the individual. What is nature? The expression of the inherent gunas, is the nature of a person. It is our reactions to what we perceive and so varies from individual to individual. Depending upon the preponderance of any one of the three gunas, the individual develops certain characteristics. These were used by our elder ancestors to group men/women into four broad sections. They were: Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras, and The Lord has highlighted this point in this sloka. The society at that time brought out a blue print highlighting the duties for each of the four groups. It was out of necessity to maintain an order in the community. Let us recollect that: Thoughts become actions, Actions become habits, Habits becomes ones nature and Nature leads one to destiny.

Brahmanas: preponderance of satvic guna with a mix of rajo guna.  
Kshatriyas: preponderance of rajo guna, with a mix of satva guna,  
Vasyas: mainly rajasic with a mix of satva and tamas,

Sudras: mainly tamasic in nature.

Brahmanas were the thinkers, using the power of intelligence. They were given the role of guiding the public on the Vedic path of living.

Kshatriyas were those who had powerful shoulders and made good warriors. It was the period of kingdoms ruled by Kings/Queens. They were the ruling class and the warriors who fought for their country. (The Brahmanas took the role of guiding the royalty towards actions that protected the citizens of the kingdom and imparted the Vedic knowledge to them.)

Vysyas were those with knowledge in business and trade. They gathered and supplied commodities to the public at a reasonable cost.

Sudras were strong but not so intelligent. They were the manual workers in the community.

In the present society we live, Brahmanas are thinkers, Kshatriyas are politicians, Vysyas are traders and Sudras are the labourers. This has now come to be known as the caste system and somewhere in the long history of India the practice of hereditary birth right has come into being ie. a child born to Brahmana is considered as brahmana, child born to kshatriya, a kshatriya, and so on. This was not the original conception. Sri Krishna will, in the next few slokas enumerate the important qualities that enable a person to fit into one of the four groups. He will stress that it is the “guna right” and not “birth right” that entitles an individual to belong to any one of these groups.

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरारवम्ज ेव च ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ्||42||

śhamo damas tapaḥ śhauchaṁ kṣhāntir ārjavam eva cha ।

jñānaṁ vijñānam āstikyam brahma-karma svabhāva-jam ||42||

**Sloka 42**

**SHAMO DAMAS TAPAH SHAUCHAM KSHANTIR ARJAVAM EVA CHA  
JNANAM VIJNANAM ASTIKYAM BRAHMA-KARMA SVABHAVA-JAM**

**Control of internal and external organs, austerity, purity, forgiveness, uprighteousness, knowledge, wisdom, faith in God are the qualities of the brahmanas born of own nature.**

sama: self control/control over the mind;

damas: control over the sense organs;

tapaha: austerity;

shoucham: purity;

kshantir: forgiveness;

arjavam: uprighteousness;

cha: and;

jnana: knowledge;

vijnanam: wisdom;

astikyam: faith in God, guru and scriptures;

brahma karma: duties of brahmana;

swabhavajam: born of nature.

Brahmana is he who has realised that the world is a mere superimposition upon Brahman. He experiences the “One Reality behind the apparent multiplicity”. Birth into a family of a Brahmana does



not make one a true Brahmana. Sage Vishwamitra was a Kshatriya and later on became Brahmarshi (brahmana rishi) by acts of severe austerities.

Nine predominant features that make one a Brahmana are enumerated in the sloka. The last quarter of the sloka is highly important. It says: “brahma karma swabhavajam” meaning, “Qualities born of own nature” this refers to the qualities expressed as a result of the thought imprints stored in the mind, at the time of one’s death.

The imprints stored are to be looked upon as the seeds of the qualities to be expressed in the future new birth. We all come into this world with a bundle of these seeds, depending upon our life in the past. The Lord does not put a new baby in an environment according to the caste system. Chapter 6 clearly states that the Lord will give the new born a suitable family and a suitable environment that is congenial to express the stored vasanas. Satvic thoughts will result in a birth that assists in expressing the satvic nature.

Another interesting point to note: In the days gone-by where there were no universities as such. The training for professionals was not through the educational system we are familiar with now. There was a need to have continuity and propagation of knowledge. As there were no universities, this need was fulfilled by the parents who imparted the skills of their trade and knowledge to their progeny. The son of a professional, from early childhood, would closely observe his father at work and thereby learn the intricacies of that profession.

Also it’s interesting to note, that there were no text books in the days of the past. Sometime in the history of India, society developed ways of classifying people according to their trade and their children then inherited the title. So a child born of Brahmana was called a Brahmana and a child born to Kshatriya, a Kshatriya and so on.

From understanding clearly the message in this sloka we come to the conclusion that according to Sri Krishna, it is not a birth right but a guna right that puts an individual in any one of the four castes.

The 9 qualities:

Sama:

“Self-control” is the control over one’s own mind. As the mind is the seat of thoughts, sama is the control over one’s thoughts. The temptations that cause the impulse to act due to the stored vasanas from the past, are to be strictly controlled and this control, when pure is called, “Sama”.

Realising that all objects of enjoyment are imperfect and painful by nature (sooner or later), and withdrawing the mind from the pre-occupation with those objects is Sama. It is then ready to meditate on the Supreme and it is the first quality to develop in order to be called a Brahmana.

Dama: control over the senses. Refer to sloka 1, chapter 16

Tapas: austerity.

This has been covered in slokas 14, 15 and 16 of chapter 17. Many think that yearning for God is tapas. We have examples from the mythological stories of even asuras conducting severe tapas to obtain special boons from God. The minds of such asuras had rajasic qualities like anger, greed and lust and tamasic qualities like indolence and lethargy. These qualities make the mind impure. Cleansing the mind of these impurities and filling it with bliss and peace which are the characters of satva, is tapas in its strictest, purest sense. Apart from yearning for God, tapas is also an act wherein the body, mind and senses are dedicated to the service of God. Keeping the mind free from sensual

pleasures (which can be deadlier than poison) is the most important quality that has to be nurtured by a Brahmana.

Shoucham: Purity:

Refer to slokas 3, chapter 16 and sloka 14, chapter 17. Purity at all the three planes of mind, body and speech is Shoucham.

Kshantihi: patience, forbearance and forgiveness (kshama). Refer to sloka 3, chapter 16.

Arjavam: Straight forward. Refer to sloka 1, chapter 16.

Jnanam:

This refers to the “Spiritual knowledge” and is the basis of chapter 13. (Slokas 7-11 of chapter 13 cover the subject of jnanam). In the context of this sloka it is not only the spiritual knowledge that makes one a Brahmana but there is also a need to have worldly knowledge. The Brahmana has to understand the workings of the various sectors in society and be willing to impart the knowledge that helps others to climb up the spiritual path. To lift those who are at the level of “stone man, animal man, man-man” to the level of “God man” is the duty of a true Brahmana. To be compassionate to the ignorant is as important for a Brahmana, as developing spiritual knowledge.

Vijnanam: It is the practical experience of what has been learnt (chapter 7 has been dedicated to this quality). Living in the true knowledge of what has been studied and experienced by such studies brings out the wisdom.

Astikyam: Faith in God, in the sacred texts and the guru. (Chapter 17 is all about the various aspects of faith and types of faith). Faith in the belief that God resides in each form of life is essential, as it leads to the development of love and compassion to one and all.

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर् दक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।  
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात् करं म स्वभावजम् ॥43॥

śhauryam tejo dhṛitir dākṣhyam yuddhe chāpy apalāyanam ।  
dānam īśhvara-bhāvaśh cha kṣhātram karma svabhāva-jam ॥43॥

**Sloka 43**

**SHAURYAM TEJO DHRITIR DAKSHYAM YUDDHE CHAPY APALAYANAM  
DANAM ISHVARA-BHAVASH CHA KSHATRAM KARMA SVABHAVA-JAM**

**Prowess, splendour, firmness, dexterity, not running away from battle, generosity, lordliness – these are the duties of Kshatriyas, born of their nature.**

shauryam: prowess;  
tejo: splendour;  
dhṛuti: firmness;  
dakhyam: dexterity;  
yuddha apalayanam: not running away from battle;

cha: and;  
api: also;  
danam: generosity;  
iswara bhavas: lordliness;  
kshatram: of a kshatriya;  
karma swabhavajam: duties born of their nature.

Seven qualities of Kshatriya are brought out in this sloka. The highest ranking Kshatriyas would have been the rulers of the land in the olden days. The qualities brought out in this sloka are addressed to the ruling class of warriors but are also applicable to the Kshatriyas in general.

Shauryam: Prowess.

It goes without saying that a Kshatriya is he who has broad, strong shoulders to exhibit his prowess in the battlefield. Protection of the citizens of the kingdom and expansion of the kingdom needs prowess.

Tejas: Splendour.

The victories, the wealth and the land amassed by a King, displayed and demonstrated his splendour. The splendour is also enhanced by his other qualities which we are going to study. Majestic look and majestic behaviour is the tejas referred to. Sri Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu ruled as a Kshatriya and exhibited these qualities. The splendour in him is enhanced by his strict adherence to satya and dharma.

Dhruiti: Firmness.

Firmness in dealing with issues relating to the citizens of the land and sticking to dharma and satya (truthfulness) is dhruiti. Sri Rama exhibited this in the discharge of his duty to his kingdom and citizens. He did not hesitate to send Mother Sita to the forest and he did not hesitate to fight Ravana to rescue Sita from captivity. He did not hesitate to go to the forest (when Kaikeyi asked Dasaratha for the grant of her boons) and thereby did not let his father be judged as a liar who could not keep his promise.

Having decided to fight, the king has to fight to win or be ready to face heroic death in battle. Using the guidance offered by the ministers, the information submitted by the intelligence department and in consultation with the commanders on the plan of battle, he was expected to take the final decision boldly and courageously. He would be expected to execute the battle plan with firmness. In a court of justice the king was expected to stick firmly to dharma and satya while giving his verdict.

Dakshyam: Being constantly alert is the rule of thumb for the Kshatriya.

In one of the stories of the olden days, there was an emperor who had a sword hung from the ceiling, tied to a weak rope, pointing towards the top of his head. It was just to signify that the position he held was so delicate in its balance that at any moment an enemy might take advantage. Constantly being alert to the dangers to the throne is dexterity. The soldiers patrolling the border are expected to be alert for the movement of the enemy forces at all times. Alexander the Great can be an example of an emperor who showed this quality.

Apalayanam: Not running away from the battlefield is apalayanam.

Running away is a sign of cowardice. The soldier fights to win or die in the battlefield. The dharma sastra for the Kshatriya says that the Kshatriya who dies on the battlefield, gets the privilege of luxuries but if he wins he will live to enjoy the kingdom won.

Danam: Alms giving.

Generosity to the public, to the needs of the deprived and to the dependant members of society were essential for the king, to get the wholehearted support of the citizens of the land. He was expected to donate and thereby encourage the starting up of spiritual and educational institutions in the land.

Iswara bhava: Lordliness.

The king should be able to rule with self-confidence. Faith in himself will give him the capacity to command over his ministers. Iswara bhava is the Lordliness in this sense. (If there is any weakness, the junior ranking officials may try to take over the throne). The king at all times should be able to command over his lower ranking officials and at the same time earn their respect.

Iswara is the ruler over all the senses. The senses are the juniors and the mind the senior officer in the body. The senses should not be allowed to rule over the mind. The mind should be the bandmaster over all of them.

We can read this verse as though it applies to us all. After all we are expected to be men/women of action. We should express these seven Kshatriya qualities. We should all be the Arjunas of the world. In this sense:

Sauryam:

We should be bold in meeting the challenges of life. In the path towards self-realisation we should exhibit:

Dhruti:

Firmness in challenging the un-divine qualities in us. This in turn will bring forth:

Tejas:

Splendour. More splendour/tejas should flow from us.

Dakshyam:

We must learn the art of self-vigilance.

Apalayanam:

When we take a decision we must execute it properly and fully. The perseverance will help us to overcome the obstacles in the way. We should not at any time abandon our duties. We should have an aim in life. Without aim/purpose the life is not worth living, many would say. We have to face competition/challenges in our path but should not run away from challenges. Failure to do so would not only harm us but our dependants too.

Towards attaining the Purushartha of “Moksha” we must fight the evil tendencies/Kauravas within our mind. We must sharpen the divine (Pandavas) within us and let the Antaratma (Sri Krishna) guide and lead us. It is the birth right of each one of us to attain Moksha and we should not run away from the battle of life. Finally, we should be like Arjuna and ask for guidance from the charioteer of our life, Sri Krishna. This comes from learning under guidance and understanding the sacred text clearly.

Danam:

Offering the wealth, knowledge, food to those in need, with love, are our sacred duties.

Iswara bhava:

If we want our family and our community/country to prosper in the spiritual path of dharma and satya we must fight adharna. Let us follow the message from Swami Vivekananda who said “March onwards” with the band of “Pranava”.

Let us follow the dharma of a Kshatriya, remaining firm in our beliefs and bold in fighting unrighteousness. Let us not despair when obstacles come in the way or when things go wrong. The knowledge of a Brahmana and the strength of Kshatriya should help us to achieve the success.

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम |  
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम ॥44॥

krīṣhi-gau-rakṣhya-vāṇijyam vaiśhya-karma svabhāva-jam | paricharyātmakam  
karma śhūdrasyāpi svabhāva-jam ॥44॥

**Sloka 44**

**KRISHI-GAU-RAKSHYA-VANIJAM VAISHYA-KARMA SVABHAVA-JAM  
PARICHARYATMAKAM KARMA SHUDRASYAPI SVABHAVA-JAM**

**Agriculture, protection of the cattle and trade are the duties of a Vysyas, born of their own nature; and action consisting of Service, is the duty of the Sudra born of their own nature.**

krishi: agriculture;  
gorakshana: protection of the cattle;  
vanijyam: trade;  
vaishya karma: duties of vaishya;  
swabhavajam: born of own nature;  
paricharyatmakam: consisting of service;  
karma: duties;  
shudrasya: of the sudra;  
api: also;  
swabhavajam: born of own nature.

The sloka gives out 3 qualities/duties of a Vaisya and one predominant quality of a Sudra. Any society needs not only educated men - those who are masters of the scriptures, politicians, scientists and those with knowledge concerning the defence of the nation (these constitute the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas) but also needs businessmen and manual labourers. A king cannot be a road sweeper and a road sweeper cannot be expected to become the king. We all occupy the position we hold in society because of the qualities inherent in us. It is a fact that carrying out duties that do not fit in with the temperament will harm the individual and the society. In an operation theatre, the surgeon has to conduct the duties of a surgeon and the nurse has to conduct the duties of a nurse. We can imagine the consequences if the roles are reversed.

A Vysya is he who has an aptitude for business. He has a good valuation of profit and loss in trade and by his expertise brings revenue to the country, meeting the needs of the citizens. Agriculture, cattle rearing and trade are mentioned in this sloka with reference to a Vysya. This is because this was the norm of the day 5000 years ago. This is not so now and we have a number of professionals who fall under the category of Vysyas. The dharma of any such professionals is to serve and bring prosperity to

society. In this sense we can say that Krishna belonged to the Vysya community (traders of milk and milk products) but became the Jagadguru by His preaching.

A Sudra is he who has no aptitude for business, no knowledge to rule and no scriptural knowledge. He is still needed by the society. He should work with an attitude of service.

All the actions suited to the temperament if carried out properly will assist in clearing the stored vasanas in the mind and assist in spiritual progress. One can lift oneself up from being a stone man to that of a God man on earth. Working contrary to our nature will not clear the existing vasanas but add new vasanas and thereby delay our experiencing the final success of Moksha. Let us work with the attitude of “work is worship” and march on towards “Liberation.”

स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।  
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥45॥

sve sve karmaṇy abhirataḥ sansiddhiṁ labhate naraḥ ।  
sva-karma-nirataḥ siddhiṁ yathā vindati tach chhṛiṇu ॥45॥

**Sloka 45**

**SVE SVE KARMANY ABHIRATAH SANSIDDHIM LABHATE NARAH  
SVA-KARMA-NIRATAH SIDDHIM YATHA VINDATI TACH CHHRINU**

**Devoted each to his own duty, man attains the highest perfection. How engaged in his own duty, he attains perfection, that do you hear.**

sve sve karmani: one's own duty;  
abhirataha: devoted;  
samsiddhim: highest perfection;  
labhate: attains;  
naraha: man;  
sva karma nirataha: engaged in his own duty;  
siddhim: perfection;  
yatha: how;  
vindati: finds;  
tat: that;  
shrunu: hear.

The Lord says that He is going to give us the means for achieving the highest perfection, through Karma Yoga. What is the key to success? Sve sve karmany abhirataha: be devoted to one's own duty. Is it not correct that he who wants the best results from an action has to attain highest perfection in what he is doing? He who puts in the best effort, is the one we would expect to get the best results.

The three words used in this sloka which are related to the actions that pave the way for the highest perfection are:

Abhirataha: devoted

Nirataha: engaged

Sve sve karmany: one's own duty.

One must be totally devoted to his duty. The highest level of devotion is that where the duty is conducted, with the feeling of offering the entire results of action to the beloved Lord. This is real “Karya bhakti”. “Karya” means “actions.” It is devotion expressed through actions. The actions conducted according to the principle of “karma phala tyaga” (renunciation of the results of actions) come under the category of “Karya Bhakti”. The actions have to be for “Him” and the results of such actions are for Him too. The actions conducted with the feeling of “We are His servants and He is our master” become “Karya Bhakti.”

Sharing what one has with the needy is also a form of devotion to the Supreme. Instead of working for personal gains and fulfilment of personal wishes, it would be more fruitful if: We work for the welfare of our family, Work for the welfare of the community, Work for the welfare of the nation. The spiritual way (karya bhakti) of working, is that work, is conducted for the welfare of the Universe.

Nirataha: Engaged.

We have three instruments of action in our body and they are the: Mind, speech and the physical body (mano, vak, kaya).

All the three instruments should be engaged in the same duty at any one time. Day dreaming while conducting the duty, unnecessary talking while doing the work and unnecessary bodily movements should be avoided. Total concentration on what is being done is essential in any field of work.

A momentary deviation from the task ahead because of delusion (maya) might result in dire consequences. Arjuna was going to fall into the trap of momentary delusion at the most important period of discharging his duty in his life.

Svakarma: One’s own duty.

We have discussed in detail about “karma swabhavajam” in the three previous slokas. Actions that fit in with the thought imprints stored, born of one’s own nature are the means of clearing them and our journey in life should be used in fulfilling this task.

Broadly speaking, “Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vysya and Sudra” are the four types of professions in any society. One may not use the above four titles but the work should fit in with that quality enumerated in the above slokas. The classification is based on physical capacity, psychological development and the aptitude of the person for the profession. Working on this basis paves the way for national prosperity and for a cultured society. Putting in the best efforts one has and offering it to the society (sloka 47, chapter 2) not only brings prosperity to the nation but also takes the individual towards the path of “Moksha.”

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम ।  
स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥46॥

yataḥ pravṛittir bhūtānām yena sarvam idaṁ tatam ।  
sva-karmaṇā tam abhyarchya siddhim vindati mānavaḥ ॥46॥

**Sloka 46**

**YATAH PRAVRITTIR BHUTANAM YENA SARVAM IDAM TATAM  
SVA-KARMANA TAM ABHYARCHYA SIDDHIM VINDATI MANAVAH**

**He, from whom is the manifestation of beings, by whom all this is pervaded, worshipping Him by performing one's own duty, man attains perfection.**

yata: from whom;  
pravrittim: manifestation of;  
bhootanaam: beings;  
yena: by whom;  
sarvam: all;  
idam: this;  
tatam: pervaded;  
ssvakarmana: with his own duties;  
tam: him;  
abhyarcham: worshipping;  
siddhim: perfection;  
vindati: attains;  
manavaha: man.

Tam abhyarchan: "Him worshipping". Siddhim vindati manavaha: "man attains perfection".

It is a fact that whatever we are desirous of achieving in life, first of all we should make attempts to find out where/from whose Grace we can achieve the same. We can then carry out certain duties and associate with that power. This relationship then develops and becomes an act of worship. To attain spiritual perfection which is the key to Moksha, there is a need to show this attitude towards the Lord. This is "tam abhyarcha".

When there are so many divinities, who/which divinity should we approach? Ena Sarvam idam tatam: by whom all of this is pervaded, is the answer. It is not the Devas or highly evolved beings in the higher planes (like Devendra in Swarga Loka) but the "Supreme Parabrahman" who pervades all. We have studied that: The Supreme is the creator and He sustains all by pervading the entire Universe. "He" is without form and qualities (nirakara, nirguna).

How to approach such a non-existing entity? One may ask. The secret word is "Tatam". As "He" pervades all, it is "Him", who pervades all, we should approach. "He" is present everywhere but not in the form we are looking out for. "He" comes, in so many forms and ways and we do not notice Him.

The needs of the needy (individual or a group in any society) should be met by those who have the means and knowledge to be of help. If we all get engaged in our "Sve Sve Karmany" (our own duties) and take part in fulfilling the needs of society we will be approaching the Lord. We will then achieve perfection.

Swadharma: (own duty). With this right frame of mind, the actions carried out in this spirit purify the mind. It is the means for perfect wisdom and for salvation.

Story from Mahabharata, Vana parva section that brings out the significance of "one's own duties":

It is about a young sanyasin who had achieved great yogic powers by his sadhana. Once, when he was under a tree a few droppings from a bird on the tree fell on his head. He looked up in anger and saw the bird. Just by his sheer look, the bird fell dead. He did not realise that he had achieved such strong yogic powers.

One day he went out for his alms and arrived at a house in a village. As is the practice, he stood at the entrance and begged for food from the lady of the house. He did not get any response from inside the



house. He begged again for the second time. There was no response. He begged again for the third time. This time there was restlessness and anger in his voice. Finally, the lady of the household came out and served the food. He looked at her in short temper and asked why she did not attend to his call. The lady gave her sincere apologies. She said that she was carrying out her duty to her handicapped husband and she could not honestly leave the duty in the middle. She also said, “I am doing my duty to look after my husband and it is my yoga. I do not know anything more about the sastras, but do not think I am a crow to be burnt alive by your angry looks”.

The young sanyasin was astonished and realised his mistake. He asked forgiveness and begged her to teach him the sastras. In reply she directed him to a merchant by name of “Vyudha” in another town for learning more about karma and duties. The sanyasin went to the town and came to know that “Vyudha” was a butcher. He went reluctantly to the butcher’s shop and saw Vyudha busy with his professional work. He was disgusted that the lady had sent him to such a person, who was not worthy to even be looked upon. But nevertheless he talked to the merchant.

Vyudha the butcher, said that he knew, the lady from the village had sent him to the town to meet him. The sanyasi was ashamed of himself and requested the merchant for spiritual guidance. Vyudha then asked to be excused for a short while. He went inside his house and came back after a while. He explained that he had to tend to the needs of his disabled, elderly parents. Talking about dharma, he said: “No duty is ugly, no duty is impure” it is only the way in which the work is done, which determines its worth. “By discharging my professional duty as a butcher, as a means of self-expression (swadharna) I am earning my livelihood. My birth placed me in this profession. I try to do my duty well. I try to do my duty as a householder and I try to do all I can to make my parents happy. I neither know yoga nor am I a sanyasin. What I have learnt has come through the unattached performance of my duty”, he said. “By discharging it properly I am expressing my adoration to the Lord” he told the sanyasin.

This story is known as “Vyudha Gita” meaning the Gita taught by a butcher.

Unfortunately, the way of the world we are used to is different. Many consider the worship of the Lord is one thing and discharge of worldly duties as entirely another thing. They do not connect the two. The worship of the Lord as per the meaning of this sloka is discharging one’s duty to the family and society to the best of one’s capacity. “Sve sve karma” says the Lord, meaning, “doing one’s duty” as determined by his nature. Our inherent vasanas have put us in the position we are in and it is our duty to clear these vasanas. The duty is only a means of expressing and clearing these vasanas.

What about bad thought imprints, are they also vasanas to be fulfilled, one may ask?

This is true to an extent. There are two options: Let one suffer the consequences of wrong actions and learn the lesson not to harbour such thoughts in future. Or Let us divert the mind to another thought and let the bad thought burn away slowly, erasing the thought imprint in the process. The message is: Perform one’s duty – Karma Yoga; Worship the Lord – Karma Bhakti; Attain knowledge – Jnana Bhakti. Jnana leads to perfection and the seeker is on his way to Moksha. Truly speaking, the seeker will be a “Jivanmukta”, Liberated Soul while still living on this earth.

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।  
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥४७॥

śhreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt |  
svabhāva-niyataṁ karma kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣham ||47||

## Sloka 47

### SHREYAN SVA-DHARMO VIGUNAH PARA-DHARMAT SV-ANUSHTHITAT SVABHAVA-NIYATAM KARMA KURVAN NAPNOTI KILBISHAM

**Better is one's own duty, though without merits, than the duty of another well-performed. He who performs his duties ordained by his own nature incurs no sin.**

shreyan: better;  
svadharmo: one's own duty;  
vigunaha: devoid of merits;  
paradharmat: than the duty of another;  
anushtitaat: well done;  
svabhavanियatam: ordained by his own nature;  
karma: duties;  
kurvan: performing;  
kilbisham: sin;  
na apnoti: does not incur.

Let us try to analyse this sloka in two different perspectives: At the spiritual plane with intention/desire to attain Moksha and at the social plane with intention/desire for worldly gains.

We have studied so far about our true identity. We are really “two in one”. We are really the “Atman”, spark of Parabrahman, with the physical body as a suit over the Atman. The Atman is the real us and the physical body which associates with the physical world is only an illusion (maya). In this context, “swadharma” is the expression of “Atma dharma” and “Paradharmat” is the expression of the physical needs of the body for the fulfilment of desires. The duty of the sincere seeker is to follow the “Atma Dharma” which is the expression of divinity via acts of righteousness, truthfulness, charitable activities etc. Forgetting our true identity, we associate with the body and undertake acts of “deha dharma” to fulfil the multifarious desires that crop up frequently. This is the “Paradharmat” referred to in this sloka.

With full of vigour and zeal we undertake activities to fulfil personal desires. Actions of “Atma dharma” may not appear fruitful initially because they involve abstaining from or missing many of the ‘worldly pleasures’. Liberation (which the seeker is after) is not a magical result that happens overnight. It takes sincere, dedicated, hard work for many years and could take many births and deaths. But the end result is really worth the struggle because it gives “Eternal Peace” with no more sorrows to face. This is what we should understand from the sentence: “Better is one's own duty, though without merits”. Conducting all ordained duties without expectation of results and the pleasures to be accrued from the same, leads us towards the path of Eternal Peace. The merits referred to are the “fulfilment of worldly desires which result in only transient pleasures.”

“He who performs his duties ordained by his own nature incurs no sin”:

Duties “Ordained by his own nature” are duties relating to “Atma dharma”. These duties will not result in new vasanas getting imprinted on the mind. We have studied in chapter 14 that the vasanas are the sins. “Incurs no sin” means “no new vasanas on the mind.” In a negative sense, the Lord is implying that he who performs the duties of another (deha dharma) will incur sin, which is the “accumulation of new vasanas”. This results in a delay, in attaining “Moksha” which is the ultimate “Purushartha” for having been born as humans. Because of this mistake we have to experience so many pleasures and pains for so many births.

We are born as humans and our Atma Dharma is to work for humanity. Working for the fulfilment of bodily pleasures is Paradharma. This applies to majority of us who are totally immersed in worldly life and work for the fulfilment of so many desires. Each one of us by being part of the society we live in, has certain social duties to fulfil. Towards this we undergo basic training in the early period of our lives and get the necessary qualifications to undertake certain specialised duties. This entitles us to earn and maintain ourselves and our family. The basic education and university education is organised by various sections of the community and society invests a lot of money towards getting a person qualified. The professional work conducted by the person will be the duties ordained by their own nature. This is “Swadharma”. As the training and supervision is intense, it is unlikely to result in any mistakes. On the other hand conducting duties where one is not professionally educated and trained (paradharma) may appear easy to begin with. But in the course of time, is bound to result in mistakes. The mistakes will result in painful consequences for the individual and the society. The end result of such actions is “sin by the conduct of paradharma.”

In our daily life we come across situations where we, the occupants of the house we live in, undertake repairs to the property and consider ourselves competent to undertake such tasks. There are trained engineers/professionals to undertake such jobs but we do not approach them. Many times we probably do not make mistakes. But, there are instances where unfortunately such work undertaken has resulted in major accidents. This is the sin referred to in the sloka by conduct of paradharma.

The junior surgeon in the operating theatre in a hospital may have seen and assisted in many simple surgical procedures and got expertise in carrying out such tasks. He does not incur any sin from such acts which are like “Swadharma” for his status. If one day, he decides to undertake a surgery for which he was not certified competent, then it is to be considered as “Paradharma.” Even though he may have performed well, it is still considered as “sin”. It is also possible that he might have harmed the patient or he might at a later date harm another patient by undertaking such procedures. This is the sin referred to in this sloka.

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत ।  
र्ष्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धुमेणैव मेनावृताः ॥४८॥

saha-jam karma kaunteya sa-dosham api na tyajet |  
sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa dhūmenāgnir ivāvṛitāḥ ॥४८॥

**Sloka 48**

**SAHA-JAM KARMA KAUNTEYA SA-DOSHAM API NA TYAJET  
SARVARAMBHA HI DOSHENA DHUMENAGNIR IVAVRITAH**

**O Kaunteya, one should not abandon the duty to which he is born, though faulty. For, all undertakings are enveloped by evil, as fire by smoke.**

sahajam: born of one’s own nature;  
karma: duty;  
kaunteya: Arjuna;  
sadosham: though faulty;  
api: even;  
na tyajet: not abandon;  
sarva arambha: all undertakings;

hi: for;  
doshena: by evil;  
dhoomena: as fire;  
agnihi: fire;  
iva: like;  
avrutaha: enveloped.

We have discussed in depth what we mean by the words “one’s own duty.” There may be a few who could come with a negative approach and say why not “let us abandon/renounce the world and its attachments and strive for Liberation”?

Sri Krishna categorically states “do not abandon the duty to which you are born into, though faulty.” He also says: “All undertakings are enveloped by evil”. We need to understand this clearly.

To begin with, there is no such thing as “no evil” in any act. Every act has an element of evil in it. Simple daily activities like walking on the road, breathing in the air, getting fruits/vegetables from the plants have an element of harm. We breathe in a number of germs and hurt them. Can we stop breathing? We tread on a number of insects, little animals and hurt them / kill them. Can we stop walking? We pick vegetables from the plants and this hurts the plant. Can we stop eating vegetables?

As a matter of fact our scriptures have a solution for this problem. They recommend recitation of simple mantras like “Om” while walking, picking up the vegetables etc. The sastras say that this burns away the evil in such acts. The Scriptures advocate daily Sandhya for the atonement of such sins. (Sandhya: A traditional Hindu ritual. Literally means “salutation to Sandhya”, the transition moments of the day, namely the two twilights dawn and dusk.) Let us take another example.

The judge sitting in a court of law pronounces a punishment to fit a crime according to the law books of the country. The punishment does hurt the criminal. Does the judiciary system stop working because their verdicts harm the criminal? The surgeon cuts open the abdomen to take an infected appendix out. In the process he hurts the patient. Does he stop from carrying on with the surgical procedure? The example of fire and smoke is given to explain this. The fire is needed for many types of work we undertake. The smoke emanates from the fire. If we take smoke as an evil product of fire and stop using the fire, we are the losers.

Basically the Lord is telling us to do duties (professional, domestic etc) and not get carried away by instincts. Ideas such as “I like it, I don’t like it”, should not come in once we have entered into a profession. We have no other option than to carry out and fulfil the job we were trained for.

Finally, let us recollect the meaning of the word: “Sarvambhena”. “sarvambhahi doshena” - “all undertakings are enveloped by evil”. “Arambha” is beginning. All undertakings begin with the feeling of “I am going to do it”. There is the element of “I” in it. This is the ego expressing itself and is the evil referred to. By uttering the mantra “Sri Krishnarpanamastu” with the intention of offering all the good out of the dharmic work at the feet of the Lord, there is no evil in such undertaking. This is the adoration we are expected to show in our work.

Another point to reflect upon: Karma as we have studied in chapter 3 and 4 is: Nitya Karma; Naimittika Karma; Kamya karma; Nishiddha karma. The word “Sahaja karma” has been brought in by the Lord in this sloka. “Sahaja” means that which is natural. If we look at ourselves and realise our true identity as the “Atman” and recognise that we should exhibit “Atma Swaroopa” (the form of the Atman) in all our thoughts and actions, this is “Sahaja Karma”.

**असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।**

पृ नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां सन्न्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥49॥

asakta-buddhiḥ sarvatra jitātmā vigata-sprīhaḥ |  
naiṣkarmya-siddhiṁ paramām sannyāsenādhigacchati ॥49॥

**Sloka 49**

**ASAKTA-BUDDHIH SARVATRA JITATMA VIGATA-SPRIHAH  
NAISHKARMYA-SIDDHIM PARAMAM SANNYASENADHIGACCHATI**

**He whose intellect is unattached everywhere, who has subdued his self, is free from desires, he, through renunciation, attains the supreme action-less state.**

asaktabuddhi: (whose) intellect is unattached;  
sarvatra: everywhere;  
jitatma: who has subdued his self;  
vigatasprīhaha: free from desires;  
naiṣkarmyasiddhim: supreme actionless state;  
sannyasena: through renunciation;  
adhigacchati: attains.

Attains the Supreme actionless state. What is it?  
It is the state of a “Jivanmukta”, a liberated soul while living.

Indirectly the Lord is giving us the reason to abandon the thought of Moksha. The chapter is “Moksha Sanyasa Yoga”. For experiencing the “Peace” we have to conduct actions. We have to continue to discharge our daily duties which fit in with the principle of Nishkama karma and Karma phala tyaga. The conditions for success are:

Asaktabuddhihi: Intellect unattached.  
Sri Krishna did not say “asaktamanas” (meaning: the mind unattached).

The intellect is the reasoning capacity. It can get connected to the internal world of the Atman within or through the medium of the mind to the external world.

The element of “want” makes us conduct actions either to attain Moksha or to enjoy the pleasures of the world. We are asked to continue discharging our duties and be part of the world we live in. Desperation for Moksha and running away from all worldly responsibilities is wrong. Desperation for enjoying worldly pleasures and getting totally immersed in the task is also wrong.

Sarvatra: everywhere.

It is in relation to the various actions conducted in a day. For an expert in Dhyana yoga (yoga of meditation) it is not difficult (during state of meditation) to keep the mind calm and not get distracted by impulses both from within the mind and from the objective world. But as soon as one comes out of the state of deep meditation, the objective world brings in distractions. Absence of distractions from all sources while deeply meditating on duties is what is meant by “Sarvatra asakta buddhi.” It is to be understood as “single pointed concentration”. This is the first criterion for a “Jivanmukta.”

The next command is: “Jitatma” - victory over the mind which is “self” with a small case “s”.

The mind is the bandmaster for all activities of the body. It is always running out to the external world in search of happiness. The Jivanmukta however, will have conquered his mind.

Vigatasprihaha: free from desires.

Desires are the product of what the sense organs bring in to the mind. Free from desires means that the sense organs should still be working but the desires that crop up from the impulses brought in, should be under total control.

If the intellect has to remain unattached everywhere, if the mind has to be subdued and if there should be freedom from desires, should it mean that one should not do any work? Hence the assertion by the Lord: Naishkarmyasiddhim: Achieve the Supreme action less state. It does not mean “do not conduct actions” but implies the conduct of actions with the feeling of “detachment in attachment.”

When there is action but no feeling of “I” in such actions it is “Naishkarma”. The absence of individuality in the conduct of actions is the “absence of kartrutva bhavana” (the feeling of “I have done it or I will do it”). But, let us not forget the word “siddhim”. “Siddhi” is “to achieve.” It is the end result. The final test of conducting actions (karma) is when the “I” is dropped from such actions. As actions arise because of vasanas, reaching the state of “no vasanas” in the mind is the aim and this can come by slowly burning away all the pent up desires and hatreds. One has to perform necessary actions (one’s own duties) to bring forth “vasana kshaya” (the clearing of all the stored vasanas). This has to be accomplished whilst having “no reaction to actions conducted” because a reaction would bring in new vasanas.

Verse 14, chapter 4, Sri Krishna says “I have no actions to perform now and no actions to perform later, but I still do my work.” How does one achieve this state?  
Sanyasena: by renunciation.

Renunciation of “I” (ego) in the action is “Sanyasa”. Sloka 2 of this chapter defined “Sanyasa” as “renunciation of all desire oriented actions”. As the desires stem from the ego, renunciation of ego is Sanyasa. This is absence of “Bhoktrutva bhavana” (feeling of enjoying the pleasures – “I will enjoy”).

Arjuna had understood Sanyasa as inaction and now the Lord says it is a wrong notion. The Actionless state in action is Sanyasa, He corrects Arjuna. We have to renounce “Ego” and this is the condition brought out so many times in this sloka.  
What do we get from this?

Paramam adhigachati: attains the Supreme.

It is the state of “Jivanmukta” we referred to earlier. In short this sloka is the summary of chapter 5, Karma Sanyasa Yoga.

This sloka also is a reiteration of sloka 43, chapter 3:

EVAM BUDDHEH PARAM BUDDHYVASAMSABHYATMANAM ATMANA AHI SHATRUM  
MAHABAHO KAMAROOPAM DURASADAM

O Arjuna, mighty armed, thus having known what is greater than the intellect, namely Atman, and restraining the self by the Self, conquer the foe in the form of desire which is indeed hard to overcome.

सिद्धिं प्राप्तो यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे |  
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ||50||



siddhim prāpto yathā brahma tathāpnoti nibodha me |  
samāsenaiḥ kaunteya niṣṭhā jñānasya yā parā ||50||

### Sloka 50

**SIDDHIM PRAPTO YATHA BRAHMA TATHAPNOTI NIBODHA ME  
SAMASENAIVA KAUNTEYA NISHTHA JNANASYA YA PARA**

**O Kaunteya, learn from Me in brief how reaching perfection, man attains Brahman, that Supreme state of knowledge.**

siddhim: perfection;  
prapto: reaching;  
yathā: how;  
brahma: Brahman;  
tathā: that;  
apnoti: attains;  
me': Me;  
nibodha: learn;  
samāsenaiva: even in brief;  
kaunteya: Arjuna;  
niṣṭha: state;  
jñānasya: of knowledge;  
parā: Supreme.

Both Karma yoga and Jnana yoga are included in this sloka. That perfection in actions described in the past few slokas is directing the seeker towards karma yoga. This knowledge acquired lifts the seeker towards the Supreme state of knowledge which is Brahman. “Brahman is the Supreme knowledge”, Sri Krishna asserts. This is Jnana Yoga. Conduct actions, develop the knowledge to reach the Supreme state of knowledge is the advice to Arjuna.

In the next few slokas Arjuna will be given information on how the knowledge of Brahman is acquired by perfection in action. As a matter of fact Sri Krishna in the next three slokas has given the total summary of the Gita and the three together according to the experts constitutes “Samkshipta Gita” (summary of Gita). The appropriate word used by Krishna is: “samāsena eva Kaunteya” (in brief, O Kaunteya).

बुद्ध्या विशुद्धया युक्तो धृति्यात्मानं नियम्य च |  
शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ||51||

**buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto dhṛityātmānaṁ niyamya cha |  
śhabdādīn viṣhayāns tyaktvā rāga-dveṣhau vyudasya cha ||51||**

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः |  
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ||52||

vivikta-sevī laghv-āśhī yata-vāk-kāya-mānasaḥ |  
dhyāna-yoga-paro nityam vairāgyam samupāśhritaḥ ||52||

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।  
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभू याय कल्पते ||53||

ahankāram balaṁ darpaṁ kāmam krodham parigraham |  
vimuchya nirmamaḥ śhānto brahma-bhūyāya kalpate ||53||

Sloka 51 - 53

**BUDDHYA VISHUDDHAYA YUKTO DHRITYATMANAM NIYAMYA CHA  
SHABDADIN VISHAYANS TYAKTVA RAGA-DVESHOU VYUDASYA CHA**

**VIVIKTA-SEVI LAGHV-ASHI YATA-VAK-KAYA-MANASAH  
DHYANA-YOGA-PARO NITYAM VAIRAGYAM SAMUPASHRITAH**

**AHANKARAM BALAM DARPAM KAMAM KRODHAM PARIGRAHAM  
VIMUCHYA NIRMAMAH SHANTO BRAHMA-BHUYAYA KALPATE**

**Endowed with pure understanding, firmly controlling one's self, turning away from sound and other sense-objects, and abandoning attraction and hatred;**

**Dwelling in solitude, eating but little, speech, body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and taking refuge in dispassion;**

**Having abandoned egotism, (animal) power, arrogance, desire, anger and greed, free from the notion of "mine", and peaceful, he is fit for becoming Brahman.**

The knowledge required towards the conduct of actions for Moksha is "Adhyatma Vidya". The goal achieved is, "Brahma Sakshatkara".

The following conditions are to be fulfilled to experience the ever peaceful state of Brahman:

Buddhya vishuddhaya,  
Yukto dhrutyatmanam niyamy cha,  
Shabdadeen vishayaan tyaktva,  
Raga dweshou vyudasya cha,  
Viviktasevi,  
Laghvasi,  
Yat vak kaya manasaha,  
Dhyanyoga paro nityam,  
Vairagyam samupashritaha,  
Ahamkaram,  
Balam darpaṁ,  
Kamam krodham parigraham,  
Vimuchya,  
Nirmamo,  
Shanto.



There is no need to go in search of “Moksha”. What is needed is to understand fully, put into practice and fulfil the above criterion.

All of these should be constant companions at all times on a 24/7 basis. This is the state of “Jivanmukta” (Liberated soul). This chapter is “Moksha Sanyasa Yoga”. The notion of “I want Moksha” has to be abandoned. Liberation is the seeker’s birth right and is within each one of us to acquire.

बुद्ध्या विशुद्ध या यु क्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च ।  
शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युद स्य च ॥51॥

buddhyā viśuddhayā yukto dhṛityātmānam niyamya cha ।  
śhabdādīn viśhayāns tyaktvā rāga-dveṣhau vyudasya cha ॥51॥

### Sloka 51

**BUDDHYA VISHUDDHAYA YUKTO DHRITYATMANAM NIYAMYA CHA  
SHABDADIN VISHAYANS TYAKTVA RAGA-DVESHOU VYUDASYA CHA**

**Endowed with pure understanding, firmly controlling one’s self, turning away from sound and other sense-objects, and abandoning attraction and hatred;**

buddhya: understanding;  
vishuddhaya: pure;  
yukto: endowed;  
dhrutyā: firmly;  
atmanam: self;  
niyamya: controlling;  
cha: and;  
shabdadeen: sound and other;  
vishayaan: sense objects;  
tyaktva: relinquishing/ turning away;  
raga dweshou: attraction and hatred;  
vyudasya: abandoning.

Buddhya vishuddhaya: referring to buddhi  
dhrutyatmanam: referring to the mind  
shabdadeen vishayaan: referring to the sense organs.

Buddhya vishuddhaya

Buddhi is “intelligence” and Vishuddhi is “perfect purity”. The intelligence should be pure and not perverted. There should not be a speck of dirt on the intelligence. When there is an element of ego, the buddhi is said to be impure. The dirt referred to is the “ego”. When there is no ego, it is “subudhi” meaning “good reasoning capacity”. In the presence of ego (selfishness) it is considered as “durbuddhi” (reasoning capacity with selfishness predominating). Technically we can say that the mind should be as perfectly clear as the mirror without any speck of dirt on it. The dirt on the mirror distorts the reflection.

Dhrutyatmanam niyamyā: firmly controlling the self/mind.

The mind should not be like a monkey jumping from thought to thought. (Arjuna controlled his mind and discharged his duties and let Krishna, the intellect hold on to the reins on the chariot). (Refer to the description of Geetopadeshā picture in the introduction).

We have studied already as to how the sense organs constantly bring in impulses to the mind. Like the dust making the mirror impure, these impulses act like dirt and make the intellectual mirror impure. The seeker has to learn the art of firmly controlling the mind and not letting any impulses register in it. “Niyamyā” means “practice”. “The practice has to be perfect”, says the Lord. The mind tends to run after the sensuous world and should be controlled firmly.

Shabdadeen vishayaan tyaktva: relinquishing sound and other sense objects.

While the attempt is firmly to control the mind, the journey of life has to continue. We hear, see, smell, taste and feel the world in one form or other. Relinquishing this is impossible but it is important to practice, ‘not taking notice of everything’ which can bring distraction. The horses on the chariot have blinkers. The blinkers do not shut the eyes totally. But they aid to prevent the horses getting distracted. Similarly, the seeker should make progress in the right direction and not let the other impulses that come in cause distraction. Keep the senses open and working but control what they bring in, should be the way to understand this sloka.

Raga dweshou vyudasya cha: Abandoning attraction and hatred.

Likes and dislikes disturb the sense of balance in the mind. They stay for long periods in the mind and the seeker should not become a victim to their sway. So far, in sloka 51, we have been told: Have a firm secure control over the gates of entry/exit, And Not to dwell on the pleasures of life.

विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः |  
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समु पश्रितः ||52||

vivikta-sevī laghv-āshī yata-vāk-kāya-mānasaḥ |  
dhyāna-yoga-paro nityam vairāgyam samupāshritaḥ ||52||

**Sloka 52**

**VIVIKTA-SEVI LAGHV-ASHI YATA-VAK-KAYA-MANASAH  
DHYANA-YOGA-PARO NITYAM VAIRAGYAM SAMUPASHRITAH**

**Dwelling in solitude, eating but little, speech, body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and taking refuge in dispassion;**

viviktasevi: dwelling in solitude;  
lagvasee: eating but little;  
yata vak kaya manasaha: speech, body and mind subdued;  
dhyana yoga paro: engaged in meditation and concentration;  
nityam: always;  
vairagyam: dispassion;

samupashritaha: taking refuge in.

Viviktasevi: dwelling in solitude.

The sacred text is the summary of the Upanisads (“sitting near”). Sitting near the master and learning the text presupposes that the mind should concentrate on what is being taught.

It is difficult to learn the art of concentrated meditation in day to day’ life. There is a need for a solitary place in the house which is free from impulses that distract the concentration needed for meditation. Gradually one should make progress and master the technique so that even in the crowded market place he will not get distracted. This is “dwelling in solitude”. Firm control over the mind and the sense organs is “dwelling in solitude.”

Laghvasi: It means “moderation in food”.

The sloka “Yuktahara Viharasya” in chapter 6, sloka 17 is all about this moderation. Eating satvic food (Sloka 8, chapter 17) is also important.

The impulses from the external world brought in by the sense organs act as food for the mind. We should therefore not overfeed the mind with sensual impulses and make sure we feed it with satvic food.

Yata vak kaya manasha: Control of the speech, body and the mind.

Verses 15 and 16 in chapter 17 are about this quality.

Dhyanayoga paro nityam: always engaged in meditation.

It is not just meditating on the Supreme. Considering the work as worship and discharging one’s duties with 100% attention is also part of meditation.

Vairagyam samupashritaha: Dispassion to worldly objects.

This is mastering the art of “detachment in attachment towards worldly objects and also developing attachment to the Supreme.” Sense objects become objects of desire. Desires in turn act like thieves that rob us of our wealth (Peace). We, (like policemen are on duty 24 hours a day), should not let the sense objects become objects of desire and rob us of the Peace within. (On the contrary the thief (desires) should run away on seeing us).

अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।

विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभू याय कल्पते ॥53॥

ahankāraṁ balaṁ darpaṁ kāmam krodham parigraham |

vimuchya nirmamaḥ śhānto brahma-bhūyāya kalpate ॥53॥

**Sloka 53**

**AHANKARAM BALAM DARPAM KAMAM KRODHAM PARIGRAHAM  
VIMUCHYA NIRMAMAH SHANTO BRAHMA-BHUYAYA KALPATE**

**Having abandoned egotism, (animal) power, arrogance, desire, anger and greed, free from the notion of “mine”, and peaceful, he is fit for becoming Brahman.**

ahankaram: egotism;  
balam: strength;  
darpam: arrogance;  
kamam: desire;  
krodham: anger;  
parigraham: covetousness / greed / receiving gift from others;  
vimuchya: abandoned;  
nirmamaha: without “mine”;  
shantaha: peaceful;  
brahma bhooyaya: for becoming Brahman;  
kalpate: is fit.

Sloka 51 - 53:

The qualities given in these slokas should be expressed as the “Song of the Soul”. It is important that the seeker develops certain enduring values of life.

The seeker should work hard at eliminating totally the following qualities: Ahamakaram, Balam, Darpam, Kamam, Krodham, Parigraham - covetousness (pari - on all sides, graha: to grab) (Parigraha also means: amass, to crave, to receive or accept material possessions or gifts from others, taking from others more than one’s essential needs.)

Ahamakara: “Pride”

This is the greatest evil that comes in the way of the seeker wishing to experience the Eternal Bliss which is “Moksha”. The Atman associated with the mind/intellect becomes the jivatman. The jivatman developing association with the sense organs and as a result with the physical world around, thereby forgetting its true identity becomes the jiva. Ahamkara is the result of the Atman apparently becoming the jivatman and developing selfishness. The association / identification with the physical body is maintained through all the soul’s transmigration, in the series of births and deaths.

Having come towards the end of the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, the seeker is expected to have a greater understanding of this word “Ahamkara”. There are basically three types of “Pride”. They are:

Karma ahamkara:

The pride that comes from the feeling “I have done so much good work” is karma ahamkara.

Budhi ahamkara:

It is the pride that comes from the feeling that I am intelligent, (like, “I have studied so many sacred texts, the Vedas and the Upanisads”) and consider myself to be superior to others.

Indriya ahamkara:

It is the pride in the power of the sense organs.

The pride of youth falls under this category.

Balam and darpam: The subject matter on “Balam” has been discussed in detail in sloka 11, chapter 7. The strength to fulfil the desire and satisfy the ego is balam.

On the contrary the seeker should learn to use the spiritual strength in him to overcome the ego. Arjuna surrendered at the feet of Lord Krishna and received the nectar of Gita. This gave him the spiritual strength which was the weapon to fight the evil Kauravas.

We have discussed on “Darpam” in sloka 4, chapter 16. The sheer animal strength and winning the objects of desire in course of time makes the individual develop pride. This is expressed as arrogance in his reaction to others. The sheer arrogance is “Darpam.” Arrogance due to animal strength is “Darpam”.

Kama/krodha: desire and anger.

The Lord has referred to these two evils several times in the preceding chapters. The desires turn into greed and this brings out the quality of “parigraha” which is “covetousness”. It also means receiving gifts from others. The sastras strongly condemn such acts.

Parigraha also means: (Pari - on all sides; graha - to grasp) Amass, To crave for, To seek, To receive or accept, Taking more than what one needs. How does such a person live? This is the subject matter that is covered in the next sloka. As a matter of fact the scriptures are clear about when and where one should receive gifts. A poor person can receive gifts to sustain himself and his family. Even here, the sastras are strict about when and where such gifts can be accepted.

Vimuchya: Complete rejection of the desires arising from association with the objects in the material world is Vimuchya.

Nirmama: (Not mine): One should be free from the notion that “It is mine”. On the contrary the attitude should be, “whatever I have belongs to Him and I am only its caretaker.” This in turn brings on “Shanti” – “Peace.” There will be no more agitations in the mind.

What is the end result from such a discipline? Brahma bhuyaaya kalapate: “Fit to attain the state of Brahman”, the Lord says. “Kalpate” means “fit to receive the reward”. He who has these divine virtues and has abandoned the evils mentioned in these slokas is fit to attain the state of Brahman, which is “Sat, Chit, Ananda”.

ब्रह्मभू तः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।  
समः सर्वेषु भू तेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम ्॥54॥

brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śhochati na kāṅkṣhati |  
samaḥ sarveṣhu bhūteṣhu mad-bhaktim labhate param |54||

**Sloka 54**

**BRAHMA-BHUTAH PRASANNATMA NA SHOCHATI NA KANKSHATI  
SAMAH SARVESHU BHUTESHU MAD-BHAKTIM LABHATE PARAM**

**Becoming Brahman, serene minded, he neither grieves nor desires, equal to all beings, he obtains supreme devotion to Me.**

Brahma bhootaha: Jivanmukta / becoming Brahman;  
prasannatma: serene minded;  
na shochati: grieves not;

na kankshati: no desires;  
samaha: equal;  
sarveshu bhuteshu: to all beings;  
madbhaktim: devotion to Me;  
param: Supreme;  
labhate: obtains.

The last word in sloka 53 was “Brahma bhuyaya kalpate” meaning, eligible for becoming “Brahman”. He becomes a “Brahma Jnani” (knower of Brahman). The sastras call such an evolved seeker as “Jivanmukta”. Jivanmukta is the title for the liberated soul while continuing to live in this world.

How would such a seeker conduct his duties? This is answered in this sloka.

Prasannatma: serene minded. (Refer to sloka 16, chapter 17, “Manasika Tapas”)

Philosophically it is the “Ananda” which comes from within and not from the objective world. He should have a balance of mind in relation to the worldly transactions. The state of happiness that does not end in sorrow is Prasannata. It is the serenity that comes of mental composure.

Na kankshati: has no desires.

He accepts whatever returns that come from his actions as a gift from the Lord. He considers that he has a right (adhikara) to conduct actions and is not motivated by the fruits that come from his actions.

Na shochati: does not grieve.

There should not be grief with the results obtained from the ordained duties. “Lord, I take what you give me as your prasadam” should be the attitude. Grief comes from expectation. When there are no expectations, there will be no more room for grief. Grief and desires have to do with the “I-ness”. How to avoid grief? By not having the sense of agency in actions.

Sense of agency in actions arises at two levels: Kartrutva Bhavana and Bhoktrutva Bhavana. “Kartrutva bhavana” (the feeling of “I did it”) which originates in the mind, “Bhoktrutva bhavana” (the sense of agency in enjoyment of the results of actions) which originates in the intellect. One should develop equanimity of mind by not having likes and dislikes in relation to the results of actions.

Samaha sarveshu bhuteshu: equal to all beings (sloka 55, chapter 11).

The Jivanmukta shows love for all beings. It is true that the world in which we live, has a variety of beings expressing a variety of characters. The sastras bring out the truth that despite the apparent differences every living entity in this universe is alive because of the spark of Paramatman within. The Jivanmukta sees/realises the presence of the Paramatma in all and as he has supreme love for the Paramatma, he transmits the same love to all beings.

Sarveshu bhuteshu: Towards all forms of life.

There could be differences: In nationality, In religion, Caste, Sect, Sex, and so on and so forth. He is a Self realised soul because he sees/visualises/has the awareness of the same “Self” in all. This is “Self” realisation.

“Madbhaktim labhate param: Obtains Supreme devotion to Me”.

This is an important declaration from the Lord Himself. The first three quarters/padas in this verse: “Brahma bhootaha prasannatma, na shochati na kankshati, Samaha sarveshu bhuteshu” Meaning:

Becoming Brahman, serene minded, neither grieving nor desiring, the same to all beings. This comes when the actions are in line with the jnana/knowledge acquired. This knowledge/jnana is considered as “Parama Bhakti”. By “Supreme devotion to Me” says the Lord.

The Lord is making a categorical statement that supreme knowledge expressed by an individual is supreme action and this is Supreme Devotion. A true Jnani is a true Bhakta and a true Bhakta is a true Jnani. The Lord wants the seekers to consider Jnana, Karma and Bhakti as being interrelated, He does not want us to classify them as being different from each other and does not consider any one of them as being superior to the others.

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।  
ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥55॥

bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaśh chāsmi tattvataḥ ।  
tato mām tattvato jñātvā viśhate tad-anantaram ॥55॥

### Sloka 55

**BHAKTYA MAM ABHIJANATI YAVAN YASH CHASMI TATTVATAH  
TATO MAM TATTVATO JNATVA VISHATE TAD-ANANTARAM**

**By Devotion, he knows Me in essence, who and what I am; then having known Me in essence, he forthwith enters (into Me).**

bhaktya: with/by devotion;  
maam: Me;  
abhijanati: knows;  
yavan: what (I am);  
yaha: who (I am);  
asmi: (I) am;  
tatvatah: in essence;  
tato: then;  
mam: Me;  
tattvato: in essence;  
jnatva: having known;  
vishate: enters;  
tad: that;  
anantaram: at the end.

Sloka 17, chapter 7 has a similar meaning to this sloka. It is: “Tesham jnane nitya yukta ekabhaktir vishishyate”

We learnt that true knowledge (jnana) expressed in action (karma) is “Supreme Devotion” (Parama Bhakti) and this comes from the Grace of the Lord. “Knowledge leads to devotion” is the essence of the last few slokas. In this sloka however, the Lord says that “Devotion (bhakti) leads to knowledge (Jnana) and this is the path for Moksha”. This could appear as being apparently contradictory.

Vers 17, Kapitel 7, hat eine ähnliche Bedeutung wie dieser Vers. Es ist: „Tesham jnane nitya yukta ekabhaktir vishishyate”.

But by deep devotion, the seeker comes to understand the true nature (tatvataha) of the Supreme. He comes to know “who the Lord is and what the Lord is.” Just theoretical knowledge alone, cannot provide the answer to “who and what the Lord is”. Each step up of the ladder in spiritual progress gives us a better picture of the Supreme. So, in reality, the slokas are not contradictory but are complimentary to each other.

We can understand this clearly by taking the example of how a new born baby develops its relationship with its mother. The baby upon birth, does not know who its mother is and so consequently no love is expressed. However after a little time, the baby comes to realise that this person is taking care of all its needs, as and when they arise, like change of nappies, feeding, giving cuddles etc. The baby responds initially by smiling at this person who is providing all the care. This is the first stage of knowledge (basic knowledge) and this develops into deep love. As the baby continues to grow, this love enables it to develop a deeper knowledge of the person who is providing the care. This knowledge (Jnana) then leads to further love (Bhakti). In stages, the baby: Comes to know her mother, Comes to love the mother, who cares for her, Then comes to know her mother much better and this leads to further love. The child who knows her mother perfectly as her carer, will become the perfect devotee of her mother. The knowledge that the person who cared for her and looked after her needs led to love (devotion) and love in turn led her to know her mother much better. The child and mother become one. The child acts in a fashion that pleases the mother and the mother acts to protect the child. Each of them works to please the other.

This is the way to understand the last section of the sloka which says: “Having known Me in essence, he forthwith enters into Me.” If we replace the child with “us, the individuals” and the mother with “Parabrahman” we can understand the scenario better. First of all we should know that He cares for our welfare and protects us at all times. It is us, who do not realise this. Most of us probably blame the God for our problems but then give credit to ourselves for the good things that come our way. Devotion is love for the Supreme. It is measured by the degree of identification the devotee has with the Lord.

Total identification with the Lord and divinity, requires the dropping of the “ego” by the devotee. Ego/Ahamkara is one of the four parts of the antahkarana (inner organ). The feeling of “I, Me” is known as “ahambhavana”. When this expressed outwardly it is “Ahamkara”. This is “Ego”. The external organs (Bahirkarana) of action are the karmendriyas: Pada (feet) - for locomotion. Pani (hands) - for dexterity. Payu (rectum) - for excretion. Upastha (genitals) - for reproduction. Vak (mouth) - for speech.

There are four internal organs of action/Antahkarana. They are: Mano, Buddhi, Chitta, Ahamkara. Mind (mano): it is that part that cannot make quick decisions and is said to be oscillating between feelings of “should I or should I not”? Buddhi: that aspect which makes quick decisions is buddhi. Reasoning, decision making etc are its functions. Chitta: memory bank. It is that aspect which has the capacity to recollect. Ahamkara; the ego - it is that aspect which expresses the feeling of “Me, I am the doer”. Of course, in worldly transactions selfishness creeps in and the devotion does not reach the supreme state in all cases.

The fact is: What is known through love is “real knowledge”, What is done through real love is “true service.” The sincere Bhakta is worshipping Saguna Brahman and The sincere Jnani is worshipping Nirguna Brahman. The unknown, unknowable (nirakara nirguna Brahman) becomes known to true lover/bhakta. He understands who and what the Lord is. (By devotion, he knows Me in essence, who I am and what I am, the unknown, unknowable). This is because love provides the way to the inaccessible and makes the impossible, possible.

The Bhakta sees the Lord at the level of his mind. But the Jnani sees the same Lord with true wisdom at the level of his intellect (Intellectual eye of wisdom). Vishate tadanantaram: after becoming wise (a



Vijnani - loving the Lord constantly) and living the life of knowledge, the seeker enters into the Lord. It is like salt or sugar dissolving in water. This state can be called as the state of “Krishna Consciousness.”

What do we understand from these slokas: By knowledge alone Liberation is achieved; by devotion alone such knowledge is obtained. Shankaracharya, a staunch “Advaitin” propagated Bhakti as a means to unite with the Lord.

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वा णो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।  
मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥56॥

sarva-karmāṅy api sadā kurvāṅo mad-vyapāśhrayaḥ | mat-prasādā avāpnoti  
śhāshvatam padam avyayam ||56||

### Sloka 56

**SARVA-KARMANY API SADA KURVANO MAD-VYAPASHRAYAH  
MAT-PRASADAD AVAPNOTI SHASHVATAM PADAM AVYAYAM**

**Performing all actions continuously, he who takes refuge in Me only, by My Grace, he obtains the indestructible, eternal state.**

sarva: all;  
karmani: actions;  
sadaa: always;  
kurvaani: performing;  
api: even;  
mad-upsashrayaha (madvapashrayaha): takes refuge in Me;  
matprasadaat: by My Grace;  
avapnoti: obtains;  
shashvatam: eternal;  
padam: state (meaning state of Moksha);  
avyayam: indestructible.

The summary of the last few slokas is: The reward by the Lord for true knowledge (Jnana) expressed in action (Karma) is “Supreme Devotion” (Parama Bhakti).

“Knowledge leads to Devotion”. “Devotion” (Bhakti) leads to knowledge (Jnana) and this is the path for Moksha. Devotion is the flower and Jnana is the fruit. Supreme Devotion (Parama bhakti) leads to Supreme knowledge (Vijnana): It does not mean that the seeker has attained Moksha. He is still living in this world and has to wait like everybody else for the date of his departure, which is ordained by the Lord. “The roads leading to a town” means that the town is a different entity to the roads that lead to it. Moksha is an entity on its own and all the paths lead us to it ultimately. This is expressed via the symbol of “Sanatana Dharma”. The life of the devotee is therefore not complete just by developing supreme knowledge. So, what should such a devotee do?

Sarvakarmanyapi sadaa madvapashrayaha: Performing all actions continually and taking refuge in Him only.

Let us be clear that all actions, means actions according to the Sastras. It does not mean “any actions” (No prohibited actions). Actions (karma) are the means to Moksha and not the Moksha in itself. This is the essential requisite to burn the existing vasanas.

(Vasana Kshaya) Sadaa: it is an important adjunct. It means “continuously”. It refers to the duties in every stage of life and the duties during the different periods of the day. These should be continuously discharged “till the death” of the physical body. It should be on the principle of: Karmenye vadhikaraste maa phaleshu kadachana: Have a right to carry out the ordained duties but not to the fruits of such duties.

What is the result from such form of work? Mad prasadaat avapnoti: By My Grace obtains; Sashvatam padam: the Eternal Place, This is: “The Moksha”.

The state of Moksha is: Avyayam: indestructible (permanent). No more re-entry into this world. The last few verses give us a better understanding of three of the four paths for Liberation. Karma yoga: all actions performed at body level with a firm control over the mind (by the pure intellect) and the conduct of pure actions is Karma Yoga. Bhakti Yoga: all actions at mental level that channel the emotions so that the mind can contemplate on the “Eternal Truth” is Bhakti Yoga. Jnana Yoga: Study, knowledge and reflection on the Truth that promotes discrimination, detachment and Meditation on the Supreme, carried out at the intellectual plane. The practice of these three paths is real sadhana (effort) and such a person is a true sadhaka (seeker of the Truth). The seeker needs purity of actions, mental purity and intellectual purity. (kaya, mano, chitta suddhi).

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि सन्न्यस्य मत्परः ।  
बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥57॥

chetasā sarva-karmāṇi mayi sannyasya mat-paraḥ ।  
buddhi-yogam upāśhritya mach-chittaḥ satatam bhava ॥57॥

**Sloka 57**

**CHETASA SARVA-KARMANI MAYI SANNYASYA MAT-PARAH  
BUDDHI-YOGAM UPASHRITYA MACH-CHITTAH SATATAM BHAVA**

**Mentally surrendering all actions in Me, having Me as the highest goal, resorting to the Yoga of discrimination, fix your mind ever on Me.**

chetasa: mentally;  
sarva: all;  
karmani: actions;  
mayi: in Me;  
sanyasya: resigning/surrendering;  
matparaha: having Me as the highest goal;  
buddhiyogam: yoga of discrimination;  
upashritya: resorting to;  
matchittaha: fixing the mind on Me;  
satatam: always/ ever;  
bhava: be.

“Me”: we have to take it as: “Eternal Dharma, Eternal Truth” and not referring to Krishna as an individual. Krishna is a personification of “Dharma and Satya”. He is the Supreme Parabrahman incarnated as Krishna. It is not “Krishna school of thought” but it is the Vedic teaching that Sri Krishna has propagated through the medium of the sacred text.

Mentally surrendering all actions in Me: This is the summary of Karma Yoga.

The Lord is advocating action and certainly not “inaction”. The attitude of “Krishnarpanamastu” is the way to conduct any actions. We are doing the service to the Lord and the results are to be offered to the Lord.

Having Me as the highest goal: We have to remember that we are the Atman within and not the Jivatman which has forgotten its origin from the Atman. Our aim is to realise this truth. The result of actions that have the sense of “I” in them, lead to numerous rebirths into this world and one has to go through the pains and sorrows associated with each new birth. The result of actions with the feeling of “Krishnarpanamastu” - remembering Him at all times -, reduce the possibility of rebirth into this world.

So which path would a sensible person choose? “Having Him as the highest goal” therefore has to be the answer. The mind should constantly contemplate on the Lord and the body should perform all prescribed duties. “What we think, so we become” is what the masters say. We should therefore live a life of Krishna consciousness (being conscious of the Eternal Truth and Eternal Dharma) at all times.

Resorting to the yoga of discrimination: “Buddhiyogam upashritya”.

Sloka 10, chapter 10: “dadami buddhiyogam”: To these, ever steadfast in worshipping Me with love, I give them “Buddhi Yoga” by which they come to Me.

Resorting to the yoga of discrimination is the same as worshipping the Lord with love. Buddhi/intelligence is the power of discrimination we the humans are blessed with. Unfortunately this power is not exercised by many. We have failed to use the intellectual capacity of reasoning or we are misusing this power. We must learn the art of discriminating right from wrong in all our actions.

Sanyasya: Sincerely surrendering results of good actions is the correct way to receive His Grace.

Mat Chittaha: mind fixed on Me. The mind is the seat of thoughts that get converted to actions. If the thoughts (guided by the intellect) are on Him the resulting actions will also be for Him.

Satatam bhava: This feeling has to be constant.

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गा णि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।  
अथ चेत्वमहङ्कारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्क्ष्यसि ॥58॥

mac-chittaḥ sarva-durgāṇi mat-prasādāt tariṣhyasi |  
atha chet tvam ahankārān na śhroṣhyasi vinankṣhyasi ॥58॥

**Sloka 58**

**MAC-CHITTAH SARVA-DURGANI MAT-PRASADAT TARISHYASI  
ATHA CHET TVAM AHANKARAN NA SHROSHYASI VINANKSHYASI**

**Fixing your mind on Me, by My Grace, you shall overcome all obstacles. If from egotism now you will not hear Me, you will perish.**

macchittaha: fixing your mind on Me;  
sarva durgani: all obstacles;  
mat prasadaat: by My grace;  
tarishyasi: will overcome;  
atha: now;  
cet: if;  
tvam: you;  
ahankaraat: from egotism;  
na: not;  
shrosyasi: hear;  
vinankshyasi: shall perish.

What is the benefit from listening to the advice by the Lord? What damage can accrue if the advice is not taken notice of? These two questions are answered in this sloka.

Benefits: how to get the benefits? “By fixing the mind on the Lord.” All the thoughts should be focussed on divinity. At no time should there be deviation from “Satya and Dharma”. The dictates of the Gita sastra should be adhered to. The principle of “karmanyevadhikarasthe” should be implemented at all times.

What are the benefits? “Overcome all obstacles in life”. For the spiritual seekers obstacles are those that come in the path of Moksha and hinder its progress. What are the obstacles? Happiness and sorrow; pains and pleasures; victory or loss - the results of actions, these are the obstacles. Experience of happiness from work carried out; pleasures we experience in life or achieving victory in our efforts, will boost our ego and this is a hindrance in our path. On the contrary when the results of our efforts bring in sorrow, pains or loss, we get depressed or angry or jealous which hinders our progress. We will eventually perish. We will not fulfil the purpose of our birth into this world and will go down to lower and lower planes of existence.

By implementing the teachings of the Lord through our mind, actions and speech (mano, vak, kaya) we will overcome these obstacles. We will have a balanced state of mind to continue to discharge our duties.

We can look at what the obstacles are from a different angle: Happiness/sorrow etc. are the results of our actions and actions are due to our inherent gunas. The gunas are stored in the mind. The obstacles are therefore the stored gunas/vasanas in our mind. They could be the three gunas in any permutations. All these constitute the “maya” which is the obstacle to cross. The Lord of Maya (delusion) is the Lord Himself, We are the slaves to the maya. Let us remember that to get beneficial results we need to have the Grace of the Lord. Without His Grace nothing is possible in this world.

The Lord says: Na shrosyasi meaning “if you do not hear”. How can we hear the Lord?

- 1) From the voice of the Atman within which is “Antaratma”. “He” is always talking to us but we block His voice coming through from within.
- 2) From the voice of the masters who come down in the form of gurus or preceptors in our lives.
- 3) From the voice of learned elders, teachers, parents.
- 4) From the writings of the masters who explain the contents of the sacred texts.

Why do we not listen to Him? “Due to ego”. We overestimate our power (balam) which brings about arrogance in our behaviour (darpam); We lose our sense of proportion (smritibrama); This brings about the destruction (vinasha);

Thus we have heard the Lord telling us through sloka 63, chapter 2. It is not the Lord’s judgement that we should go to hell. It is the natural ‘downward’ process caused by our own egotistic actions. What we need to do is: To hear Him, Understand what is heard, Convert into actions what is said, and get the eligibility to get his Grace. Let us therefore give less/no importance to the voice of ego and give priority to listen to the voice of Divinity from within.

The sunlight is for all and not partial to any individual. If we close the windows and draw the curtains and block the sunlight’s entry into our house, it will then be our fault for keeping the inside of our house dark. The grace of the trees is for all to get shelter from rain, heat and wind. However much we may improve the environment around us with all the great modern scientific advances, we will not make much progress if we do not listen to the voice from the sacred texts and make changes in our mental make-up. We have to move from being stone men (Tamasic) to active men (Rajasic); From active men to pure men (Satvic) and Finally by dropping the ego, Surrender at the feet of the Lord with all our being. If not, the result will be: Vinashyati meaning “perish”. It is not a curse from the master but a statement of fact, giving us the information regarding the results of actions performed, which are contrary to the sastras.

यदहङ्कारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे |  
मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ||59||

yad ahankāram āshṛitya na yotsya iti manyase |  
mithyaishā vyavasāyas te prakṛitis tvām niyokṣhyati ||59||

**Sloka 59**

**YAD AHANKARAM ASHRITYA NA YOTSYA ITI MANYASE  
MITHYAISHA VYAVASAYAS TE PRAKRITIS TVAM NIYOKSHYATI**

**If prompted by egotism, you think “I will not fight”, vain is this, your resolve, nature will compel you.**

yad: if;  
ahankaram: egotism;  
ashritya: having taken refuge in;  
na: not;  
yotsya: will fight;  
iti: thus;  
manyate: think;  
mithyesha: vain is this;  
vyavasayas: resolve;  
te: you;  
prakruti: nature;  
tvam: you;  
niyokshyati: will compel.

Let us get back to the beginning of the Gita. Arjuna with full of zeal was ready to fight the evil Kauravas. He requests Krishna to place the chariot in the middle of the battlefield so that he could see those he had to fight. On seeing Bhishma, Drona, Kripacharya he lost his nerve and started to feel for the fate of his family and friends in the war. He also thought of the consequences to those who were the dependents of the soldiers. He decided that he did not want to fight and dropped his weapon of action. But, he did ask for guidance from the master on the conduct of the right action under such circumstances. Gently telling him off in so many different ways, Krishna tells Arjuna: Ref: sloka 30, chapter 3: Renouncing all actions in Me with the mind fixed in Self, free from hope and egoism, fight without mental agitation. (mayi sarvani karmani --- yudhyasva vigatajwaraha) Towards the end of the teaching Krishna is bringing to the notice of Arjuna certain facts of life. He is telling Arjuna that the initial resolve not to fight was “the ego” talking.

After all, this philosophy is to fight the evil tendencies in the mind with the good tendencies inherent, using the Antaratma/inner voice of the divine as the guide. When there is an evil, there is a need to fight the evil. Not everybody can take up the arms and fight. Those who are trained in the art of warfare have to fight. It is in the nature of Arjuna, as a Kshatriya to be ready to fight. “Your nature will compel you” says Krishna. We should know by now that Krishna is referring to the gunas in Arjuna. They are rajasic and they will compel him to be a warrior. If not today, he will certainly continue to be a warrior tomorrow. Escapism is therefore not the answer to the dilemma. Momentarily the ego in Arjuna which says “do not fight”, might win but the inherent nature will be the winner in the end.

We can see that just because Arjuna was his friend Krishna did not grant him Moksha. Krishna wanted Arjuna to have Jnana, use the Jnana to conduct Karma and thereby attain Moksha by following the principle of surrendering the fruits of actions. This is the Grace from Krishna. He gave Arjuna “Buddhi Yoga” which assisted him to conduct the ordained duties.

We also have the Grace of the Lord on us. We have the sacred text (summary of the Vedas) given by Him and we have so many masters who have explained the text in a language that is easy to understand. We have to make use of these, better ourselves and help in making the universe we live in a safe place not just for us, but our future generations and all forms of life. Let us never succumb to the most dreaded enemy we encounter in the path, namely: “The Ego”.

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा |  
कर्तुं नर्तुं ेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ||60||

svabhāva-jena kaunteya nibaddhaḥ svena karmaṇā |  
kartuṁ necchasi yan mohāt kariṣhyasy avaśho 'pi tat ||60||

**Sloka 60**

**SVABHAVA-JENA KAUNTEYA NIBADDHAH SVENA KARMANA  
KARTUM NECCHASI YAN MOHAT KARISHYASY AVASHO 'PI TAT**

**O Arjuna, bound by your own Karma (actions), born of your own nature, that which through delusion you do not wish to do, even that you shall do helplessly, against your will.**

svabhavajena: born of own nature;  
Kaunteya: Arjuna;  
nibaddhaha: bound by;

svena: your own;  
karmana: by action;  
kartum: to do;  
ne'chasi: do not wish to do;  
yat: that;  
mohat: through delusion;  
karishyasi: shall do;  
avashopi: also helplessly;  
tat: that.

The Lord has taken up the subject of “actions and results of actions” and completes His comments on Arjuna’s statement “I will not fight” (sloka 9, chapter 2: Na yotsya iti Govindaha uktva tooshneem babhoova ha).

Bound by your own karma, born of one’s own nature: Nibaddha: “baddaha” means “bound by” and “nibaddaha” means strongly bound.

Our nature is the result of what we have done and thought in the past. The desires and hatreds during our past lives, caused by our association with the world around (prakriti) left a number of thought imprints (vasanas) on our minds. These vasanas were carried forward to our present birth and help constitute our nature. We associated ourselves with the prakriti in previous lives and developed these thoughts. Nobody else put these thoughts in our minds. The Lord certainly did not show any favour, we kept our own vasanas in our mind is the simple truth. These vasanas will get converted into actions at a suitable time. Due to the strength of the impulses stored we are helplessly compelled to act in the present station of life. Even if we do not want to act: This has to be interpreted clearly.

There are times when we probably feel that we do not want to do certain things. We have the example of Arjuna who did not want to fight in the war. If it is an impulse of not wanting to fight/act in a certain way: It is no good. The strength of the vasanas will make us fight/act, says the Lord. One can then ask: What is the way out? Is there no way out for us? Yes, there is a way out, is the answer. The Gita is the guide to refer to. It advises us to surrender at the feet of the learned and request for help. The scriptures, the learned elders and gurus will give us the “Jnana” which is the only weapon to destroy “Ignorance”. As the light dispels the darkness, ignorance will in the course of time be destroyed by the knowledge.

Example: Let us take the example of a candle. The candle is used to dispel darkness. It needs to be lit. It should then be carried carefully into the place where there is darkness. At no time should one be careless in carrying the candle. The Gita (Jnana) is like a candle. It is needed to dispel “Ignorance.” Learning it from the masters is the means to learn. If one is careless in carrying it (fails to follow the guidelines with Sraddha and Bhakti) it would harm him and others too. We need to carry the knowledge from the sacred text carefully, to succeed in dispelling ignorance.

Ignorance is “Maya”. In the case of Arjuna, because he took shelter under “Jagadguru”, he got an instantaneous cure for his ignorance. Whereas, for me and you, who are but mortals on this earth, it will take a long time to clear our ignorance.

The answer is therefore “Sadhana” meaning “effort/to practice.” The more spiritual efforts we put in, the quicker will be the time to clear the ignorance (kalmasha) accumulated and unite with the Supreme. Our life is a tug of war. On one side we have the vasanas accumulated due to our ignorance and lack of knowledge in past lives. On the other side we have the voice of the Atman within, the message from the sacred text and the advice of the spiritual masters. By practice (sadhana) and blessings of the gurus, we can strengthen our divine voice within. We can develop the 26 divine (slokas 1, 2, 3 chapter 16) virtues and strengthen the divine team. Selfishness, arrogance and their associated enemies (kama, krodha, lobha etc) will join the side of ignorance. (sloka 4, chapter 16) It is



up to us to strengthen our divine team or weaken it by letting the opposition become stronger. It is up to us to see we are in the right path for Liberation and make the journey faster. At the end, it is God's Grace that will eventually take us towards Liberation.

ईश्वरः सर्वभू तानां हृद्देशसरे ऽजुन तिष्ठति ।  
भ्रामयन्सर्वभू तानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥61॥

iśhvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām hṛid-deśhe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati |  
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā ॥61॥

### Sloka 61

**ISHVARAH SARVA-BHUTANAM HRID-DESHE 'RJUNA TISHTHATI  
BHRAMAYAN SARVA-BHUTANI YANTRARUDHANI MAYAYA**

**O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in the heart of all beings, causing all beings to revolve like puppets mounted on a machine, by His illusive power.**

Iswaraha: The Lord;  
sarva bhootaanaam: of all beings;  
hriddheshu: in the heart;  
tishtati: dwells;  
bhramayaan: made to revolve;  
sarvabhootaani: all beings;  
yantraroodhani: like puppets on a machine;  
mayaya: illusive power.

Where does the Lord reside? What does He do? How does He do what He is doing? These three questions are answered in this sloka.

Where does He reside? In the heart of all beings. He resides as “The inner Consciousness” within all. There is no differentiation and no partiality. From a small microbe to the cleverest of human beings, “He” is inside all. From a Sudra to a Brahmana He is inside all.

What should we make of this statement?

- Respect all and hate none.
- Do not feel superior or inferior to others because of their position in society. Remember that He is inside us and inside everybody else.
- “He” is there to take note of all the thoughts in our mind, all the actions we conduct and hear all the words we speak. So, be careful of what we think, do and say. He will reward us suitably for the good and we will suffer for the wrongs we do. He is only the dispenser of the fruits of our thoughts/actions and has no partiality to any individual.

In the heart of all beings: This is the postal address of His residence. It is not the physical heart He is referring to. It is the intellectual part of the mind. His ultimate aim is to see that all are given an opportunity to achieve Moksha. It is us who make our life difficult by actions filled with ego and getting caught under the influence of maya. The majority of us think that He resides in a very far off place where man cannot reach. He is so subtle that we cannot see His form, shape etc. He is so far away that our sense organs cannot perceive. Either way, too near or too far, we still cannot see Him.



What does He do? “He” (the Consciousness within) energises the matter and gives life to it. “He” brings life to “Prakriti” which is the physical body, the mind and the intellect. “He” makes us all revolve like puppets on a machine. We need to recollect the picture of a puppet play. The artist has a few puppets on a little stage and each puppet has its own strings. The strings are needed to move the puppets, the way the artist wants them to move on the stage. “We”, on the stage called life, are the puppets. Each one of us move (not just physically but mentally too) and think we are doing the movement ourselves. This is a wrong notion. First of all we are alive because of His Grace and hence we can move. The string “He” uses is the invisible string called “Maya”, it is the power of illusion. Maya, made up of the three gunas makes us conduct actions 24 hours a day. We are in the hands of this powerful weapon of His called “Maya” and the whole world revolves round by this power. We keep on acting to fulfil desires. The mind, the seat of the three gunas is the instrument that makes the body function. Iswara pervades the mind/intellect and Iswara with the support of Maya Shakti, makes us revolve like puppets on a string.

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत |  
तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥62॥

tam eva śharaṇam gaccha sarva-bhāvena bhārata |  
tat-prasādāt parāṁ śhāntim sthānam prāpsyasi śhāshvatam ॥62॥

**Sloka 62**

**TAM EVA SHARANAM GACCHA SARVA-BHAVENA BHARATA  
TAT-PRASADAT PARAM SHANTIM STHANAM PRAPSYASI SHASHVATAM**

**O Bharata, with all your being seek refuge in the Lord alone. By His Grace, you shall obtain Peace and Eternal abode.**

tam: to Him;  
eva: alone;  
saranam gaccha: seek refuge;  
sarwa bhavena: with all your being;  
bharata: Arjuna;  
tat prasadena: by His grace;  
paraam: supreme;  
shantim: peace;  
prapsyasi: shall obtain;  
shaswatam: eternal.

In the last verse we are told that all of us are under the clutches of “Maya” (delusion). This makes us revolve round the wheel of life on and on. How then to get out of the clutches of the maya? What is the benefit of getting out of the clutches of maya? We get an answer for these questions in this sloka.

Sharanam gaccha: take refuge.

Sharanagata or surrender is the answer. Surrender to whom?

Tam eva: to Him alone.

We should surrender to the Lord who is the Iswara residing in all and makes us revolve like puppets by His illusive power.

We can understand this by studying the scenario of a giant wheel. The giant wheel revolves round and round and people get on to it, to experience the thrill of the ride. Initially it is simple fun and one can hear laughter all round. Slowly and slowly as the speed increases, there are shouts and screams. There may be one or two who cannot withstand this motion and shout for help to stop the machine. Who can stop it? Only the mechanic in charge can stop it and let us get out of the moving giant wheel. Nobody else can stop the motion of the wheel. Similarly, the mechanic in our life called samsara is “Iswara”. Total unconditional surrender to Him is the only key for release from bondage to the world around.

Not just surrender but: “Sarva bhavena – with all being”.

Our body, mind and speech (with which we communicate with the world) should surrender to Him. In all our actions and with all our being we must remember the divinity and take shelter. This is possible by developing all the 26 divine virtues fully (slokas 1, 2 and 3 chapter 16). At the same time one should make sure that there is no trace of any asuric qualities. (sloka 4, chapter 16). What is the result? The result is, “Liberation” (Moksha).

The mechanic is the one who lets us enter into the giant wheel and he is the only one who can get us out of it. Iswara let us enter into this world and is the only one to get us out of it. What is the end result?

Paraam Shantihi Sthanam Shaswatam Prapsyasi: Will attain Supreme Peace and Eternal abode.

The seeker will be released from the joys and sorrows of this worldly life. Waves and the ocean: the waves that have come out of the ocean temporarily have a momentary existence and merge back into the ocean. The wave has no water of its own. Similarly, the jivatman who has projected out from the Atman (like the wave that comes out of the ocean) has no independent existence. Under the power of maya, our real identity as the Atman is forgotten. By continuing to discharge all ordained duties from birth till the moment of departure from this world, one has to learn the art of living peacefully and fulfil his role on this stage of life.

We all go out of the house in the morning, do our duties and come back home in the evening. On the days when we have done the honest work to satisfaction, we will experience peace on reaching home. We will put our feet up and experience the happiness of relaxation. This feeling of peace cannot be put into words. Similarly after coming out of the Lord’s house, we have to do our life’s work properly (according to the sastras) and think of getting back to His house. By fulfilling our roles and working according to the plan (by the director who put us on the stage of life) and exhausting our vasanas, we will be entitled to reach the place of “Para” (Supreme), Santi (Peace). This is “Saswatam” (Permanent).

We are born in this world and we have no control over it. After being born, we have to live till we die. We have no control over it. We have to look after our body as long as we live. We have to work and fulfil our obligatory duties to our family, society etc. We should not bring selfishness into this duty. All along we have to take shelter in Him and conduct our duties diligently.

This verse is the theme of the opening stanza of “Isavasya Upanisad”.

It says: Isavasyamidam Sarvam yat kinca jagatyam jagat Tena tyaktena bhunjita ma grdhah kasya svid dhanam

All things whatsoever that move in this world and the universe itself is pervaded or clothed by the Lord. Thou should enjoy by abandonment, covet not anybody’s wealth. (Refer: Introduction)

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गु ह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।  
विमश्रुयैतदशेषे ण यथ े ेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥63॥

iti te jñānam ākhyātām guhyād guhyataram mayā |  
vimṛśhyaitad aśheṣheṇa yathe cchasi tathā kuru |63||

### Sloka 63

**ITI TE JNANAM AKHYATAM GUHYAD GUHYATARAM MAYA  
VIMRISHYAITAD ASHESHENA YATHE CCHASI TATHA KURU**

**Thus, “the Wisdom” has been declared by Me to you; this is a greater secret than all secrets; having reflected upon it fully, act according to your wish.**

iti: thus;  
te’: to you;  
jnanam: the wisdom;  
akhyatam: has been declared;  
guhyad: than the secret;  
guhyataram: greater secret;  
mayaa: by Me;  
vimrusyaitad: having reflected upon this;  
asheshena: fully;  
yatha: as;  
ichasi: wish;  
tatha: thus;  
kuru: do.

There is a message in this sloka for both students and teachers. The qualities needed to be a good student and a good teacher are to be found in this sloka.

Iti Jnanam: thus, the Knowledge.

Thus: What has been said so far in the preceding chapters.

What has been said: Karma, Jnana, Bhakti, Dhyana Yogas, the four paths for Liberation. The clear understanding of these four main paths and their commutations together is “The wisdom” referred to in this sloka.

The Lord has not picked “Jnana Yoga” and said it is the best path to follow. A clear understanding of all the four paths together constitute the wisdom, the seeker has to acquire. This is “Chit” (Knowledge of the Vedas, Upanisads). What is the need for this? What is the end result of this wisdom? “Ananda” - total absolute bliss which is eternal and not transient.

Vimrusyat tad asheshena: reflect upon it fully.

What is “it” referring to? It refers to “Tad” (Brahman). This is “Sat”, the Eternal Truth. This is the “Sat, Chit, Ananda” the nature of Parabrahman. We have to understand that with this verse the Lord has ended His teaching to Arjuna.

Guhyat guyataram: greater secret than all secrets.

What is the secret referred to? It is the “Gita Sastra”. The entire Upanisad literature is summarised in 700/701 slokas of the sacred text. There are a number of words in the slokas which have a hidden intellectual meaning. They are “Guhya vakyas” (We have come across some of them and analysed

them). Of course the Lord did not want/does not wish this knowledge to be in the hands of only a selected few. Why did He say, “Secret” then? What is a “secret”? Secret means keeping something hidden so that others cannot hear or see it. If it is open, anybody can see and it cannot be a secret anymore. The fact that it is a secret brings out “inquisitiveness”. People are more eager to know what the secret is. For the uninitiated, the secret words do not make any sense. In a war, there are secret agents who pass on important information in coded words to those who know how to decode them. The information collected can help in achieving victory but if the information were to fall into the hands of the enemy, it could ruin the battle plan. In the war of righteousness, there is a need for the intricate subject of Dharma to be given only to those who are sincere seekers of Dharma and will take the welfare of the universe as their motto.

Individual upliftment and the welfare of society is the secret message behind the doctrine of the Gita. The individual has to have the right mental framework to know it, understand it and implement it. There should be no selfishness. Such an inquisitive mind will understand the message clearly and put it into practice. The learned in the society have a duty not to go to the forest to retire but to see that they teach in words and in actions the message of the Gita. If they fail to do so and retire to the forest, they will be leaving the society in the hands of the unscrupulous, selfish few.

It is also a fact that there are some who genuinely misunderstand the Gita and also others who misuse the message, using it for their own personal gain. To avoid these groups, the Lord has said that it is a secret. Because, it is the summary of the Vedas which are the main scriptural texts, one has to be careful to understand it first himself and then pass it on to those, who really are sincere seekers of the “Eternal truth”. Hence this is the greatest secret of all secrets. The understanding will come from the blessings of the Guru. In the case of Arjuna, it came down from the Jagadguru Himself.

Secret to those who do not understand it clearly - one needs to explain the meaning clearly. Secret to those who selfishly misrepresent the meaning and use it for personal gains - keep it a secret and do not reveal it to such people. Selecting the right student, to pass it on to, at the right moment is an art in itself. We have the example of Sri Krishna himself. He knew Arjuna for long time before the war but did not teach Gita. Why? Arjuna’s mental framework was not ready to receive it. He gave it when Arjuna sincerely needed it and requested it. He begged Krishna, “I do not know what I have to do” and said: “please help me.”

As a matter of fact Arjuna did ask for the teaching once again after the war. Krishna tried to teach him but Arjuna got himself so busy with his official duties that he did not concentrate on what was said.

Example: The education system in vogue now is indirectly following this principle. To get the best physics students, there is a selection process to select the best students. Even though Physics is not a secret, it should be taught as a secret to those who are mature and ready enough to receive it.

Vimrushyasetad ashesha: reflect totally on what has been said.

The sincere student must learn the art of reflecting over (reflecting/manana) all that has been said. We see our reflection when we stand in front of a mirror. We can then see possible signs of dirt on us. We will then clear the dust/impurity and make ourselves presentable. Reflecting on our own reflection makes us better persons to receive others. Similarly, we should stand in front of the “intellectual mirror of wisdom” and see the impurities on our mind and then make efforts to clear them.

The first part is to sincerely and clearly hear what has been said. This is “Sravana”. The next step is to reflect on it, which is “Manana”. This has to be in a quiet secluded spot and with a full memory of what has been taught. With this method, the student will be able to apply the knowledge practically in daily life. The last step is “Nidhi Dhyasa” wherein the intellect is totally absorbed in what has been taught. This is the pre-requisite for the practical implementation of the theory. Voluntary, not compulsory decisions make one a better person.

Yatheschasi tatha srunu: as you wish, so you act.

This is a message for all teachers. The teacher must not expect the student to do what he says just because he said so. The student should have the ultimate decision to act by analysing the pros and cons on what he has been taught. If the teacher is expecting the student to do what he has said, it amounts to the teacher not fulfilling the condition of “Karma Phala Tyaga.” The teacher should not be looking for the fruits of his actions. Sri Krishna has Himself shown by example. Of course, He wanted to uproot the evil and uphold dharma but He did not command Arjuna to fight. He said, “Do as you wish but analyse clearly, what has been said”. The fruit did come at the end and the Kauravas were killed but the philosophy is still alive today, 5000 years after it was given to Arjuna because of this principle. Krishna’s method of teaching the Gita was “Nishkama Karma”.

Another benefit from this message: Arjuna was a physically strong warrior but mentally weak. With the teaching of the Gita, he became mentally strong (he admits to it later in this chapter).

सर्वगु ह्यतमं भू यः शणु मे परमं वचः ।  
इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥64॥

sarva-guhyatamam bhūyaḥ śhrīṇu me paramam vachah |  
iṣṭo ‘si me dṛiḍham iti tato vakshyāmi te hitam ||64||

#### Sloka 64

**SARVA-GUHYATAMAM BHUYAH SHRINU ME PARAMAM VACHAH  
ISHTO ‘SI ME DRIDHAM ITI TATO VAKSHYAMI TE HITAM**

**Hear again, My Supreme word, most secret of all, because you are dear to Me, therefore, I shall tell you what is for your good.**

sarva: all;  
guhyatamam: most secret;  
bhooyaha: again;  
shrunu: hear;  
me’: My;  
paramam: supreme;  
vachaha: word;  
ishtaha: dear;  
asi: thou art;  
dhridam: dearly;  
iti: thus;  
tataha: therefore;  
vakshyami: will tell;  
te’: thy;  
hitam: good.

Krishna says that He will tell Arjuna what is good for him. Why is He making this statement? “Ishtosi me’: you are dear to Me”, is the answer.

The seeker has to serve his chosen master in every way and win his affection. By obedience, prostration, personal service, the disciple / the seeker, will win the affection of the master. It just shows the fact that spiritual knowledge cannot be purchased and has to come to the disciple as a gift from the master.

Why is Arjuna dear to Krishna?

1) Arjuna was not tamasic but rajasic.

2) Sloka 1, chapter 9: to you, free from malice/envy I shall declare this profound secret. Arjuna did not have the asuric (undivine) quality of “asuya” (envy). He who has envy has predominance of “I” (ego) and is not dear to the Lord.

3) Arjuna surrendered totally to Krishna and asked for guidance. He wanted to know what was best (sreyas) for his welfare. Sloka 7, chapter 2: He said, “My mind is distracted by the taint of pity and I am ignorant of what my duty is. I ask you to teach me what is good (sreyas) for me”.

4) Arjuna showed harmony between thought, word and deed (Arjavam). This showed the genuine, satvic desire for welfare not just for him but for all.

5) Arjuna had all the 36 qualities of a true bhakta. (Chapter 12, slokas 13-20). Sloka 20 says: “they, who follow this immortal dharma as their goal with faith, such devotees are most dear to Me.”

Paramam vacha: The Supreme word. I am going to say the Supreme word again, says Krishna (This is taken up in the next sloka).

This is not just a message to Arjuna from Krishna but a message for all the Arjuna’s of the world at all times. It is up to us to strive and become Arjuna’s of the world. We will then automatically get His grace showered on to us.

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।  
मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥65॥

man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī mām namaskuru ।  
mām evaiṣhyasi satyam te pratijāne priyo ‘si me ॥65॥

**Sloka 65**

**MAN-MANA BHAVA MAD-BHAKTO MAD-YAJI MAM NAMASKURU  
MAM EVAISHYASI SATYAM TE PRATIJANE PRIYO ‘SI ME**

**Fix your mind on Me; be devoted to Me; sacrifice for Me; bow down to Me; surely then you shall come to Me alone; truly I do promise, you are dear to Me.**

manmama bhava: fix your mind on Me;  
mad: My;  
bhakto: devotee;  
madyajee: sacrifice for Me;

maam: to Me;  
namaskuru: bow down to;  
eva: even;  
esyasi: shall come;  
satyam: truly;  
te': to you;  
pratijane: promise;  
priyaha: dear;  
asi: art;  
me': to Me.

The first half of this sloka lays down four conditions to be fulfilled by seekers of the Eternal Truth. Let us not forget that "Absolute Truth is God and God is Absolute Truth." The great spiritual masters addressed "Sat" (Absolute Truth) as "God" and later on brought out a number of forms to it (These forms have become the idols for worship and meditation).

The second half gives the end result/benefit/reward for fulfilling the following four conditions in everyday life activities.

Mamanaa bhava: fix your mind on Me.

Mind is the seat of thoughts and the thoughts get converted to actions. If our thoughts are pure, actions will automatically be pure. If we are pure in thoughts, speech and actions, we are said to be on the path to reach Him and unite with Him. This is to be considered as "Dhyana Yoga" to achieve Moksha.

By remembering that we are the jivatman and "He", the Paramatma is within, watching all of our thoughts and actions, and staying as our life long companion, we will be doing a better job as His servants on earth, sent down by Him to fulfil a role in society. In our journey of life, the destination is "Paramatma", and the means is our physical body which is the suit over the Atman, a spark of "Paramatma". We should recognise that the vehicle to reach the destination is "He" and our destination is "He", we will then be able to express divinity in all our actions. It is His grace that has put us on this earth and by His grace that we reach Him in the end. Such thoughts enhance the devotion (bhakti) needed for meditation (dhyana).

Madbhakto: be devoted to Me.

Meditating on the truth about "Manmana bhava", the seeker has to progress in his spiritual journey. True sincere devotion is total identification with the loved one. It implies that our actions have to please the loved one. There should not be any thought of selfishness in the love expressed. This is "Bhakti Yoga".

Madyajee: Sacrifice to Me.

One has to sacrifice the results of all dedicated truthful actions (The results one gets at the end of any action conducted). This part refers to "Karma Yoga". The doctrine of "Karmanyevadhikarasthe" has to be totally implemented. We have the right to work only but not to the fruits of actions and we should not be lazy at any time. Actions have to be Nishkama karma (desireless actions) and not Sakama karma (desire fulfilling egocentric actions).

Maam namaskuru: Bow down to Me.

It is not physically bowing down to the God in the form of idol/deity in a temple but bowing down to the "Knowledge of the Eternal Truth" and those who impart that knowledge. In this case, this divine knowledge was imparted by Jagadguru Krishna to Arjuna. Surrender on the part of the student (not

bribe) brings forth the best efforts from the teacher who imparts the knowledge with great love and affection. (In olden days, the temples were so constructed that the door to the inner sanctum was small and whoever wanted to enter it, to have the sight of the idol had to bow down to get in, even the emperor had to bow down to enter). This section is to be considered as “Jnana Yoga”. Krishna is not asking Arjuna to bow down to Him, but what Krishna represents, which is: “The Guru, the Knower, the Knowledge and the Saviour”.

The end result of following the four paths is: “Mamevaishyasi - you shall come to Me. Satyam pratijane’: this is the Truth, I promise.”

It is to say that if we walk one step towards Him, He will run nine steps towards us. If we make the first attempts to be good, He will help us to reach Him.

Priyosi Me’: you are dear to Me.

It has the same meaning to it as “Ishtosi Me’” in the last sloka. As a matter of fact we are all dear to Him. “He” wants us to be His good children on this earth and work for “Universal welfare”. He will keep on teaching us lessons as we progress in life and one fine day we will change for the better and will start striving hard to reach Him. The troubles in our life are also His grace. They should become the lessons to improve ourselves and at the same time to clear the results of wrongs from the past.

Sloka 34, chapter 9 has a sloka 3/4 of which is exactly the same as in this sloka. Last quarters of the two slokas are different. In chapter 9 it says: yuktaivam atmanam matparayanaha. It means: Having thus united yourself with Me, taking Me as the Supreme goal, (you shall come to Me). In this sloka it says: Mamevaishyasi satyam te’pratijane’ priyosi me’ (Surely you shall come to Me alone), truly I promise, you are dear to Me. The first one in the ninth chapter is simply a statement of fact that the seeker who takes up the four spiritual paths will reach Him. In this, the final chapter, the Lord goes one step further and says that the seeker will reach Him and that it is His promise. Coming from the Jagatguru, it shows the compassion He has towards sincere seekers of Truth.

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शु चः ॥66॥

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekam śharaṇam vraja ।

aham tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣhayiṣhyāmi mā śhuchaḥ ॥66॥

**Sloka 66**

**SARVA-DHARMAN PARITYAJYA MAM EKAM SHARANAM VRAJA  
AHAM TVAM SARVA-PAPEBHYO MOKSHAYISHYAMI MA SHUCHAH**

**Abandoning all Dharmas, take refuge in Me alone. I shall liberate you from all sins. Do not grieve.**

sarva: all;  
dharman: dharmas;  
parityajya: abandoning;  
maam: in Me;  
ekam: alone;



sharanam: refuge;  
vraja: take;  
aham: I;  
tvam: you;  
sarva: all;  
papebhyo: from all sins;  
mokshaishyami: will liberate;  
maa: not;  
shuchaha: grieve.

All the masters agree that this sloka is a “Shakti Mantra” and when correctly understood gives immense strength to withstand the pains and sorrows of mundane worldly life and reach the abode of “Eternal Bliss.” It is one of the many beautiful slokas in the sacred text Srimad Bhagawadgita. Different interpreters have viewed it from different angles and each one of them is correct in their own way.

The Purushartha for all the Hindus:

Dharma: learning the art of Righteousness and implementing the same in actions, considering it as the sacred duty,

Artha: achieving the means for survival following the path of Dharma,

Kama: Fulfilment of desires which are in agreement with the principle of dharma,

These should be the criterion to attain: Moksha: Eternal Peace.

Let me start with the introductory explanation for: “sarva dharman parityajya”:

Sarva: all, Dharman: Actions, Duty, Parityajya: abandoning.

We should not forget that we are all members of the society and we all have a number of obligatory duties to fulfil. These will be the duties to the society (which includes one’s own family and friends), other forms of life and mother nature. We must learn the art of: discharging all these duties according to Dharma (righteous) and Satya (Truth), and at the same time offering the fruits/results of such actions at the feet of the Parabrahman: This is Sarva dharmaan parityajya.

”Mam ekam sharanam vraja”: Take refuge in Me alone:

This is an act of Self-surrender. One could follow any one of the paths/yogas of Jnana, Karma, Bhakti or Dhyana. Follow the “Atma Dharma” and conduct all dharmic actions as being a spark of Parabrahman. Total surrender should be the frame of mind. Bhakta is he/she who shines blooming with the full blossom of the flowers of Bhakti (36 qualities of the Bhakta-Chapter 12, slokas 13-20), this brings out the Ananda aspect of Sat Chit Ananda.

Yogi: (Karma Yogi). To unite with the “Sat” (Truth - Absolute Truth) aspect of Sat Chit Ananda is yoga. It is like the droplets of water from rain joining together to form a stream, the streams join together to form rivulet, the rivulets join together to form a river and finally the river joins the ocean, forgetting its original status.

Jnani: With total knowledge (Jnana) the jnani by gradual acts of self-surrender, lifts himself from the planes of: annamaya kosha, pranamaya kosha, mano maya kosha, vijnanamaya kosha, ananda maya kosha and finally merges totally into the Supreme Consciousness within.

This is the expression of “Chit” aspect of Sat Chit Ananda. It is the message for all the seekers in their spiritual journey to lift themselves up, from being a stone man to a God man on earth, from being tamasic to being suddha satva. Tamasic man is in a world of delusion and is neither happy nor immersed in sorrow. Rajasic man is in an alternate flux of happiness and sorrow. Satvic man is

contented. Suddha satvic man is never in grief. He is beyond the plane of assessing results of actions as good and bad and lives the life of a Jivanmukta (liberated soul). Krishna wants Arjuna to reach this highest maturity so that there is no more grief: He therefore says, “maa shuchaha.” It is about clearing the ajnana which is: “dropping ego” (Ahamkara).

Parityajya: It is not a simple word meaning just abandoning but implies the effort of transcending from tamas to shuddha satva state. It is climbing up, one step higher in the spiritual evolutionary ladder. Know what is the next step in your journey and transcend your thoughts and actions from where you are now to the next step. In this process, Abandon the dharma at the lower level, take up the dharma of the next level of progress and finally reach the highest level of spiritual maturity.

Let us go into the inner cores of the text and try to analyse the meaning of the word “Dharma” as used by the Lord.

Transcend from the level of dharma of the jnanendriyas to dharma of the mind and from dharma of the mind to the dharma of the intellect and finally to the dharma of the Antaratma within, which is “Atma Dharma”. This is one way to interpret “sarva dharmaan parityajya.”

Mam ekam sharanam vraja: take shelter in Me alone (Atman). This means: shelter in Atma Dharma. Climb up from stone man to animal man, Animal man to man man, and man man to God man.

What is “Dharma”?

Quote: Sri Chinamayananda. “It is the essential quality of a being, without which the being has no existence.”

The familiar word used to express it is: “Righteousness.” Mano, vaak and kaya (mind, speech, and actions) are the channels of communication and it is our sacred duty to bring out righteousness from each of the three channels.

This quality is broadly grouped into three sub-sections. Righteousness at the: Spiritual, Social and Moral planes of existence. Just as white light shines in different colours, depending upon the medium, Dharma takes on different colours according to the level of our position in the society as: Individuals, family members, members of the society and so on and so forth. As one matures/grows from being a child to that of an old man: from Dharma of brahma charya ashrama (stage of celibacy – stage 1) to Dharma of grihastha ashrama (stage of being a member of family – stage 2) to Dharma of vanaprastha ashrama (stage of retirement – stage 3) to Dharma of sanyasa ashrama (stage of renunciation – stage 4).

Absolute dharma is unity and Relative dharma is diversity. Broadly speaking there is “Prapanchika Dharma (dharma for being a member of the society – worldly duties) and Adhyatmika Dharma (dharma for being a part of the Paramatma – spiritual duties)”. The social and moral plane of existence is “Prapanchika Dharma” and the Spiritual plane of existence is “Adhyatmika Dharma.” The social aspect of the Prapanchika dharma is righteousness that fits in with the rules and regulations of the family, society, nation, group of nations etc. These undergo changes with the passage of time and the needs of the community at any particular time. Even though the moral aspect of the Prapanchika dharma remains the same in every part of the world, customs that are prevalent in any society sometime dictate what is moral and what is immoral. Each one of us has to remember the saying: “Be a Roman while in Rome” and fit in with the rules of Rome. And act like a human by following the moral ethics like ahimsa (non injury), daya (compassion), satya (truthful) etc.

Adhyatmika dharma: (from the level of the spiritual plane): Adhi: beginning; Atma: the Atman. Adhyatmika dharma is dharma of Parabrahman/Paramatman.

To understand it we must have “Jnana (knowledge)”. What is “Jnana”?

Slokas 7-11 chapter 13, kshetra Kshetrajna vibhaga yoga, give us 20 qualities of a true Jnani:

Amanitvam: humility

Adhambhitvam: un-pretentiousness

Ahimsa: non-injury

Kshanti: forgiveness

Arjavam: uprighteousness

Acharya upasanam: service of the teacher/guru,

Shoucham: purity

Sthairyam: steadiness

Atma-vinigraha: self-control.

Indriyartheshu vairagyam: dispassion towards sense-objects

Anahamkaram: absence of ego,

Janma mruthyu jara vyadhi dukha dosha anudarshanam: perception of evil in birth, death, old age, sickness and pain,

Asakti anabhishwanga putra dara grihadishu: non attachment, non identification with son, wife, home and rest.

Nityam cha samachittatvam ishta anishta upapathishu: even mindedness on attainment of desirable and the experience of undesirable,

Mayi cha ananya yogena bhaktir avyabhicharini: unswerving devotion to Me in yoga of non-separation,

Viviktadesha sevitvam: resort to solitary places,

Aratir jana samsadi: distaste for the society of men,

Adhyatma jnana nityatvam: constancy in Self-knowledge,

Tatva jnanartha darshanam: perception at the end of true knowledge, Realise the meaning of the Maha Vakya Tat Tvam Asi. You are in reality: Tat (That), which is Consciousness within/Atman-Brahman within.

Sloka 11 of chapter 13:

ADHYATMA JNANA NITYATVAM TATVA JNARARTHA DARSHANAM  
ETAD JNANAM ITI PROKTAM AJNANAM YAD ATONYATH

Constancy in “Self-knowledge” (Adhyatma Jnana); Perception of the ultimate (true end of) knowledge (Tatva jnana); All this is declared as Jnanam and what is contrary to it is Ajnanam.

“Adhyatma jnana”:

Sloka 3, chapter 8:

AKSHARAM BRAHMA PARAMAM SVABHAVO ADHYATMAM UCHYATE:

Brahman the Supreme is imperishable, The “Eternal Truth” is His essential nature and this knowledge is “Adhyatma Vidya/Self-Knowledge”. The “Self Knowledge” is “Chit” aspect of Parabrahman and expressing it in thoughts/actions is “Dharma” in essence. This is the “Truth” (Satyam) and on implementing the same, one experiences “Ananda” which is “Bliss” (Atmarama).

Adhyatma is the Atman within each one of us. This is a spark of “Parabrahman” and His essential nature is “Satya, Dharma, Ananda” which is “Sat, Chit, Ananda.” To express divinity is the adhyatmika dharma to follow, to be part of the society we live in. This is the sadhana to be practiced which helps in broadening one’s vision. Narrow vision to Broad vision to Supreme vision. Like the unfolding of a lotus flower with the sun light falling on it.

The sadhana needs practice of: Sravana, Manana, Nidhidhyasa. The Gita is all about “Karma” (duties), The duties have to be according to “Dharma”, We should have the correct understanding of this Dharma and this is “Jnana”, The “Jnana” should be the basis for all our actions. This has to be the

“Dhyana (meditation)” the Lord refers to in the Gita. “Bhakti” or Supreme devotion to this approach makes it the four fold “Sanatana Dharma” - “Karma, Jnana, Bhakti and Dhyana”.

Let us now look at the main characters in the Mahabharata: Bhishma, Drona, Dhritarashtra, Arjuna and Krishna in the context of the word: “Dharma”:

Even though Drona and Bhishma were role models for Arjuna, their dharma was flawed.

**Bhishma:** He understood that his dharma was to stick to the truth of the “Vow” he gave to his father “Shantanu”. The vow was: “I will not marry and I will take care of the throne of Hastinapura and protect the ruler on it.” Because of this he turned the other way when Duryodhana and his brothers carried out atrocities on the Pandavas, especially on Droupadi. He also fought for the Kauravas and took up the role of Commander-in-Chief of their army. All this shows that he was following: “Prapanchika dharma and Moral dharma”. He failed in following “Adhyatma dharma”. He must have realised that he was wrong but did not want to break his promise. But, when he was on the death bed of arrows, he knew he had fulfilled his promise to his father and it was time to worship Lord Krishna, the Divine incarnate. He took by his own free will to lie on the bed of arrows and watch the millions get killed in the battle as a form of punishment for the crime he had committed. At the end he brought out the Sri Vishnu Sahasra Nama/thousand names expressing the various aspects of Vishnu, which is chanted by millions even today.

**Drona:** Drona fought for the Kauravas because he felt that it was his duty/dharma to follow. The Kauravas were his employers who gave him the most important job of training their children in warfare. Even though he loved Arjuna the most, he took the side of Kauravas because they gave him the job when he needed it desperately. He was following “Prapanchika Dharma”. He failed in implementing “Adhyatma Dharma”.

**Dhritarashtra:** He was sorry that because of his disability his son Duryodhana missed the opportunity to be the Emperor of Hastinapura. He did not consider that it was his duty/dharma to treat the sons of his own brother as his own. The first sloka chapter 1: He refers to Kauravas as “my own (mamakaha)” and does not include Pandavas as his own. He failed to stop Duryodhana carrying out the atrocities on the Pandavas. He failed in both moral and prapanchika dharma.

**Arjuna:** Arjuna was ready to fight the Kauravas but on seeing Bhishma, Drona and Kripacharya standing on the opposite side, lost his sense of balance. His relationship with them took precedence and came in the way of what was best for the citizens of Hastinapura. He did not want especially to fight Bhishma and Dronacharya. What he thought was moral dharma was not true moral dharma at all. The responsibility to the citizens of Hastinapura was his moral dharma. He failed to recognise it but sought guidance from Krishna and surrendered totally to Him.

**Krishna:** Instead of saying that I say so, constantly refers to “Me’ mataha” - meaning “My opinion”. He always upheld the Vedas and Upanisads as the Highest authoritative source. He showed the way to implement the Vedic Dharma of which He himself was the creator.

Finally about Gandhari, wife of Emperor Dhritarashtra: She decided that (as a Pativrata) when her husband was blind, she did not have the right to have eyesight and enjoy the physical world. So she kept a blindfold on her at all times. She forgot the moral dharma to be a father and mother to her sons. She failed in her moral duty.

Few more points to ponder about:

**Sarva dharman parityajya:** Do not follow the dharma of Bhishma, Drona, Dhritarashtra, Gandhari.  
**Mamekam vraja:** Surrender and follow Me. Here “Me” refers to “Sanatana Dharma/Vedic dharma”. Follow the sacred text is the command to Arjuna.

Aham tva sarva papebhyo moksham ishyami: “I will clear all your sins and confer Moksha”. “I” does not refer to Krishna but refers to “Sanatana Dharma”, implementing which, gives the right to Moksha.

Ma shuchaha: Do not grieve. Let grief not hinder the progress in the path towards the end result: Moksha.

Ajnana is the problem and Jnana is the solution. Where is the Jnana? As Adhyatma Jnana it is inside each of us. So the lesson to learn is: You are the problem (in not realising your true identity) And You are the solution. Learn to realise your identity as: Tat Tvam Asi. Krishna’s Dharma was Vedic Dharma and He has brought it out in the Gita.

Quotes:

Duryodhana: Janami dharmam na cha me’ pravrittihi Janami adharmam na me’ nivrittihi: I know what is dharma but I cannot follow it. I know what is adharmam but I cannot stop following it.

Dharma Raja: “Dharmasya tatvamnihitam guhyam”: Meaning: “Secret of Dharma is well hidden in a cave”. Not easy to tell categorically what is dharma and what is adharmam in any given context. He says: Better follow the practices of great people.

Let us briefly look at other explanations to this sloka:

1) Abandon all others dharmas and take shelter in Atma Dharma.

We are two in one, the Atman (Soul) and the Jiva (ego). Atma dharma is “Loka kalyana” (universal welfare). Jiva dharma is fulfilling personal egoistic desires. Do conduct nitya and naimittika karmas (chapter 3, sloka 8) and avoid sakama karma and nishiddha karmas (selfish actions and prohibited actions). Work for universal welfare and not for personal gains. Duties of the four stages of life: Perform duties pertaining to the stage one is in and do not take up the duties pertaining to the other stages of life.

2)

- a) Deha dharma – duties for the physical body
- b) Kula dharma – duties for the clan we belong to,
- c) Desa dharma - duties pertaining to the country of birth,
- d) Loka dharma – duties of a universal citizen.

As one climbs up the social ladder, the duties will change in accordance with the new roles taken. Therefore, the best duty is the conduct of work at all times for the welfare of life on this earth. Sloka 55, chapter 11: The Lord says: Nirvairaha sarva bhooteshu – no enmity towards any being or any form of life. This is the spirit Sri Shankaracharya would want us all to work with, in society.

Let not grief (maa shuchaha), born of ignorance, make you lose your strength. But let the true knowledge help you to: “Uthishta” – get the strength to lift up from grief. This is the Sakti Mantra for all (Gives the strength). Sloka 5, Maneesha Panchakam (Adi Shankaracharya) says “I am convinced that whoever has his mind dwelling upon the Great being who is worshipped by Indra and other Gods in heaven and is thus completely at Peace with himself, has not only understood Brahman but is himself that Great Brahman.”

इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन |  
न चाशु श्रू षवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसू यति ॥67॥

idam te nātapaskāya nābhaktāya kadāchana |  
na chāśhuśhrushave vāchyam na cha mām yo 'bhyasūyati ||67||

### Sloka 67

**IDAM TE NATAPASKAYA NABHAKTAYA KADACHANA  
NA CHASHUSHRUSHAVE VACHYAM NA CHA MAM YO 'BHYASUYATI**

**This is never to be spoken by you, to one who is devoid of austerity or devotion, nor to one who does not render service, (or to one who desires not to listen) and not to one who speaks ill of Me.**

idam: this;  
te': by you;  
naatapskaya ( na atapskaya): not one who is devoid of austerity;  
nabhaktaya (na abhaktaya): not to one who is not devoted;  
kadachana: ever;  
na: not;  
ca: and;  
ashushrushave: one who does not render service or who desires not to listen;  
vachyam: to be spoken;  
na: not;  
ca: and;  
maam: Me;  
yah: who;  
abhyasuyati: ill of.

It is important that we are not critical of this sloka but understand exactly what has been said.

First of all, the Lord starts this sloka by saying: “This is never to be spoken by you”: The message in this sloka, one can say is specifically to Arjuna and to all the sincere Arjuna’s of the world. He is advising His sincere student/ardent devotee the means of propagating the philosophy of the Gita. We, Arjunas of the present must take up this advice. Arjuna must have been greatly elated to receive the graceful blessings of the Lord. Anyone who hears a great lecture is so eager to talk/discuss/explain what he has heard to one and all. He wants to go to the top of the mountain and shout out what he has been taught. Do not do so and follow certain guidelines, says the Lord.

The same principle is followed in universities, schools and colleges, who take students for higher education. When the subject concerning the higher education is very special, the students are selected on merit and they are expected to follow certain principles. When there are admission criteria for special courses, is there anything wrong in putting forward a criterion to receive this message, the greatest philosophy?

One can see that He has not brought caste, sex, religion. The only criterion to be adhered to is “Universal welfare.” Any knowledge, if it has to survive for thousands of years, especially the spiritual science which is for the welfare of life on earth, (in this case related to the Vedas, the most ancient scriptures from Brahma towards the continuous movement of “Dharmachakra/wheel of dharma” – sloka 15, chapter 3), has to be passed on from generation to generation, through the medium of “the learned teacher” to “the deserving, keen student”. The teacher/guru must know the subject thoroughly, not be egotistic and have the welfare of all as his motive. The disciple must have a sincere desire to learn and implement it in his daily life. There should not be any expression of ego.

The teacher in this case is “Jagatguru Krishna.” There cannot be any guru superior to Krishna. He has imparted the Gita to Arjuna. He selected the best student to receive the message. For over 5000 years or so, it has been passed on to so many more deserving saints and philosophers who have kept it alive till today.

Let us look at the criterions given by the Lord.

a) Naatapaskaya: Not to the one who is devoid of austerity.

Tapas, we have learnt in chapter 17, is austerity at the levels of mind, speech and body. He who has no purity of the mind, speech and bodily actions, cannot control his sensual impulses, cannot be the guru or suitable candidate to pass the message on to others. Suppose we want to sow seeds to grow, do we not have some criteria to sow the seeds? Do we sow on a rock or barren land? The medium/soil to sow the seeds has to be of good quality. Similarly the seeds of philosophy should be sown on such minds that help the philosophy to grow into a beautiful plant and bring beauty to life on earth.

b) Na abhaktaya: not to one who has no devotion.

There is a need for the student to identify himself with the subject he is going to study. This involves love/devotion to the subject to be learnt. The more love one has to the subject, that much better will he understand the subject and thereby become a useful graduate. It is important to have devotion to the “ideal” of the Gita, to be fit to receive the message.

c) Na asrushave: It is not to be taught to those who do not render service.

This has to be service to the teacher and service to the life on earth. (Chapter 4, sloka 34 – tad viddhi pranipatena - is about the service to the teacher) Humbleness to receive the teaching with grace is an essential pre-requisite. Service to the life on earth: The sacred text is about universal love and the feeling of oneness with all. He who has no such love is really a consumer for receiving personal benefits. He is not fit to receive the teaching. We have the examples of great savants like Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who have shown this quality in them.

d) Abhyasuyati: who speaks ill of Me.

This has to be understood in two different ways. “Me” has to be interpreted as “the teacher” (guru). No student should speak ill of the teacher, especially in relation to the study of the scriptures. There is always free will, if one does not like the guru, he has the freedom to take leave of the guru, thank him for what he has taught and then leave respectfully. More importantly, we must know by now that “Me” is not referring to Himself as Krishna, son of Devaki and Vasudeva but to “Eternal Truth and Eternal Righteousness” (Satya, Dharma). He who talks ill of the Truth and righteous, is not fit to enter the corridors of the school/temple of this great philosophy.

To summarise, anyone who is desirous of learning the sacred text should put forward the following four questions to himself and then see if he is fit to receive the message or not.

- a) Have I got self-control?
- b) Have I got devotion to the Lord and the Gita?
- c) Have I got the willingness to serve my guru and the mankind?
- d) Have I got respect for the philosophy of Gita?

I must make myself ready to say “yes” to these four questions and then only can I become a true seeker and be eligible to receive the teachings. My mind, body and speech should be ready to receive the Gita and practice its philosophy.

We must be clear to understand that no true, sincere seeker is excluded from Lord's remarks in this sloka.

य इदं परमं गु ह्यं मद्भक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।  
भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः ॥68॥

ya idam paramam guhyam mad-bhakteshv abhidhāsyati ।  
bhaktim mayi parām kṛtvā mām evaiṣhyaty asanśhayaḥ ॥68॥

**Sloka 68**

**YA IDAM PARAMAM GUHYAM MAD-BHAKTESHV ABHIDHASYATI  
BHAKTIM MAYI PARAM KRITVA MAM EVAISHYATY ASANSHAYAH**

**He who with supreme devotion to Me, will teach this profound philosophy to My devotees shall doubtlessly come to Me.**

yah: who;  
idam: this;  
paramam: supreme;  
guhyam: secret;  
madbhakteshu: to My devotees;  
abhidasyati: shall declare;  
bhaktim: devotion;  
mayi: in Me;  
paraam: supreme;  
kritvas: having done;  
maam: to Me;  
eva: even;  
eshyasi: shall come;  
asamsayaha: doubtless.

The message in this sloka is for those who take up the task of teaching the sacred text.

He, who with supreme devotion to “Me”:

Those who fulfil the criteria to be teachers of the Bhagawadgita philosophy, should not only be fit to be teachers, But should have an additional important qualification. It is: They should have supreme devotion to the Lord/the Eternal Truth and His teaching (of the summary of the entire Upanisads).

The Lord has already said that He will bestow the Buddhi Yoga on the devotees who express total devotion to the Lord/To the Eternal Truth. The Lord says it is the profound philosophy because it bestows the greatest gift to mankind, The gift of “Eternal Peace”. He is not boasting about His philosophy. After all it is the summary of the entire Vedas and Upanisads which are our master scriptures.

Teach to My devotees:



The teachers should select those students who not only want to learn the sacred text but are sincere devotees of the Lord/Eternal Truth/Eternal Dharma.

Shall undoubtedly come to Me:

What is the benefit for the teacher? (The teacher with true devotion to the Lord and His teachings would like to declare the philosophy to sincere devotees of the Lord and is not doing so expecting any fruits for his actions) The Lord has promised the Grace, which is: “Shall undoubtedly come to Me”. One should not look at this Grace as a bribe from the Lord to attract the teachers who propagate the sacred philosophy. If any culture has to survive, it can be so, only when generation after generation get a chance to learn it. Our sacred Hindu culture/heritage has survived because of this principle of teaching by competent teachers to competent/sincere students. There is a need to impart moral/ethical values early in one’s life. Those who can do so, deserve to get the best rewards. Even if they do not work for rewards, the Lord promises Moksha to them.

Example: crossing a busy road. Every one has a right to cross the road. They should have the willingness to cross the road, (it could be a child, an old person or a disabled/blind person who want to cross). Those who are physically fit and know how to cross the road (by knowing the Highway Code) can cross by themselves. The better citizens of the land, are those who spare a minute of their time and assist those who want to cross but are unable. Still better are those who keep coming back to help those who are waiting to cross. They deserve the best reward for their service.

Similarly the learned ones and masters should help the willing ignorant to cross the busy road of life. Passing on the knowledge and making it available at all times is the greatest service given by the learned masters. The message from the sacred text is the best food for the mind which is the seat of all actions. Actions decide the future of the individual and the nation. Those passing on the message that helps in the conduct of actions for the welfare of the life on the earth, do get due reward from the Lord Himself.

It is also true that he who teaches others actually becomes a better student of that subject. The interaction with his students, brings to the forefront aspects the teacher would not previously have thought of, about his speciality subject. He will then spend some time reflecting, so that he can understand the subject better and explain the same to those inquisitive students. Considering that “I am the master” is an expression of “ego.” Considering that I am the eternal servant of the master with love to the master and His teaching is the means to foster devotion to the Lord. Such spiritual service takes the sincere seeker towards the Lord very quickly.

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।  
भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥69॥

na cha tasmān manuṣhyeṣhu kaśhchin me priya-kṛittamaḥ ।  
bhavitā na cha me tasmād anyah priyataro bhuvi ॥69॥

**Sloka 69**

**NA CHA TASMAN MANUSHYESHU KASHCHIN ME PRIYA-KRITTAMAH  
BHAVITA NA CHA ME TASMAD ANYAH PRIYATARO BHUVI**

**Neither is there any among men who renders dearer service to Me, nor shall there be another on earth dearer to Me than he.**

na: not;  
cha: and;  
tasmaat: than he;  
manushyeshu: among men;  
kaschin: any;  
me': to Me;  
priyakrittamaha: one who does dear service;  
bhavitaa: shall be;  
na: not;  
cha: and;  
me': to Me;  
tasmaat: than he;  
anyaha: another;  
priyataraha: dearer;  
bhuvi: on the earth.

Continuing the theme on spreading the message from the Gita, The Lord asserts that He likes best those who spread the message of the sacred text. He also adds that amongst all the different ways to serve the Lord, teaching the text is the best method to receive His grace. Why is it so?

Is it not selfishness on his part towards the philosophy of the Gita? No, definitely not, should be the answer. If we have understood the text so far, we will realise that the contents of this sacred text (that deals and stresses on “Eternal Truth and Righteousness in thought, speech and deed”) is beneficial to the seekers after the “Eternal Truth” and at the same time helps to bring Peace and Prosperity on earth. It is beneficial to the individual and the society irrespective of any religion, caste, creed, sex, age etc. It is a humanitarian philosophy for the welfare of all forms of life on earth and not just for the present but for many thousands of years to come.

Why specifically the teachers, He is so partial to, one may ask?

Let us analyse the role of the teacher once more. For example, every year the teacher keeps teaching the same physics to all his students in his class. New students come and old students go on to higher classes. Amongst these students some take up physics as a speciality for further study at university. Among these a few take up post-graduate study in physics, others may become teachers of the subject and join the teaching profession. Among those students who go for higher education in physics, one may actually invent something which will be beneficial to society for thousands of years to come. The teacher who taught the subject first, played an important role in creating that student, who went on to bring massive benefit to the life on earth. So, the Lord loves the teachers best.

What are the ways one can propagate the sacred text? Teaching is one form of propagating it. Others could be: Parents (by reading it themselves and studying/discussing the same with their children a few minutes a day/once a week) who make it a regular scriptural study in their house. Those who have studied/discussed the same at home could, when the opportunity arises discuss it with their friends. There should be Gita satsangs where devotees who have a common interest can study/discuss the intricacies of its philosophy. Gita ashram is that shelter which reverberates with the message of the Gita and teaches the sacred text to both the adults and children. He who learns one sloka or part of the sloka may like it so much, he would jump at the opportunity to learn more with masters.

We have the example of Sri Ramakrishna who pioneered by showing the world the great Swami Vivekananda who's thundering, bold statements from the Gita like: Utthista, Klaibyam maa smagaha (sloka 3, chapter 2,) have brought out so many missionaries all over the world who continue to awaken

the sleeping minds of thousands and carry out great social service to mankind. No doubt, the Lord uses so many superlative words to 'pat the back' of the teachers of the sacred text.

अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।  
ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥70॥

adhyeshyate cha ya imam dharmyam samvadam avayoh |  
jñāna-yajñena tenāham iṣṭaḥ syām iti me matiḥ ॥70॥

**Sloka 70**

**ADHYESHYATE CHA YA IMAM DHARMYAM SAMVADAM AVAYOH  
JNANA-YAJNENA TENAHAM ISHTAH SYAM ITI ME MATIH**

**And he, who shall study this sacred dialogue of ours, by him I shall have been worshipped by  
Jnana-Yajna. This is My opinion.**

adhyeshyate: shall study;  
cha: and;  
yaha: who;  
imam: this;  
dharmyam: sacred;  
samvadam: dialogue;  
aavayoh: of ours;  
jnana yajnena: by jnana yajna;  
tena: by him;  
aham: Me;  
ishtaha: worshipped;  
syam: shall have been;  
iti: thus;  
me': My;  
matihi: opinion.

Imam Dharmyam samvadam:

Please note that the Lord has said "This Dharma" and not labelled it as "this Gita".

"This sacred dialogue":

It is sacred because: It is not a biased text, It deals with righteousness, It encourages people to follow their dharma (swadharma), Its emphasis is on the welfare of the universe (loka kalyana) irrespective of religion, nationality, caste, creed, sex etc, and also on total surrender. (sloka 66 - sarva dharman parityajya) It is the Yoga of action (Karma Yoga), Yoga of knowledge (Jnana Yoga), Yoga on meditation meditating on the "Eternal Truth" (Dhyana Yoga) and Yoga on devotion (Bhakti Yoga). The seeker can choose any one of the four paths that suits his temperament.

Who will study? Studying does not imply just taking the book in the hand and reading it. It is not 'book worms' the Lord wants and definitely not those who can just repeat what is said without knowing the meaning. Studying is: Reading with single pointed concentration, Listening with single pointed concentration (sravana), Recollecting (what was taught by guru) in secluded quiet

surroundings, (manana) Clarifying the doubts (on the subject that was taught by the guru), reading the text many times and discussing with the guru, Implementing what was taught with single pointed concentration in action (nidhidhyasa), Enjoying the beauty of experiencing happiness in putting into action what was studied, with no selfishness but with respect to the teacher and with loka kalyana as the motive. This is the meaning of the word: “he who will study”.

Spiritual evolution should take place by the study of the Gita. The best way to preach Vedanta is to live the life of Vedanta and in this instance the life of “The Gita.”

Dialogue of ours:

The dialogue between Jagatguru and the best student (who is beyond tamas), who has no jealousy, who fulfils the qualities of a sincere student, who has moved to the level of upper rajasic/satvic plane of purity.

I shall have been worshipped by “Jnana Yajna.”

Yajna is when one pours oblations into the sacred fire to invoke the Lord. In this Jnana-Yajna, by worshipping the Fire of Knowledge, to get the true spiritual knowledge, one must be prepared to pour into the fire and burn all the existing bad thoughts and ego, whilst requesting the God of Knowledge to bless him with good thoughts.

“Such is My conviction”. (Me’ mataha):

The Lord has used this a few times already. He has simply put the Vedic Dharma in a format that is not difficult to understand by the sincere seeker under the guidance of a competent guru. (sarvopanisado gavo dogdha gopala nandanaha – dhyana sloka, All the Upanisads are the cows, the milker is Lord Krishna, Partha is the calf, men of purified intellect are the drinkers, the milk is the Supreme nectar of the Gita).

श्रद्धावाननसू यश्च शणु ु यादपि यो नरः ।  
सोऽपि मु क्तः शु भल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम ्॥71॥

śhraddhāvān anasūyaśh cha śhṛiṇuyād api yo naraḥ |  
so ‘pi muktaḥ śhubhām lokān prāpnuyāt puṇya-karmaṇām ||71||

**Sloka 71**

**SHRADDHAVAN ANASUYASH CHA SHRINUYAD API YO NARAH  
SO ‘PI MUKTAH SHUBHAM LOKAN PRAPNUYAT PUNYA-KARMANAM**

**That man who hears this, full of faith and free from malice; he too shall be liberated and attain the happy worlds of the righteous.**

sraddhaavaan: full of faith;  
anasuyascha: and free from malice;  
shrunayad: hears;  
api: also;  
yo: who;

naraha: man;  
so'pi: he too;  
muktaha: liberated;  
shubhaan: happy;  
lokan: worlds;  
prapnuyat: attains;  
punyakaramanaam: of righteous.

After giving the merits of teaching the Gita: to the devoted (to its teachers, sloka 68) and the merits of listening with sraddha and bhakti to the Gita (sloka 65, to the students), the Lord now includes another class of people (ignorant and illiterate) who would get merit from listening to the Gita. This is a very important point.

The ignorant and illiterate form the majority who do not know the Gita. They should not be barred from learning. No one is excluded. It is really a very important point for the learned teachers. Apart from teaching to the devoted, interested students, the learned/ the teachers must take time to talk about the text to this group of people. Of course there is a condition for these people also to be eligible to listen to it. They should fulfil two conditions to get the benefit.

The first condition is: They must have sraddha/faith.

This group of people, even though ignorant and illiterate would have heard of the word "Gita". They also would like to experience the life of the liberated. For them "Liberation/Moksha" is escape from their present drudgery. They also are entitled to get liberated and experience happiness. The Lord out of compassion to such people says that by listening with faith they will climb up the spiritual ladder and experience happiness. (sloka 25, chapter 13: still others, not knowing thus, worship as they have heard from others; they too go beyond death by their devotion to what they have heard.)

This fits in with the teaching of Karma Yoga. Every good act has its own good results. In the cases of the illiterate and deprived, moving up to a higher level of existence is a good result. It is also a fact that what they heard may not be totally clear and they may not put into practice what has been heard. When they are struggling for their daily portion of bread how could one expect them to lead a life according to the teachings of the Gita? But faithfully listening to what is said with devotion to the teacher and the text will slowly take them up to the world of happiness, may be, not in the present life but sometime later in another life. The teacher who makes time to teach this to such people should use simple words to explain the same, to their level of understanding.

The second condition to receive the benefit: Anasuya: They must not be jealous.

There should not be any jealousy shown to those who are in a better station in life. They must not blame others, God or society for their present station in life and should not be jealous of others. They must have a pure heart. If the mind is not pure, what is heard will have no impact. A pure mind is an essential prerequisite for this group of people. The Lord has made an interesting statement. He has said: "they will be liberated and attain the happy worlds of the righteous". This is "Krama Mukti", meaning "gradual Liberation". They will climb one step higher for the merit of listening with faith and being free from jealousy and on death from their present station in life, will be born in a situation where there is happiness around. It is like saying "they will go to heaven." (For a poor man, moving from the slums to the properly built house with sanitation is heaven). The Lord will give them an opportunity to be born in a suitable environment to climb to the higher levels of the spiritual ladder. "Moksha" may take a very long time/several births but still they too will attain it. Listening to the Gita is like giving spiritual food to the mind. Gita Amrutam – (nectar of the Gita), in the course of time, will enable the sadhaka to grow spiritually and attain Eternal Peace.

कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा ।  
कच्चिदज्ञानसम्मोहः प्रनष्टस्ते धनञ्जय ॥72॥

kacchid etach chrutam pārtha tvayaikāgreṇa chetasa ।  
kacchid ajñāna-sammohaḥ pranaṣṭas te dhananjaya ॥72॥

## Sloka 72

**KACCHID ETACH CHRUTAM PARTHA TVAYAIKAGRENA CHETASA  
KACCHID AJNANA-SAMMOHAH PRANASHTAS TE DHANANJAYA**

**Has this been heard by you, O Partha, with single-pointed concentration? O Arjuna, has the delusion caused by your ignorance been destroyed?**

kacchit: whether;  
etat: this;  
shrutam: heard;  
partha: O'Arjuna;  
tvaya: by you;  
cetasa: by the mind;  
kacchit: whether;  
ajnana sammohaha: the delusion of ignorance;  
pranashta: has been destroyed;  
te': your;  
Dhananjaya: Arjuna.

Krishna, the teacher, has finished his discourse/dialogue. It started with Arjuna (overcome with distress at the thought of waging the war and the consequences of the same) taking shelter under the guru and asking for guidance on the right action to take. Arjuna admitted that he was ignorant of the Sastras. (Slokas 7-8, chapter 2)

Just like any good teacher puts such questions at the end of his teaching to his student, Krishna has put forward these questions.

Has this been heard by you?

With this question He meant: Did you hear all what I said? Did your mind register what was said? (was it true sravana) Did your intelligence reason out the intricate points I brought out in the discourse? (did you conduct nidhidhyasa?)

“Did you hear this with single pointed concentration”, is the next question.

Did your mind wander away during my discourse, He is asking? It is a fact that single pointed concentration is essential in every type of work. A distracted mind does not register the true import of what has been said.

“Has the delusion caused by your ignorance been destroyed”? is the last question.

Arjuna had gone to the greatest psychoanalyst in the world for help. After giving the treatment, the psychoanalyst wants to ascertain if it has been of benefit. We come across this scenario in our day to day life. When we go to the doctor for an illness and get the treatment from him, at the end of the treatment he puts forward this general question: How are you? Are you feeling better? The physician would like to hear the answer directly from the patient's mouth.

What was Arjuna's illness?

Arjuna had admitted that he was "ignorant of the sastras". This was because he was ignorant of his and other's true identity as "The Atman". He had body consciousness and there was a strong expression of "ego" in him. The delusion caused by ignorance was supposed to be destroyed by obtaining the knowledge about Atman (Jnana). Krishna says "Pranashtaha". Nashta is that which gets destroyed. Pranashtaha means "totally destroyed." He would like to hear from his patient that the ignorance is totally cleared.

Dhananjaya: Arjuna is addressed as "Dhananjaya".

Krishna is now hoping that Arjuna has acquired "Spiritual wealth" and would use it to destroy man's greatest enemy, the enemy being "ignorance and ego". We, the mortals on earth, should first of all learn not to be Dhritarashtras by holding on to our bodies but acquire the spiritual wealth to become Arjunas of the world, Fight the battle of righteousness (as Dhananjayas) within us and all round us and destroy ignorance and ego.

अर्जुन उवाच ।

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिम् लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥73॥

arjuna uvācha ।

naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā tvat-prasādān mayāchyuta ।

sthito 'smi gata-sandehaḥ kariṣhye vachanam tava 73॥

**Sloka 73**

**ARJUNA UVACHA**

**NASHTO MOHAH SMRITIR LABDHA TVAT-PRASADAN MAYACHYUTA**

**STHITO 'SMI GATA-SANDEHAH KARISHYE VACHANAM TAVA**

**Arjuna said:**

**O Achyuta, my delusion is destroyed. I have regained my memory, through your Grace. I am firm, (my) doubts are gone, I will do according to your word.**

nashto: is destroyed;

mohaha: delusion;

smrutir: memory;

labdhaha: regained;

tvat: your;

prasadat: grace;

maya: by me;

Achyuta: Krishna;

sthito: firm;

asmi: I am;

gata: free/gone;

sandehaha: doubts;

karishye: I will do;

vachanam: word;

tava: your.

The quality of “humbleness” in a real seeker has been brought out in this sloka exceptionally beautifully.

Arjuna’s problem was loss of memory. He had forgotten who he really was. He did not know if he was an enemy warrior or a kinsman of those who had assembled in the battlefield. He did not know what his duty was when faced with such a dilemma. He needed psychiatric help. He had unfolded his symptoms of delusion (Slokas 28, 29 and 30, chapter 1 give a description of the state of the Arjuna’s mind). It is like the patient going to the doctor for the treatment. In this case it was a patient with psychological symptoms going to a psychoanalyst. His delusion was due to the ignorance of his true identity as “The Atman”.

Look at the state of transformation in the patient! He says: My delusion is destroyed (nashto mohaha). I have regained my memory (smritir labdha). From being Arjuna, the grandson of Bhishma, he has now realised that he was an agent of the Lord to fight evil “adharma” in the society where he, as a Kshatriya had a social duty to fulfil. (An agent of the Lord in fulfilling Lord’s promise of “yada yada hi dharmasya” - sloka 7, 8 chapter 4).

How did this transformation take place? Was it because the patient took the medicine as prescribed by the doctor? He had received the best psychotherapy for his ignorance. In this case there was an additional factor that cured the illness. It was: “The Grace of the Lord”. Whatever happens to us individually or as members of the society we live in, has the invisible hand of the Grace of the Lord. Both good and bad are His Grace. Arjuna’s delusion and loss of memory was also the Grace of the Lord. (chapter 15 sloka 15) If not, then mankind would not have such a profound tonic/medicine like the “Gita” which is alive even after so many thousands of years.

We are seeing in the field of modern medicine, almost all the new modern inventions, after a period of few years, lose their potency. Medical professionals are in need of new and different medicines every so often. But the Grace of the Lord is a medicine that will retain its potency all the time. It needs faith, devotion and humbleness on our part towards Him, He will then bestow His Grace. Arjuna did not simply feel that he had regained his mental strength but he admitted that this was due to the love of the Lord towards His disciple. This humbleness is an essential quality to develop by all spiritual seekers.

Regained my memory:

Arjuna realised that his body was only a suit over the Atman called “Krishna”. The same, Krishna/Divinity is also the indweller in all forms of life and will be for all times to come, is what he understood by listening to the narration of The Gita by the Lord Himself. This was possible because the Lord opened his inner eye of wisdom. The veil of ignorance was removed.

I am firm and free from all doubts:

There was total clearance of all the doubts in his mind. He had developed the self-confidence to face the battle of life and fulfil his role as an agent of the Lord. The Lord had not given him an external light to illuminate something in the dark, nor had he given him a magic weapon to fight the Kauravas. He had given him an internal light of knowledge to realise his true identity and the true nature of the physical world. This helped him to develop the capacity of utthista (to get up) from his state of utter weakness and fulfil his role in the battle/play of life.

I will do according to your word:

This is the best statement to be given by the student who receives the best guidance from his guru. The Guru, in this case Sri Krishna, did not command Arjuna to stand up and fight. But He implied that Arjuna should fight the evil as an agent of the Lord. Arjuna understood it and so he said: “I will do according to Your word.” This is the quality to be developed by sincere seekers. In our life, we should listen to the inner voice of wisdom (Antaratma) which is always communicating with us. It is us who



have blocked the pathway to this voice from within. Really speaking, the true seeker is he who: Can hear the inner voice of Consciousness within, Acquires Jnana, and Conducts all actions in the spirit of Nishkama Karma and Karma Phala Tyaga, Expresses Bhakti to the Supreme. A sincere Bhakta is in communication with the Lord all the time, A sincere Dhyani listens to the inner voice from the Lord always. It is not the external battle we are talking of, But, The inner battlefield of Kurukshetra, which is within our mind. In our daily yajna in life, we should offer ourselves to the Lord. The jiva then becomes one with the Paramatma. This is the essence of the Mahavakya “Tat Tvam Asi.” By our actions we can unite and become one with the Paramatma, provided the ego is annihilated.

The Lord has given to His disciple the spiritual knowledge: “The Gita sastra”. What was the purpose of imparting this knowledge? It was for the purpose of “Destruction of Delusion and Attainment of Spiritual Knowledge.” Through this sloka, Arjuna admits that his delusion is gone.

सञ्जय उवाच ।

इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।  
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम ॥74॥

sañjaya uvācha ।

ity aham vāsudevasya pārthasya cha mahātmanaḥ ।  
samvādam imam aśhrauṣham adbhutam roma-harṣhaṇam ॥74॥

**Sloka 74**

**SANJAYA UVACHA  
ITY AHAM VASUDEVASYA PARTHASYA CHA MAHATMANAH  
SAMVADAM IMAM ASHRAUSHAM ADBHUTAM ROMA-HARSHANAM**

**Sanjaya said:**

**Thus, have I heard this wonderful dialogue between Lord Krishna and the high- souled Partha, which causes my hair to stand on end.**

iti: thus;  
aham: I;  
vasudevasya: of Krishna;  
parthasya: of Partha;  
cha: and;  
mahatmanaha: great souled;  
samvadam: dialogue;  
imam: this;  
asrousam: have heard;  
adbhutam: wonderful;  
roma harshanam: which makes the hair stand on end.

Sanjaya was the blessed recipient (direct eye witness of the entire war) of the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna. He brings out three phrases of expression:

- Wonderful
- High souled Partha
- Which causes my hair to stand on end.

Wonderful:

He is referring to the most wonderful presentation of the Vedic philosophy of the Upanisads by Sri Krishna, the incarnation of Parabrahman to uproot the evil and protect the righteous. We, like Sanjaya should develop the quality of listening and understanding the sacred text when expounded by great masters (Sravana, Manana, Nidhidhyasa). We must realise its importance in the battle of life each one of us is facing. It should encourage us to attend the discourses on the Gita, conferences on the Gita and experience the “wonder of the Gita”.

High souled Partha:

Sanjaya developed a very high regard for Arjuna. Before the war, Arjuna was one of the Pandavas and Sanjaya was an employee of the Emperor Dhritarashtra. He respected all the Pandava brothers. On hearing the Gita (which was brought out for the first time by Lord Krishna for the benefit of Arjuna), On realising that Krishna was the incarnation of Parabrahman (Viswaroopa Sandarshana and Vibhuti yoga), Sanjaya put Arjuna on a high pedestal and gave him the title of “Mahatma”. Arjuna was a blessed soul to have had the Gita presented to him by the Lord.

Another explanation for the title of Mahatma:

Arjuna who had dropped the Gandiva to the floor and knelt down on the floor (because of severe mental weakness arising out of ignorance) was able to stand up on his own, pick up the Gandiva and be ready to fight. He had the correct knowledge to take up the correct action. He became a true Jnani ready to take up his ordained duty of upholding dharma. Every soul on this earth has a birth right to be lifted from the level of mortal to that of Mahatma.

“Which causes my hair to stand on end”:

We had a similar expression by Arjuna – sloka 29, chapter 1. The difference between the two situations is: Arjuna was confused, and also frightened on realising that he had to fight to win which could only be a possibility when the respected Bhishma, Drona and others were killed. Severe mental anxiety had then made his hair stand up on end. Whereas, Sanjaya had seen the transformation in Arjuna after he received the medicine in the form of the Gita. (The medicine made the patient (Arjuna) come out of ignorance and he was ready to fight the war for his brother “Dharmaraja”.)

If we can lift ourselves from the plane of being tamasic and rajasic and listen to the sacred text brought in the form of discourses by learned masters, we can experience the same feeling of “awe” as expressed by Sanjaya. Also, on understanding the text, our hair will not stand on end when we have to face difficult situations in our battle of life.

Sanjaya addressed Krishna as “Vasudeva”. The sastras call the “Vasus” (eight in number) as “The Lords of Time”. Krishna, the Lord (Parabrahman) over the Vasus is therefore to be looked upon as the Lord of the Vasus, the Lords of Time.

There is an important point to note in this sloka. Sanjaya heard the dialogue first hand and narrated to Dhritarashtra who was the second hand receiver of this sacred text. The sacred Mahabharata (which incorporates the Gita) does not say that Dhritarashtra experienced the same horripilation as Sanjaya. Why? Dhritarashtra was not just physically blind but spiritually blind too. His intellectual eye of wisdom did not open up. He had a selfish motive of wanting his sons to defeat the Pandavas. Hence there was no emotional reaction similar to that of Sanjaya on listening to the entire narration.

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद्गुह्यमहं परम | ३

योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम् ॥75॥

vyāsa-prasādāch chrutavān etad guhyam aham param |  
ogam yogeshvarāt kṛṣṇāt sākṣhāt kathayataḥ svayam ||75||

**Sloka 75**

**VYASA-PRASADACH CHRUTAVAN ETAD GUHYAM AHAM PARAM  
YOGAM YOGESHVARAT KRISHNAT SAKSHAT KATHAYATAH SVAYAM**

**Through the grace of Vyasa I have heard this Supreme and most secret Yoga direct from  
Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, Himself declaring it. ||75||**

vyasa prasaddat: through the grace of Vyasa;  
srutavaan: I have heard;  
etad: this;  
guhyam: secret;  
param: supreme;  
yogam: the Yoga;  
yogeshwarat: by the Lord of Yoga;  
krishnaat: by Krishna;  
sakshaat: direct;  
kathayataha: declaring;  
svayam: himself.

One can see the greatness and humbleness of Sanjaya expressed in this sloka. Sanjaya was chosen to be the first ever on-line battlefield reporter. He did not show his ego because of his selection but is expressing his gratefulness to Sage Bhagavan Vyasa who gave him the special power to witness (remote control/wireless audio visual communication) the great battle and listen to the most sacred conversation between the Lord and Arjuna. He recognised what he heard was the most secret of philosophical dialogues, aptly termed “Raja Vidya, Raja guhya” by Sri Krishna Himself.

He knew the greatness of Krishna before the war and respected Him for the expression of divine actions. But, he did not realise that the Krishna he knew and respected before was the master of Yoga. After listening to so many verses he learnt more about the Yoga and considered Krishna to be the Lord of Yoga.

He was referring to the union of the body consisting of “body, mind and intellect” (Jivatma) with the divinity (Atman) within, which brings everlasting “Ananda” to the seeker. By giving the title of “Yogeshwara” Sanjaya is indirectly hinting to his blind master/employer Dhritarashtra about the identity of Krishna and hoping that he would call off the battle. “It is not too late, command your son Duryodhana to stop the battle and give the Pandavas their share of the Kingdom”, Sanjaya is indirectly giving a hint to his master.

राजन्संस्मृतमूय संस्मृतमूय संवादमिममद्भुत म ।  
केशवार्जुनयोः पु ण्यं हृष्यामि च मु हुर ह्मु ुः ॥76॥

**rājan sansmṛitya sansmṛitya saṁvādam imam adbhutam |**

keśhavārjunayoḥ puṇyam hrīṣhyāmi cha muhur muhuḥ ||76||

**Sloka 76**

**RAJAN SANSMRITYA SANSMRITYA SAMVADAM IMAM ADBHUTAM  
KESHAVARJUNAYOH PUNYAM HRISHYAMI CHA MUHUR MUHUH**

**O king, as I recall again and again this wonderful and holy dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again.**

rajan: o king;  
samsrutya: recall;  
samvadam: dialogue;  
imam: this;  
adbhutam: wonderful;  
kesavarjunayoh: between Krishna and Arjuna;  
punyam: holy;  
hrushyami: rejoice;  
cha: and;  
muhur muhuhu: again and again.

Sanjaya had heard (sravana) the dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna. He did not go to a discourse by Jagatguru but was the witness to the sacred (impromptu) dialogue. He had received with apt attention the entire dialogue. Sanjaya, true to his nature went one step ahead and repeatedly recollected what was heard (“Manana”).

We studied in chapter 6 that the method of acquiring knowledge is by Sravana (listening) and then Manana and Nidhidhyasa (recollecting what is heard with total concentration on its import). This will take the seeker to the next stage which is getting totally absorbed in the unalloyed joy (Ananda). This is what Sanjaya is communicating with us who are the seekers of “Eternal Joy.” Let us listen/read again and again the sacred text, let us read many different texts on the subject and listen to as many different masters as possible. Let us listen to the same master repeatedly, analyse repeatedly what is said, put into practice what has been understood and only then, will we experience the joy experienced by Sanjaya. This is the Sadhana advocated by the masters for all spiritual seekers.

Punyam: holy.

The philosophy of the Gita is the Holy water that cures all worldly ailments (bhavarogas) by removing the deep rooted evils of “ignorance” (of one’s true identity as Atman) and “ego” which is the manifestation of ignorance. Let us be clear that this cannot happen just by listening to the sacred text but is only possible by understanding and truly living the life of Gita.

तच्च संस्मृतम्यु संस्मृतम्यु रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः ।  
विस्मयो मे महानराजन्हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः ॥77॥

**tach cha sansmṛitya sansmṛitya rūpam aty-adbhutaṁ hareḥ |  
vismayo me mahān rājan hrīṣhyāmi cha punaḥ punaḥ ||77||**

**Sloka 77**

**TACH CHA SANSMRITYA SAMSMRITYA RUPAM ATY-ADBHUTAM HAREH  
VISMAYO ME MAHAN RAJAN HRISHYAMI CHA PUNAH PUNAH**

**O King, as often as I recall that most wonderful form of the Lord, great is my astonishment, and I rejoice again and again.**

tasya: that;  
samsrutya: recall;  
roopam: form;  
atyadbhutam: most great/wonderful;  
harehe': of the Lord;  
vismayo: astonishment;  
me': my;  
mahan: great;  
hrishyami: I rejoice;  
cha: and;  
punaha: again.

Sanjaya is ecstatic. "Recall the most wonderful form of the Lord": Sanjaya, one can say: is referring to the "Viswaroopa", which he was most blessed to witness, Or Krishna, the four armed (shown to Arjuna at the end of the 11th chapter because Arjuna could not stand the sight of universal destruction) or Was referring to the glories of the Lord (Vibhuti) Or The most wonderful form of "No form, no qualities" (nirakara, Nirguna) which cannot be expressed in words. Or A combination of the above.

It should also be noted that the masters say that when the Lord showed the universal form, all the soldiers on the battlefield (including Bhishma, Drona) had fainted because it was so frightening to witness mass destruction. The sages who witnessed were standing with folded arms praising with recitation of the Vedas and hymns and the crooked/evil ones were entering the large open mouth of the Lord. (chapter 11) Sanjaya did not faint like others. This was because he was a truly satvic individual and had total control over his mind which was absorbed in his duty as a war reporter. "Every time I recall the dialogue and the wonderful form of Krishna": the picture of what he has seen has gone into his memory bank and Sanjaya is bringing that form to the front of his mind again.

**यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।  
तत्र श्रीविजयो भूतिधु वा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥78॥**

**yatra yogeshvaraḥ kṛiṣṇo yatra pārho dhanur-dharaḥ |  
tatra śhrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītir matir mama ॥78॥**

**Sloka 78**

**YATRA YOGESHVARAH KRISHNO YATRA PARTHO DHANUR-DHARAH  
TATRA SHRIR VIJAYO BHUTIR DHRUVA NITIR MATIR MAMA**

**Wherever is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, wherever there is Arjuna, the archer; there are prosperity, victory, happiness, expansion and sound policy. This is my conviction.**

yatra: wherever;  
Yogesvaraha: Lord of Yoga;  
Krishna: Krishna;  
Partho: Arjuna;  
dhanurdharaha: the wielder of bow/archer;  
tatra: there;  
sree: prosperity;  
vijaya: victory;  
bhutir: happiness;  
neetir: sound policy;  
matir: conviction;  
mama: my.

Being the last sloka in the sacred text, let us recapitulate what has happened so far:

- 1) Emperor Dhritarashtra started the sacred text with a question to Sanjaya. He wanted to know what did his sons and the Pandava brothers do on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.
- 2) This is the last sloka in the dialogue. Sanjaya after hearing the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna and narrating the same to his Emperor gives his final opinion.
- 3) We should remember that it is not the end of the war. It is only just the beginning of the war. Bhishma had blown his conch to announce the start of the war (sloka 12, chapter 1). Krishna, Arjuna and the rest of the leaders blew their respective conches (slokas 14-17 chapter 1).
- 4) Arjuna had requested Krishna to place the chariot in the middle of the two armies so that he could see those who were ready to please Duryodhana. (sloka 23, chapter 1)
- 5) Krishna placed the chariot accordingly (sloka 24, 25, chapter 1). Seeing his own kinsmen gathered for the battle, Arjuna lost his nerve and became mentally weak, not wanting to take up the bow and get ready for the battle. (Sloka 28, 30, chapter 1)
- 6) He expressed his weakness, dropped the Gandiva and collapsed on to the floor (Sloka 47, chapter 1) and announced “I will not fight” (Sloka 10, chapter 2).
- 7) Krishna started his teaching with the words, “You grieve for whom there need be no sorrow, yet you speak words of wisdom.” (sloka 11, chapter 2) and takes up the task of bringing him out of the state of utter dejection.
- 8) In the form of a dialogue between the two where Krishna is imparting the spirit of “Correct action in conjunction with the real knowledge to face the battle of life” we are taken to sloka 66, chapter 18.
- 9) Arjuna understands what his real duty is and informs Krishna that his delusion is gone and he has regained his memory (Sloka 73). He was now ready to fight, give his best and let the Lord decide the end result.
- 10) Sanjaya starts his concluding remarks from sloka 73 and completes it in this sloka. Sanjaya is not hesitant to inform his emperor Dhritarashtra that the victory was going to be for the Pandavas (and not for the Kauravas). He was hoping against hope that even at the last minute, Dhritarashtra would call off the battle. This is his intention.

Let us now analyse the sloka in detail.

Every word is extremely lucid and potent in its import.

Yatra yogeswaro Krishno: wherever there is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga.

The four main paths of yoga in the sacred text are “Karma, Jnana, Dhyana and Bhakti”. Krishna is considered to be the Lord of all the Yogas. We, the mortals veiled by the power of Maya, act out of ignorance of our true nature (as Atman) and are under the clutches of the power of “Delusion” (Maya). Lord Krishna is the only one who is not under the control of the delusory power of Maya and actually the powerful Maya is under His control. Yoga is the means to come out of the clutches of this Maya and unite with the Supreme. Krishna is aptly considered to be the Lord of Yoga. If we consider “Maya” as a wild horse and choose to make a journey from “a to b” sitting on it, we should be aware that it (Maya), is very strong and can throw us from its back and prevent us from reaching our destination. Whereas, Krishna who is the master of Yoga, is also aptly known as “Yogarudha” can sit on the wild horse and let it take Him to the destination He wants. Hence, the title “Lord of Yoga” (Yogeswara).

“Yatra partho Dhanurdharaha: where there is Arjuna, the wielder of the bow”.

Arjuna, we have learnt is considered to possess the virtues of:

- a) Gudakesha: conquerer of sleep (ignorance),
- b) Anasuya: free of jealousy,
- c) Total Surrender (sharanagatha) at the feet of “Truth and Righteousness” (Krishna, personification of Satya, Dharma)

Arjuna had the weapon Gandiva in his hand to fight the battle of life. The Gandiva is to be looked upon as the “weapon to put the knowledge into action”. When faced with the battle of righteousness, the Gandiva (tool to implement the knowledge into action) dropped out of his hand and he lost the mental strength to fight the enemy. The enemy was “Ignorance”. When ignorance overtakes a man, his knowledge departs from him. This is what happened on the battlefield and the Gandiva dropped from his hand. He failed to take up the task of fighting the evil and take up his ordained duties (Sloka 8, chapter 3). He had only one option left. To find the guru who could revitalise his knowledge. Sri Krishna, the Jagatguru was next to him at this moment of crisis in his life. Sri Krishna is also known as “Jnaneswara”, the Lord of Jnana. Arjuna without wasting any more time looked for guidance. He needed to totally surrender to the “Master of Knowledge” and humbly request the Lord to impart the knowledge of the correct action to take.

Arjuna, the hero with all the hidden talent and strength in him was able to pick up the Gandiva (knowledge) and be ready to fight (dhanurdharaha). He came out of the state of ignorance; (divinity shined forth) picked up the knowledge (Gandiva) and was ready to face evil (adharma personified as Kauravas). Picking up the Gandiva should be read as picking up the weapon to put the knowledge into action.

The above explanation is for the first half of the verse: “Yatra Yogeswaro Krishna, Yatra Partho Dhanurdharaha”.

This applies to any community in general but can also be applied to individual selves. This would be “in any part of the universe” and not just in India because this philosophy is for the entire mankind and for the true Aryans (Sloka 2, chapter 2). It also means “wherever there is a war between righteousness and unrighteousness” (dharma/adharma - good against evil). It is not just for use during an actual war, life itself is a continued state of war and in every society at any one time there is always an element of unscrupulousness. When applied to the individual self it should be read as: Wherever there is battle between the good and evil qualities within.

Tatra: “there or in such situations”; Or “In that battlefield of war of righteousness”; Or In the battlefield called, “the mind”, Krishna is also the “Life Principle” (Atman) within each of us. Wherever there is an expression of all the 26 divine qualities, Sri Krishna is said to be present assisting

to fight the six asuric qualities (Slokas 1-4 chapter 16). Our duty is simply to surrender to Krishna within, for the guidance on proper action during periods of mental conflict.

Putting it in a nutshell, where there is knowledge (Krishna) and where there is action (Arjuna) there is going to be Victory, Peace, and Prosperity. Knowledge and action should be put together in all daily activities to achieve success.

The Atman within is Krishna and the physical body is Jivatma and for victory the Jivatma has to surrender to the Atman. What is the end result? Who is the winner? Sree: prosperity in that land (because there is going to be), Vijaya: victory for righteousness, Bhoothi: Happiness. Because of the victory for righteousness there is going to be happiness all round not just for the period after the war but for many more years to come. The population do not live in fear any more and this adds to the continued state of happiness.

Dhruva: firm; Nitir: policy: Happiness comes from the actions of those policy makers who take up sound policies to run the administration and take care of their citizens. The policy makers who take up the task of “welfare of all” should have sound policies without expression of selfishness and individual prosperity as their motive.

What should the Arjuna’s of the world do? They should take shelter under the philosophy of Krishna and take up the weapon of action (Gandiva). Each one should take up their respective weapon of action (depending upon their trade and qualifications). When every section takes up their respective duties, there is going to be continued prosperity in that land. They should implement the policy of “Karma Sanyasa Yoga” by fully understanding “Jnana, Vijnana” (chapters 4, 7 and 13). They should be ready to discharge their respective duties to the society and their work should be carried out in accordance with the meaning of sloka 47, chapter 2. It is a message for each one of us to wake up and come out of dejection (which makes us lose our powers to fight the battle of righteousness - sloka 3, chapter 2)

Does it apply only to the Hindus? No, definitely not. Krishna is not to be looked upon from that angle. Krishna should be looked upon as the personification of “Eternal Truth and Righteousness.” Where there is Krishna (Atman/Divinity) manifest, who guides the Arjuna (Jivatman, individual souls) in the battlerfield of life, there is going to be the prosperity, victory, happiness and sound policy, This is the firm conviction of Sanjaya (after listening to this sacred dialogue). So, this sloka refers to all the individuals in their daily battle of life, It refers to the individuals in the family set up, It refers to every individual nation in the world, And finally It refers to all the mankind in this universe of ours. There should be a feeling of unity as in “Ours” and not a feeling of “mine” in our thoughts and actions. This will bring welfare to one and all.

Matihi mama: my conviction.

The first word in the Gita starts with the word “Dharma” and the last word ends with the word “Mama”. One could read it as, “Mama Dharma” (My Dharma). Let this therefore be “My Dharma” for each of us.

What is “My Dharma”? Philosophy of the sacred text is “My Dharma”. My Dharma is to recognise the divinity in me and express it in all my actions, My Dharma is respecting the divinity all round, My Dharma is conducting karma with no sense of ego and no attachment to the fruits of action, My Dharma is to recognise “Paramatma” in the universe, My Dharma is “Advaita”. I should clearly understand the Maha Vakyas “Aham Brahmasmi” and “Tat Tvam Asi”.

Sri Krishna says through the last sloka in chapter 15:

ITI GUHYATAMAM SHASTRAM IDAM UKTAM MAYANAGHAETAD BUDDHVA  
BUDDHIMAN SYAT KRITA-KRIRYASH CHA BHARATA

O sinless Arjuna, thus I have declared unto you the most secret sastra.



He, who understands it well, becomes the wise and has accomplished all his duties.

The most important word to note is: Krita Krityascha: meaning - accomplished all his duties. The true sadhaka, wishing to fulfil this criterion must know what the real spiritual meaning of Krita Krityascha is. It should be understood as: The Sadhaka/seeker should follow the path of: Sravana, Manana, Nidhidhyasa to understand the meaning of the entire Gita: Manage successfully to clear his mind totally of all the stored tamasic and rajasic vasanas, upgrade the Satvic vasanas to Shuddha satva and Achieve: Total Mano Nasha and Vasana kshaya, being established in the state of total Brahmakara Vritti.

**iti śrīmahābhārate śatasāhasryām saṁhitāyām vaiyāsikyām bhiṣmaparvaṇi śrīmad-  
bhagavadgīta-sūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogasāstre śrīkr̥ṣṇārjuna-saṁvāde  
mokṣasaṁnyāsa-yogo nāma aṣṭādaśo'dhyāyaḥ**

**ITI SRIMAHABHARATE SATASAHASRYAM SAMHITAYAM VAIYASIKYAM  
BHISMAPARVANI SRIMAD-BHAGAVADGITA-SUPANISATSU BRAHMAVIDYAYAM  
YOGASASTRE SRIKR̥SNARJUNA-SAMVADE MOKSASAMNYASA-YOGO NAMA  
ASTADASO'DHYAYAH**

**Thus, in the Upanishad of Bhagavadgita, the knowledge of supreme Brahman, the scripture of yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna ends the eighteenth chapter entitled “The yoga of Liberation through Renunciation”.**

Summary:

The four yogas according to Sanatana Dharma to unite with the Supreme are: Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Dhyana Yoga.

Self-Realisation of identity: “Tat Tvam Asi” (Thou Art That) is the ultimate knowledge/Jnana to get. This is “Atma Sakshatkara”. With this as the basis, the knowledge to conduct Nitya karma, Naimittika karma has to be obtained by the study of Karma Yoga. The actions conducted whilst realising one’s true identity then become “Sahaja Yoga” (Divine actions). Meditation on one’s true identity and on the presence of divinity within all is “Dhyana yoga.”

One should develop the following qualities by practicing Dhyana:

Total cessation of all desires, No expression of hatred to anybody, Removal of body consciousness, Annihilation of ego, Freedom from all attachments.

All of these are possible with the help of “Bhakti” towards the Supreme. The loss of memory of one’s true identity is like the losing of spectacles, which we have placed on top of our head, we search everywhere in vain to find them.

Only a mirror or another person can tell us that the spectacles are resting on top of our head! Similarly there is the need for the Srimad Bhagawadgita, which acts like a mirror and a guru to reflect our true identity and enable us to recognise, we are “Tat Tvam Asi”.

Final point to reflect upon:

One can come across five persons in relation to this sacred text: Arjuna, Hanuman, Sanjaya, Dhritarashtra, Veda Vyasa.

Arjuna as a Kshatriya from a ruling family had the duty to protect the citizens of the land. After listening to the discourse from Lord Krishna all his doubts were cleared, he was ready to take up his weapon of action and discharge his duties towards the welfare of the citizens of the land. He received the maximum benefit.

Hanuman: By installing himself on the flag of Arjuna's chariot, he is both advocating the path of Bhakti in the battle of life and also showing His unfaltering devotion to listen to His master Sri Rama, who incarnated as Krishna in Dwapara Yuga, delivering the sermon "Srimad Bhagawadgita". One can say that he is never tired of listening to his master.

Sanjaya: As a first class war reporter, he fulfilled his duty to his master Dhritarashtra and narrated the entire battle including the Bhagavad Gita to Dhritarashtra. He expressed through slokas 74 to 77 of the 18th chapter, his ecstatic joy at listening to the dialogue and finally in sloka 78 gave his firm conviction of the benefits accrued where there are 'Arjuna's' who follow the teachings of Sri Krishna.

Dhritarashtra: His intention was only to know the fate of his sons in the battle. He was not interested in listening to the intricacies of Dharma. In sloka 67 of this chapter the Lord clearly states that the Gita should not be narrated or taught to one who is devoid of austerity. We have one such example in the form of Dhritarashtra, who did not receive any benefit from listening to the discourse narrated by Sanjaya. With regards to Dhritarashtra it was a waste of time and effort by Sanjaya.

Veda Vyasa: He rendered the greatest service to mankind by composing the Mahabharata and incorporating within it, the Bhagawadgita. Sri Krishna clearly states in slokas 68 and 69 of this chapter how much He loves the one who teaches this philosophy to His devotees. Because of this great service, He is considered as "Bhagawan Veda Vyasa". Even after 5000 years the sacred text is still alive and thriving and directing sincere seekers towards the path of Liberation.

A humble request for all sincere seekers, to remember this sloka and understand its significance:

**SLOKAM EKAM TAD ARDHAM VAA PADAM PADARDHAMEVAVA NITYAM PATATHI  
BHAKTYAYUSHYAM MOKSHAM ADHIGACHATI**

Daily study of a sloka, half of a sloka, a quarter of a sloka confers on a sincere Bhakta long life and he even manages to cross over to the world of "Eternal Peace" which is "Moksha".