

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.

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 9: RAJA VIDYA RAJA GUHYA YOGA

INTRODUCTION

The words we come across in spiritual study have

- a) Vakyartha
- b) Lakshyartha
- c) Tatvartha

Vakyartha is meaning to the word.

Lakshyartha is the meaning that helps the seeker to unite with the aim of his study. (Lakshya – aim)

Tatvartha is the spiritual meaning of the word.

Raja Vidya: the royal knowledge

Raja Guhya: the royal secret.

Many a people wonder why there is this unusual title for this chapter. We can get an idea of the reason for this unique title by looking at it from different angles.

a)

In the older days monarchs ruled the land. The welfare of the subjects was their main task. To rule under the banner of “Dharma” was the most important duty. The subject matter is most befitting for those rulers. Hence, it is Raja Vidya. To make them efficient in their duty the spiritual education for them started very early in their life.

b)

The knowledge about the “Lord of the nine gated city” is the royal secret. We, the mortals under the influence of the ego (which thinks it to be the king) have forgotten the presence of the Lord within and we need to put a lot of efforts to realise “His” presence. It is the knowledge of the Lord within and all around.

The “Atman within” is the king and the “Parabrahman” all round is the monarch. Hence the knowledge of the same is “Raja Vidya.”

The knowledge that brings out the presence of the King within and thereby express divine actions for universal welfare is “Raja Vidya.”

c)

Why is it a royal secret?

It is not really a secret in the real meaning of the word “secret.” We can understand it better by looking at an example:

If a thing is available easily, people have no interest in acquiring it. When it is not available easily, its value increases. As and when an item becomes harder and harder to get, and as its value gets increased, there develops a desire in the minds of people to possess the same. There develops a curiosity to know about it.

Is it not true that the sand in the beach is of not a great value compared to the diamond and the art of finding the diamond is comparatively a secret?

The more a seeker goes in search of the secret of “Atma Vidya” (knowledge of the Atman within) the more he would experience the aspect of “Eternal Ananda” and so it is correct title for this chapter.

d)

As it is the knowledge of that “which is not seen” it is to be considered as “Raja Guhya.”

Really speaking “rahasya” is: it is a secret that makes one realise the true identity of the Atman within.

e)

By saying it is a “secret,” it is one way of arousing the curiosity of people to know about it. To hide it away from common men of the world is not the aim.

f)

As it is the most supreme knowledge amongst the various types of knowledge one can acquire, it is “Raja Vidya.”

g)

There is a saying amongst masters: “Upanisad Rahasya.” It simply means that there are some special statements/words incorporated in them which are almost a secret and these can be decoded only by the deeper analytical study of the same. Blessings and guidance from the guru assists in such decoding. The Gita which is nothing but a summary of all the Upanisads also has a number of words with a subtle meaning and needs the blessings and guidance by the guru to understand their significance. This is another reason for the title “Raja Guhya.”

To summarise the discussion so far:

It is easy just to give the meaning of the words.

It is essential to know for what purpose we have undertaken the study.

In this chapter, it says it is Raja Vidya, Raja Guhya.

Vakyartha is “Royal knowledge and Royal secret.”

Lakshyartha is:

In the pursuit of attaining Moksha, understanding the sacred text the Srimad Bhagawadgita, we, who are in the ninth chapter, by studying so far, we have got the adhikara to enter into deeper analysis. There are a number of seekers. We have now got the adhikara over other seekers who are still in earlier chapters - we are the Rajas (kings in the field of study till the 9th chapter.) The chapter is for us, who have got the adhikara. This is therefore “Raja vidya.” The knowledge for us, who have made some progress so far in our studies.

This is a secret because: those who are in the lower classes do not understand the significance of many words used in this chapter. But, we, if we have sincerely followed the teaching, have Faith and Bhakti in it, have got the blessings of the guru to get the knowledge imparted on to us, have managed to move up in the spiritual path and can understand the slokas in it.

It is for such seekers, the teaching will have greater impact.

Sloka 1

Sri Bhagawan Uvacha

**IDAM TU TE' GUHYATAMAM PRAVAKSHYAMI ANASUYAVE
JNANAM VIJNANA SAHITAM YAT JNATVA MOKSHYASE'SUBHAAT**

The Lord said:

To you, free from envy, I shall declare this profound secret knowledge combined with realisation, which having known, you shall be free from all evil.

Idam: this
tu: indeed
te': to you
guhyatamam: greatest secret
pravakshyami: shall declare
anasuyave: free from envy
jnanam: knowledge
vijnanasahitam: combined with realisation
yat: which
jnatva: having known
mokshyase: you shall be free
ashubhat: from evil.

The Lord is taking his disciple deeper and deeper into the study of the Atman which is “Brahma Jnana”. He considers that this deeper knowledge can be imparted only to those who are free from the rotten disease of the mind called “envy.”

“Asuya”: envy, jealousy, intolerance,
Anasuya: free from envy, jealousy, intolerance.

The feeling of envy/jealousy develops in the mind when one wants to get something just for his own personal benefit but finds someone less gets it. The seed of jealousy would sprout sooner or later and results in so many untoward developments. This is common amongst students who undertake many exams in their student career.

Intolerant of those who have got what they have not got themselves has resulted in a number of civil disturbances in almost all parts of the world sometime or other in their history.

Duryodhana went to war because of “Asuya”. He was jealous of the Pandavas who were the rightful heirs for the kingdom and this envy was responsible for the death of 18 battalion soldiers.

On the other hand, jealousy was not the reason for the Pandavas to agree to wage the war. Arjuna actually tells Krishna that he does not like the bloodshed and loss of so many lives and is ready to go to the forest and let Duryodhana rule.

Similarly, let the seekers develop this quality in all situations in life and especially in their attempts to learn the Brahma Jnana and attain salvation. Let us not be envious of those who have got more than what we have or enjoying more pleasures than us. After all restlessness is the outcome of being jealous.

Brahma Jnana is to realise “Sat, Chit, Ananda.” “Ananda” comes from “Shanti.” When we want to experience the “Shanti” (peace) how can we become jealous which takes away the “peace?” Let us therefore strive for developing the quality of “Anasuya” so that we can experience the “Peace” which leads us towards success in spiritual sadhana.

“Envy” is like cancer and will erode the mind totally within a short period of time. Because Arjuna was free from this cancerous disease, the Lord revealed the royal secret. Purity of the mind from the dreaded “envy” will help to purify also the speech and actions. (Mano, Vak, kaya Shuddhi)

I will declare the most secret knowledge to you, says the Lord.

Which having known you are freed from evil:

This secret knowledge I am going to impart to you will free you from the evil. The “evil” referred to is the “cycle of births and deaths known as samsara.” You will not re-enter into this world and will unite with “Parabrahman” says the Jagadguru.

Arjuna did not want to be responsible for the death of so many respected elders, family members, innocent soldiers, to see so many women becoming widows and children becoming homeless destitute all of which would be the consequence of the war. He said that he would rather go to the forest than fight the war. He went on to tell Krishna (sloka 44, chapter 1) that as a consequence of the war, he would face the life in hell.

Sri Krishna is adding further clarification on this misunderstanding by Arjuna. He is saying: “Mokshyase Ashubhat”: you are freed from evil of births and deaths into this world.

He wanted Arjuna to know that the highest aim of the individual has to be “Union with Parabrahman” and not for paltry attempts of ascending on to heaven and enjoy the pleasures.

How will this come about?

Only by converting the knowledge into wisdom (chapter 7).

The knowledge from the study of the scripture is only an indirect knowledge. It is “Paroksha Anubhooti”.

“Vijnana” is direct experience. It is “Aparoksha anubhooti”.

The wisdom from various experiences at different stages in one’s life will eventually lead one to abandon the evils like “Jealousy, anger, greed etc.” This may take several births and deaths of experiences including several physical births but wisdom will surely dawn on one day.

Sloka 2

**RAJA VIDYA RAJA GUHYAM PAVITRAM IDAM UTTAMAM
PRATYAKSHA VAGAMAM DHARMYAM SUSUKHAM KARTUM AVYAYAM**

This is Royal secret, royal knowledge, purifier, Supreme, realisable by direct knowledge, according to dharma, very easy to perform and imperishable.

Rajavidya: the king of sciences/royal knowledge;
raja guhyam: royal secret;
pavitram: purifier;
idam: this;
uttamama: supreme;
pratyaksha avagaham: realisable by direct knowledge/intuition;
dharmyam: according to righteousness;
susukham: very easy;
kartum: to perform;
avyayam: imperishable.

The subject under discussion is the “Knowledge of the Atman” which is “Brahma Jnana”. We are given in a nutshell the various aspects of “Brahma Jnana”.

Raja guhya: this is royal secret.

This has been discussed in the introduction and the last sloka of this chapter.

Each individual is different and has various different qualities. Many of the qualities expressed by people are the result of the vasanas from past births. The present environment also plays a role in the qualities developed by individuals.

Accordingly due to some weakness in their qualities there will be some who do not understand the subject of “The Atman”. Among these there will be some who may even misinterpret what they have read or heard of. They may directly or indirectly dissuade some from learning about the sacred text.

On the other hand if the sacred text is given to the right person, he/she will be able to analyse the subject, understand it, implement the teaching in his/her life and thereby become better citizens of the land. These in turn will be able to influence others, direct them towards the right path and thereby keep the “Light of Gita” glowing all the time.

In this sense, the Gita is to be looked upon as a “Royal Secret.”

One can say that the subject of medicine is secret and has to be taught to those who have inclination towards it. The medicines are safe in the hands of doctors/pharmacists/nurses and in a sense the subject of medicine can be considered as a royal secret to be taught to the special few.

Raja Vidya: it is a royal knowledge.

This has also been discussed already in this chapter.

It is the “Supreme Purifier.”

What does it purify?

The knowledge assists the seeker to purify his/her mind/speech/actions.

This in turn will assist in burning the stored vasanas and not to let in new vasanas which will hinder the spiritual progress.

This in turn will guide the seeker towards the ultimate aim “Purushartha” which is “Salvation/Moksha.”

The masters say: “The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman” and hence it is the best purifier for all.

Dharmyam: it is according to and pertaining to dharma.

The Gita is all about “Dharma”. “Dharma” is the support with immutable principles that protects man from three-fold sufferings of “Disease, sorrow and ignorance.”

It is that which supports and upholds the divine order of the universe and also that of man.

Dharma is the art of correct action in daily activities of the individual which will enhance universal welfare and guides the individual towards Moksha.

Hence, it is the best spiritual medicine/tonic for the seekers.

Pratyakshavagamanam: it is to be realised by direct intuition and comprehension.

The seeker has to have a thirst for this knowledge, develop “Jnana” and implement it in daily actions. In course of time he develops the wisdom which assists in correcting the mistakes in actions and leads him to the realisation of the Atman and Parabrahman.

One can say that the sweetness of mango can only be experienced by direct experience. One has to eat it and experience the taste. The sweetness of the mango cannot be experienced by any other means than eating it by oneself.

Susukham kartum: Very easy to perform.

This is because it does not require any material wealth to obtain the spiritual knowledge.

It does not involve any hard labour.

It does not stop one from conducting worldly duties. One need not be a sanyasi, abandon all worldly possessions to acquire the knowledge.

It is truly the subject of “Art of living” for the welfare of the individual and the society.

Finally, the Lord says it is “Avyayam.” It is “Imperishable knowledge Supreme.”

One may lose material possessions like wealth/family etc but the knowledge cannot be lost except through senility. It may get hidden/masked by the six dreaded enemies of “Kama, krodha, lobha, moha, mada and matsarya” which act as “Maya”. Ego builds up in man due to these six enemies in spiritual progress. The knowledge does not get perished at any time. In course of time, through the blessings of the guru, Sraddha and Bhakti every individual can express divinity on earth.

No one can steal this knowledge. The good qualities (Daivi sampat - divine treasures) developed because of this knowledge will be carried onto the next birth.

Sloka 3

**ASHRADDHADHANA PURUSHA DHARMASYAASYA PARANTAPA
APRAPYA MAAM NIVARTANTE MRUTYU SAMSARA VARTMANI**

O’ Parantapa, those without faith in this dharma, not attaining Me, return to the path of the world of death.

Asraddhadhana: without faith;
purushaha: men;
dharmasya: of dharma/duty;
asya: this;
parantapa: scorcher of enemies;
aprapya: not attaining;
maam: Me;
nivartante: return;
mrutyu: death;
samsara: world of;
vartmani: return.

Whatever action one takes in life has to have an aim.

Towards achieving the aim, everyone will have to follow a path.

There should be total faith in the path chosen.

The aim of the spiritual seeker is “Moksha.”

Moksha is “attaining union with the Parabrahman.”

The knowledge of Parabrahman is “Atma Jnana.”

The path to take is the path of “Dharma” given by Lord Krishna in the Srimad Bhagawadgita.

In this sloka, “dharma” is the subject matter,

“Me” is “Atma Jnana”.

“Atma Jnana” is to achieve freedom from the experiences of births and deaths and to experience the “Brahmananda.”

Failure to experience “Brahmananda” results in falling back into the world of “births and deaths of experiences”.

Whatever experience one gets from this world has a birth and death.

Faith and devotion are the keys to success in life.

The degree of success depends upon the intensity of faith developed and practiced.

One may ask the question, “How long it will take to achieve success.”

The answer is simple: “It depends upon the intensity of effort and the force of obstructing forces.”

The obstructing force is our mental make-up due to the existing vasanas.

Let us therefore have the aim fixed in what we want to achieve in life,

Let us take the path of “Dharma” given by the Lord in the Gita.

The seeker who has total faith in the master and His teaching and follows it with Sraddha and Bhakti, develops knowledge of the path taken and meditates on the teachings will surely experience “Brahmananda” and does not fall into the pit of samsara.

Return to the path of the world of death:

What is this world of death?

Where there is birth and death is the answer.

Where is this world?

It is the earth and the worlds under.

Only in these spheres one can see both world and death.

The 6 lokas above the earth and the 7 lokas under the earth are the spheres referred to.

(refer to introduction under the title “Moksha and samsara”).

Sloka 4

**MAYA TATAM IDAM SARVAM JAGAD AVYAKTA MOORTINA
MATSTHANI SARVA BHOOTANI NA CHA AHAM TESHVAVASTHITAH**

By Me all this universe is pervaded in the un-manifested form. All beings are in Me and I do not abide in them.

Maya: by Me;

tatam: pervaded;

idam: this;

Sarvam: all;

jagad: world;

avyakta: un-manifested;

moortina: form;

matsthani: exist in Me;

sarva: all;

bhootani: beings;

na: not;

cha: and;

aham: I;
teshu: in them;
avasthitaha: abide.

Maya tatam idam sarvam jagad Avyakta moortina: By Me all this universe is pervaded in the un-manifested from.

The entire universe known and unknown to us is pervaded by the “Primordial Energy” and that energy in the un-manifest form is the Parabrahman. All the manifest energy that we know of and make use of is emanating only from this primordial energy. “Me” in this sloka is to be considered in this instance as “The Energy.” This is considered by the masters as “The Supreme Chaitanya or Supreme Consciousness.”

Matsthani sravani bhootani: all beings are in Me.

When the entire universe is pervaded by the un-manifest energy, one has to conclude that all forms of life known and unknown to us are within this wrap of enveloping energy.

It is like the various organs within the body of ours. All organs and the various cells within each organ are enveloped by the “energy” and when this “energy” leaves the body, there is no more life in that body.

Na cha aham teshvavasthitaha: I do not abide in them.

“I, the macrocosm” is pervading this entire universe is the meaning of this section of the sloka.

If one can read the word “Me” as the “Chit” (intelligence) aspect of “Sat, Chit, Ananda” we can understand it further. It is the “Omniscience” aspect of Parabrahman. The entire universe is pervaded by this “Supreme Intelligence” (Mahan Chitta) and is sustained and active/alive because of this intelligence. “He” is “Supreme Maestro” running the show called “Life”. In the same vein, we have to accept that the Supreme intelligence does not abide in individuals. A portion of the “Supreme Intelligence” abides in individuals as “Buddhi”. The ego masks this buddhi and makes us feel that we are intelligent and are capable of running the show on earth. No one on earth is capable of running the show on earth because each one is limited by the concept of “time, space and causation.”

It is like all the family members are inside a house and the house is not inside them.

All the waves are in the ocean and the ocean is not inside the waves.

Sloka 12, chapter 7, brings out the same declaration by the Lord.

One can put a counter argument to this assertion. It is agreed that the “Atman” is within each one of us. If this “Atman” is the God, we have to conclude that the “God” is within us. The answer for this dilemma is: The Atman is not a single entity and it is to be considered as a spark of Paramatman. Each one of us is a manifestation of god in human form but definitely not the God on earth. We should not be boasting that “I have trapped the God within me.” The powerful one between the body and the Atman is definitely “The Atman.” In its absence we have no existence.

Therefore, the body is “Mithya” (not permanent and hence false) while the Atman is “Satya” (permanent and Truth). We, the physical body are not eternal and the Atman is eternal. When the presence of the body is not true, how can one say that the Atman is within the body?

Sloka 5

**NA CHA MATHSYANI BHOOTANI PASHYA ME' YOGAM AISHWARAM
BHOOTA BHRINNA CHA BHOOTASTHO MAMATMA BHOOTABHAVANAHA**

Nor all beings exist in Me. Behold My divine yoga, supporting all beings but not dwelling in them, I am the “efficient cause” of all beings.

Na: not;
cha: and;
matsyani: dwelling in Me;
Bhootani: beings;
Pashya: behold;
Me' yogam aishwaram: My divine yoga;
Bhoota bhrit: supporting all beings;
Na: not;
Bhootasthaha: dwelling in all beings;
Mama: My;
Bhoota Bhavanaha: bringing forth beings.

There appears to be a contradiction in statement of facts when one reads the slokas 4 and 5. In sloka 4, the Lord categorically stated that “all beings exist in Me and I do not abide in them.” In this sloka, we are told, “nor all beings exist in Me”.

For a Jnani who has understood the philosophy of the Lord there is no contradiction at all.

The important words to understand are:
“Bhoota bhavanaha”: bringing forth beings and
“Bhoota Bhrit”: supporting all beings.

What is “bringing forth beings?”

The efficient cause for bringing forth all beings on to this universe is “The Parabrahman” who creates, sustains and finally brings dissolution of the world.

We all consider that the spark of Parabrahman is the Atman within us.

What we have to understand is that as the Atman, He is supporting all but not inside all.

This is again a pure advaitic expression. In the Advaita philosophy there is no created or creator. (Nirvana Shatkam of Sri Shankaracharya.)

“When the body is maya (illusion) and does not really exist, how can one say that all beings exist in Him?”, says the Advaitin.

Neither there is “Atman” within, (sloka 4) nor is there the “Virat” with the entire universe within Him.

By developing the “ego” and bodily identification, the understanding that the Atman is within and all exist in Him.

By supporting the individual in the form of Atman, He is the efficient cause for this apparent delusion. By the grace of the guru, the study of the scriptures and the Gita we are expected to clear this delusion and unite with the Parabrahman.

Sloka 6

YATHAKASHA STHITHO NITYAM VAYUHU SARVATRAGO MAHAAN TATHA SARVANI BHOOTANI MATSTHANITIUPADHARAYA

As the mighty wind, moving everywhere, rests always in space, even so, know you, all beings are in Me.

Yatha: as;
akasha: in the space;
sthitaha: rests;
nityam: always;
vayuhu: wind;
sarvatrago: moving everywhere;
mahaan: the great/mighty;
tatha: so;
sarvani: all;
bhootani: beings;
matshtani: rests in Me;
upadharaya: know.

In the last verse we were told that “Nor all beings exist in Me” and in this sloka the Lord says “All beings are in Me.” Why the contradiction again?

This sloka is from the point of view of the philosophy of “Dualism” (Dwaita).

The Lord is not giving us contradictory ideas but trying to explain the most subtle philosophy to us by giving an example.

It is impossible for us, the humans, to describe the Lord as He is subtlest.
The nearest one can understand the Lord is trying to understand the “Ether”.

Among the Pancha Maha Bhootas,
The earth is the grossest,
The water is subtler than the earth,
The fire is subtler than the water,
Air is subtler than the fire,
Ether is subtler than the air.

In our body,
the Pranamaya kosha is subtler than the Annamaya kosha,
Manomaya kosha is subtler than the Pranamaya kosha,
Jnanamaya kosha is subtler than the Manomaya kosha,
Anandamaya kosha is subtler than the Jnanamaya kosha,
The Atman is subtler than the Anandamaya kosha.

For the purpose of understanding from the human point of view, we need something grosser than the subtlest to understand.

Hence in this sloka, we have the comparison between the Ether and the wind.

Physically speaking, we are told by the scientists that “air” occupies only a fraction of the Space. We believe in the statement because we have faith in our scientists.

The wind is so powerful but yet is confined within the space and cannot go beyond the space. Unless there is space there cannot be any room for the wind to flow.

Similar to the wind, we, all forms of life occupy the eternal space and we need the space to move about. The Parabrahman /the Virat, (The Universal Form of the Lord) has given us the space to move about within Him.

All types of smells/fragrances are carried by the wind but the space does not get affected by these.

Similarly what we carry in the form of vasanas does not affect the Virat/Parabrahman within whom we all move about.

Just like the space, the Virat/Parabrahman pervades all.

We are so small and insignificant in comparison to the Virat we can almost call ourselves non-existent. The tiny cells are in trillions in our body and they all live within the body. The body is Virat in relation to the cells within.

Having made all this observations, the “Space” is still not the “Parabrahman” but the nearest comparison to understand the principle of “Parabrahman.”

What is our position and strength in comparison to that of the “Virat?”

Do we not respect the powerful especially if the powerful one is taking care of all our needs?

Let us show our respect to the “Virat” who is taking care of all that is created and who is making room always for the new and does not let the world go stagnant at any time.

Let us try to have faith in our spiritual scientists, respect them and learn what they are trying to teach us.

From the non-dualist point of view, let us understand the maya of the Lord and drop our bodily identification. We are non-existent.

In one sense, we are all within Him and He is within us,

In higher planes of spiritual maturity we have to understand that we are not in Him and He is not inside us but “He” is the one and the only “Absolute Primordial Energy, Chaitanya, Supreme Consciousness”.

Our salutations to Him.

Sloka 7

**SARVA BHOOTANI KOUNTEYA PRAKRITI YANTI MAMIKAAM
KALPA KSHAYE PUNASTANI KALPADOU VISRUJAMI AHAM**

O Kounteya, all beings go into My prakriti at the end of the kalpa. I bring them forth again at the beginning of a kalpa.

Sarva bhootani: all beings

Yanti: go

Mamikam: My

Kalpakshaye: at the end of kalpa

Punaha: again

Taani: them
Kalpadou: at the beginning
Visrujami: send forth
Aham: I

Refer sloka 17, chapter 8.
1000 yugas is a kalpa.

A kalpa is the time from creation of the universe to the total dissolution of the same. It is spread over a span of millions of years and is beyond our comprehension as we have a span of about 100yrs as our life on this earth.

This kalpa too is repeated again and again many a number of times.
The beginning of its creation (of the universe) is “Shrishti”.
Its span of life on earth is “Sthithi”.
Its dissolution is “Pralaya.”

The entire life on this universe is under the power of Maya and the Maya is under the control of the Lord. Surrender to this Lord (with no form and qualities) by giving a form and name, showing Bhakti and conducting actions with Sraddha to His teachings is the means to be released from this bondage called “Maya.” To this is needed the guidance and blessings of the Guru. Mother and father during the earlier days and the spiritual teacher in the later years are be considered as the gurus in the life of all.

For the sake of understanding by the men and women on this earth, our ancestral rishis explain this as follows:

They say that The Supreme Parabrahman has a desire to create and play with the created. It is all His imaginary play. When He feels He had enough he will stop the play and call it a day. He does it several times.

This is like the play of a child.

Let us imagine that there is a big house and the child of the house has a play room in it. When she feels that she wants to play, she draws an imaginary line, builds a castle, brings forth imaginary characters to play. She uses different inert objects, gives them a name and role to play. She moves those characters round the way she wants. When she had enough, she dismantles what she has created in her mind and leaves the room. While she is playing, if her mother or sister come into the room and step into the parameter of the castle created, she gets extremely upset.

During the play nothing happens to the child who caused the creation, sustenance and dissolution of her imaginary world. She remained only as a witness to the entire play.

The same principle applies to the actors on a stage. The stage could be a house, a castle, a mansion which the director wants to create. While the play is on, everything on the stage appears to be real. The actors will not be real characters when they are off the stage.

But, all this explanation is only for understanding. No examples can really depict what is happening, what has happened and what will happen.

Sloka 8

**PRAKRITIM SVAAM AVASHTABHYA VISRUJAMI PUNAH PUNAH
BHOOTAGRAMAM IMAM KRITSNAM AVASAM PRAKRITER VASAN**

Animating My Prakriti, I again and again send forth all this multitude of beings who are helpless by the force of nature.

prakritehe: of nature
vashat: by force
avasham: helpless
imam: thus
kritsnam: all
prakritim: nature
avashtabhyaha: having animated
punaha: again
visrujami: I send forth

This is a continuation and confirmation of the theme of the last few verses. Here, Prakriti/Nature has to be understood as the “vasanas” (thought imprints).

In the sleep state all the vasanas are inactive (dead to the world around). During the Pralaya/dissolution there is no activity/life at all. “He” withdraws everything into Him (all the subtle bodies enter into the Moola prakriti/womb for creation).

When “He” decides to send forth all this multitude of beings, “He” activates the vasanas and brings them back to life. “He” provides a new physical body to the “subtle bodies” that left this world. Thus “He” animates them back to activity.

We, the “jiva” are bound by our actions which leave vasanas on our mind. Iswara, the Lord, is the controller of Nature. The forces of nature in the form of “Satva, Rajas and Tamas” gunas bind the jiva to this force of re-births. The Jivanmuktas/Liberated souls are freed from this force as they have taken shelter under “Iswara” and they have no rebirths.

It is made clear that we, the individuals are under the control of force of Nature and this is because of the inherent vasanas imprinted on our minds by our actions of the past and the desires/hatreds entertained.

On the contrary, the Lord is the controller of “this force of Nature” and this “force” has no effect on Him.

The only exception to this rule is that the Jivanmuktas who are not under the control of this force.

Sloka 9

**NA CHA MAAM TANI KARMANI NIBHADNANTI DHANANJAYA
UDASINAVADASINAM ASAKTAM TESHU KARMASU**

O Dhananjaya, nor do these actions bind Me, who remains indifferent and unconcerned to those actions.

Having said that the actions of the individuals bind them to this world, the Lord now says “His” apparent actions and the results of such actions do not bind Him. He has no births and rebirths into this world. His role is just activating the subtle bodies to life and giving one more opportunity for that subtle body to take birth in a new womb and exhaust all the vasanas. Beings as what we are, majority of us do not succeed in clearing the stored vasanas and on the contrary bring in more vasanas and hence the innumerable birth each of us is supposed to take before attaining Moksha.

Let us take few examples to understand this.

The sun wakes us all up by his rays of light. Most do get up in the morning (There are some who do not do so. Let us not bring that topic now.) and get on with our activities. The sun that woke us up and shining light on us remains as a witness to all our actions. He is said to be not tainted by our actions. In a way one can say that he remains indifferent and unconcerned to our actions. He does not say to a murderer, “stop this act, you are going to suffer for this.” At the same time he does not advocate us to conduct good actions. Whatever advice the Lord has for us has been given through the sacred texts.

The screen on which the play is projected does not get affected by the various scenes that are part of the play/cinema.

The child enacting an imaginary play in her room creates the characters in the play but is not personally affected by them.

The Lord is letting all His creatures decide their own future. He is giving us an opportunity to decide our own future. He has given us the path to reach Him and has also depicted the picture for those who go contrary to His advice.

Lord’s Karma of having created this universe is on the principle of “non-attachment” and really speaking it is only His Leela, an imaginary play.

Almost all our actions are “attachment to actions” (kamyas karmas).

The actions of the jivanmuktas are according to the principle of “Nishkama karma and karma Phala Tyaga.”

Teshu karmasu: in those actions

Asaktam: unattached

Udaseenavat: like one indifferent

Asinam: being

Tani karmani: those actions

Na: not

Nibhandnanti: bind

Sloka 10

MAYYADYAKSHENA PRAKRITIH SOOYATE SACHARACHARAM HETUNANAINA KOUNTEYA JAGAD VIPARIVARTATE

O Kounteya, by Me as a supervisor, prakriti produces the moving and unmoving. Because of this, the world revolves.

What is the relationship between Purusha and Prakriti? How does the world gets activated and revolves?

These questions are answered in this verse.

The Purusha/Lord/Parabrahman acts as a supervisor, we are told.

What is the role of the supervisor?

The role of the supervisor is to activate the subtle bodies into life again. As we know, due to the inherent unfulfilled vasanas, there is no freedom for the individual. He/she has to come back to earth and work at exhausting the vasanas and not to accumulate any new vasanas. The Lord supervises this task. There are trillions and trillions of subtle bodies. In the normal course of a kalpa, a number of these subtle bodies are given opportunity to come back to earth and a body is provided for them. As

and when the subtle bodies are released on to the earth, there is at the same time death of a number of forms of life on earth. These will go into the moola prakriti and wait for their turn to be sent back to earth again.

When the lord says “moving and unmoving”, it includes all forms of life. Some are born as humans, some as animals, some as trees and plants etc.

The world revolves: this is the cycle of births and deaths which is an ongoing action during a kalpa. At the end of a kalpa/pralaya all forms of life enter into the moola prakriti and at the beginning of the kalpa a number of them are sent back to the earth.

The supervisor who takes this role is “Parabrahman” who remains as a neutral witness. The power of the Lord has to be present for the life to be alive.

A magnet attracts a number of iron particles/objects that enter into its magnetic force. In the absence of the magnetic force the particles have no life and remain inert.

The Atman by his presence illumines the gross and subtle bodies and helps them to manifest their un-manifest vasanas.

Maya: by Me

Adhyakshena: as supervisor

Sacharacharam: the moving and the un-moving

Suyate: bring forth

Anena hetuna: by this cause

Viparivartate: revolves

A court comes to life only when the Judge walks in with his/her robe and takes the seat.

All forms of visible energy are manifest only because of the “Primordial Energy”. The intelligence in man, the activation of thoughts are all due to the power of the Atman who remains unconcerned but does activate.

Three points to note in this sloka:

Prakriti as such is inert and only an instrument in the hands of the Parabrahman.

The Parabrahman then activates Prakriti and brings the universe to life. The Prakriti is indirectly responsible for the life on this planet. It is not directly but indirectly responsible for all activities.

The Lord remains as a witness and the responsibility is on Prakriti. The Lord remains unconcerned and unattached.

Prakriti will work because of the proximity of the Purusha. The example of the magnet applies to this statement.

Adyaksha: supervisor. We are used to the statement “in the august presence of” when an assembly comes to life by the presence of the most important person. In the absence of such an individual the assembly cannot function. “In the august presence of Her Majesty, the Queen, the Parliament comes to life for the term.”

Sloka 11

**AVAJANANTI MAAM MOODA MANUSHEE TANUM ASHRITAM
PARAM BHAVAM AJANANTO MAMA BHOOTA MAHESHWARAM**

Fools disregard Me, dwelling in human body, not knowing My form as the Lord of all beings.

Mooda: fools.

The Lord has used a strong word “Mooda”.

The teacher who is teaching the students in a class room considers those that do not understand him as fools.

Mother often uses the word, “foolish child” when the child does not understand her properly and conducts wrong actions.

It is only the phrase used by one who cares and would like to bring in changes in the loved ones.

The teacher would like to get all the students in his class pass the exams and go to the next class. The foolish ones unfortunately do not heed the warning by the teacher and do not make progress in their education.

In this instance, the reference of “fools” is for the ignorant. The ignorant are those who do not understand the meaning and importance of what has been taught. Either they have not understood what was taught, do not make attempts to understand or move forward arrogantly disregarding what is being taught.

The Lord says: “dwelling in human body”. He is not shouting from a distance. On the other hand, out of compassion, “He” resides in each one of us and speaks to us through the “Antarvani” (inner divine voice). Because of connection with the indriyas to the manifold world around, many do not heed to what has been said by the “Antarvani”.

Not only they do not hear “Him” but do not recognise Him. It is not the physical form of the Lord one is expected to recognise but one has to recognise the power of the Lord behind all the powers one has. The fact that someone holds the most powerful seat in a state is due to the blessings of the Lord. The intelligence is an expression of the Lord. The perverted ones are those who because of “ego” attribute the power they possess to themselves only.

Finally, the Lord tells us that “do not know My form as the Lord of all beings.”

In this regard, “Lord of all beings” has to be read as “the power” expressed by others is also due to the presence of the Lord in them.

To summarise,

Ignorant are those,

Who do not recognise the divinity in others and

Who do not recognise the divinity within.

“Love for all” is the way to live in the world and this has been expressed in a different way in this sloka. Irrespective of one’s religion, caste, sex, creed etc., one should see divinity and express divinity and this is the way for “Universal peace and harmony.”

There is another explanation for this sloka and it is as follows:

Parabrahman as Krishna is telling us that people do not recognise Krishna as the incarnation of Parabrahman. They do not understand the Higher nature of Krishna. He has already said that for the sake of protecting the righteous, uprooting evil and for upholding Dharma He does incarnate.

Mama: My

Param bhavam: Higher nature

Ajanantaha: not knowing

Bhoota maheshwaraha: Lord of all being

Manusheem tanum: human form

Ashritam: refuge in

Avajananti: disregard.

Sloka 12

**MOGHASHA MOGHA KARMANI MOGHA JNANA VICHETASAHA
RAKSHASEEM AASUREEM CHAIVA PRAKRUTIM MOHINEE SRITAHA**

Of vain hopes, vain actions, vain knowledge and senseless, they, verily are possessed of the deluding nature of the rakshasas and asuras.

This sloka is the continuation of the theme from the previous sloka. We have got a description of those who disregard the Lord, not knowing His true nature.

There are basically two worlds which are to be reached by following the path of “Sreyas or Preyas.” “Sreyas” is the path which is good for the seekers and it leads the seeker to the spiritual world. “Preyas” on the contrary which is pleasing for the senses gets one bound to the material world.

What we have to realise is that the pleasures from the material world are temporary in nature and do not yield long lasting happiness. Hence in this sloka, the Lord says that the ideas of getting permanent happiness from the world around are vain and useless. Hoping to achieve permanent happiness is a non starter and this is the meaning of the word “Moghasha.” “Asha” is desires and “mogha” is “vain”.

Mogha karmano: vain actions. The actions that lead one to fulfil the worldly pleasures are said to be vain actions as they do not give permanent pleasures. This is because all such actions do end up in sorrow which we have learnt before.

Mogha jnana: vain knowledge. What is the use of striving for knowledge that leads one to act for fulfilment of pleasures?

The entire Gita is about actions that have to be conducted in the spirit of “Nishkama karma and Karma phala tyaga” and thereby experience the “Peace” which is everlasting.

This statement is what the elders often use while correcting the actions of their children. Every parent tries to correct the actions of the children so that they do not get hurt.

Similarly the Lord like a loving parent of the entire universe is trying to correct the mistakes in our actions. Actions as such are not wrong but the motive behind any actions has to be correct.

Conduct of such actions that are contrary to the spirit of the Gita, the Lord says are “rakshaseem asureem”. This is because of the “I”ness they develop in all their thoughts and actions. Their mind disregards the intellect and hence all their understanding is vain.

Those who conduct such actions belong to the demonical and asuric category.
Those who conduct actions as per the spirit of the Gita belong to the divine category.

Mohineem: deceitful
Prakritim: nature
Shritaha: possessed of.

Such people are possessed of deceitful nature is the verdict by the Jagadguru. Who so ever conducts such actions is actually deceiving their own selves. The power of maya leads such people in the wrong direction.

Rakshasas and asuras show predominance of rajasic and tamasic qualities.

Sloka 13

**MAHATMANASTU MAAM PARTHA DAIVEE PRAKRUTIM ASHRITAH
BHAJANTY ANANYA MANASO JNATVA BHOOTADIM AVYAYAM**

O Partha, the Mahatmas, possessing My divine nature, worship Me, with a single mind, knowing Me to be the origin of all beings and imperishable.

It is the actions that make a person belong to the category of rakshasas/asuras or to the group of Mahatmas. After having given us an insight about the Rakshasas and Asuras, we are now told about the Mahatmas. As a matter of fact the entire 16th chapter is given to the description of daivic and asuric qualities.

The difference between us, the humans and animals is that we have been blessed with the capacity of reasoning. Reasoning comes from knowledge and correct knowledge helps one to conduct actions better. After all we have to live in this world amongst fellow humans and other forms of life.

Mahatma: Great soul.

The Lord resides within every individual but not many realise this truth. They do not take notice of the Lord within because they are more immersed in the world around. They are dragged hither and thither by the sense organs.

Mahatmas are those few who have realised the presence of the Lord within and also are aware of the fact that He is the origin of all beings and is “Eternal,”

- they are aware that they are limited by “time” and that they had a past, are in the present and have a future. The Lord is the master over time and is beyond time, they have understood,
- they have also understood that He is the power behind all the powers exhibited by man,
- they are aware too that He takes up the role of not only creating life on earth but also has taken up the role of taking care of the welfare needs of all,
- they are also aware that the pains suffered by humans on earth is only the result of the actions of humans either corporate acts or individual acts.

Because of these aspects of the Lord and many more they express their love and respect to that power through their actions. They strive for “Universal Welfare” and consider that their life has to be part of the system that heralds peace and prosperity all round. Their prayers are: “Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu.”

They worship Me with single mind:

The mind as we know is exposed to the world around. The Mahatmas have developed a strong control over their minds and do not let it be carried away by the sensual impulses received from the sense organs. They have developed the art of seeing the God within and all round in all forms of life and thereby worship the Sat, Chit, Ananda and not the nama, roopa. Their mind has only one idea in it and that is “divinity”.

This single-minded devotion is known as “Ananya manasa” in this sloka. That mind instead of wandering into the physical world comes to rest in the Self within is the unswerving mind. Such a devotion expressed in actions is “Ananya Bhakti.”

In short, one can say that those who understand and accept the fact that beings have all come from Parabrahman and strive to go back to that source by expression of their Satvic gunas are to be considered as “Mahatmas.”

Contrary to Mahatmas are the “alpatmas” (little souls) who are caught in the web of samsara and express rajasic/tamasic qualities.

Aashritaha: refuged (in)
Jnatva: having known
Bhootadim: the source of beings
Avyayam: imperishable.

Sloka 14

**SATATAM KEERTAYNATO MAAM YATANTASHCA DHRIDAVRATAHA
NAMASYANTASCHA MAAM BHAKTYAM NITYA YUKTA UPASATE.**

Always glorifying Me, striving firm in vows, prostrating before Me with devotion, always steadfast, they worship Me.

How to worship the Lord?
We get an answer to this question in this sloka.

Satatam keertayanto: always glorifying,
Yatayantascha Dhrida vrataam: striving firm in vows,
Namasyantascha bhaktya: prostrating with devotion,
Nitya yukta: always steadfast,
Upasate: worship.

In this sloka we are given the manner in which the mahatmas undertake worship of the Lord and thereby give an example to conduct the sadhana.

Understanding and accepting with faith that the Lord (primordial energy) is the personification of “Satya, Dharma”, giving it a name and form (Lord of one’s choice) is the first step in spiritual progress.

The word ”Me” mentioned in this sloka refers to that Lord whom the Mahatmas worship.

Having developed the total faith in the Lord, the next step is:

Satatam keertayanto:

Keertana used in this case is not just singing hymns and/or devotional songs to the accompaniment of musical instruments. It should become an act of the mind that expresses divinity constantly. The seeker should at the same time keep the un-divine thoughts away from his mind. The existing bad thoughts should be wiped off from the mind and no new bad thoughts should be allowed to register on the mind. It is like putting a notice board at the front: “House full. No entry for any other thoughts.” The divine thoughts are those that pertain to the welfare of others including imparting knowledge to the others.

The true Bhakti has nine steps in it and they are:
Sravana

Kirtana
Smarana
Padasevana
Archana
Vandana
Dasya
Sakhya
Atma nivedana.

One should strive constantly with devotion to develop this way of worship. This is Yatayantasca with Bhakti. As we have learnt already the mind is fickle and due to past samskaras easily becomes a prey to the sensual impulses. Rather than making a show of outward devotion, it should be devotion from one's own heart. Self perfection needs a constant effort and vigil on the part of the seekers.

Dhrida vrataha: firm in vows.

One should make a vow to undertake acts in this sense and be truthful to oneself in implementing the vow. Vows to undertake acts towards self purification like fasting, silence etc should be firm and resolute.

Namasyantaha: prostrating.
Maam: to Me.

The Lord here asks the sadhakas to prostrate before Him. It is not just the physical act of falling flat in front of the deity at the temple but actually expressing total surrender to "Satya and Dharma" and to those who are personifications of the same. One has to bow down to the knowledge in front of him with no sense of ego and no expectation of return benefits/favours for the love/respect shown.

The sloka ends with the word "Upasate." It means "Sit near". Let our mind sit near the divine constantly and not wander off to the world of sensual pleasures. Our physical actions are an expression of our mind and if the mind is near the divinity constantly our actions in turn also become divine.

The mahatmas think, sing and speak of the Lord's glory always. When a spiritual conference is held, the speakers who come sing and speak of the glory of the Lord. The delegates at such conferences should go back and discuss amongst friends/relatives about what they have heard at the conference and make changes in their lives for the better. The purpose of such conferences is to develop this way of thinking and acting by the participants and thereby spread the glory of the Lord.

Sloka 15

**NANA YAJNENA CHAPY ANYE YAJANTE MAAM UPASATE
EKATVENA PRUTHAKTVENA BAHUDHA VISHWATOMUKHAM**

Others also, sacrificing with the yajna of knowledge worship Me, as one, as distinct, and manifold.

There are a number of religions and a number of denominations in each religion. The main purpose of religion is to unite the people and lead them in the right path. The welfare of the community is the wish of all different religions.

In the process of bringing out the divine message in the sacred texts to the common man, in every religion the learned elders of the past have developed their own style of expressing the "Truth". In

course of time, these have become strong groups and attracted a number of people to their style of thinking and worshipping.

Unfortunately this has resulted in a narrow tunnel vision of the “Truth” embedded in the scriptures instead of a broad vision. Every religion and every sect, great in its own way, unfortunately has become self centred in this narrow outlook on what the “Truth” is. Thus instead of unity and harmony there is disunity and disharmony among the living on this earth. Instead of “Peace” there is “restlessness” all round.

Bhagawan Sri Krishna in this sloka is giving a bird’s eye view of the three schools of philosophy of the Hindus.

These are Advaita, Vishishta Advaita and Dwaita philosophies of Sri Sankara Bhagawatpada, Sri Ramanujacharya and Sri Madhvacharya respectively.

The first half of the sloka reads as follows:

Jnana yajna: sacrificing with the yajna of knowledge

Yajantaha: sacrificing

Anye cha api: (chapyanye): also others

Mam upasate: worship Me

Others also, sacrificing with the yajna of knowledge worship Me is the meaning of this verse. We are told that the sincere followers of such groups have developed the knowledge enshrined by their masters and conduct actions in the spirit of “dedicated” worship. The actions conducted by them in such a spirit of sacrifice is equal to worshipping Him.

Anye cha api: also others.

It should be read as “not only those who worship Krishna, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient and Omnipotent, but everybody who worships the higher power that creates, sustains the universe and brings dissolution too.”

Ekatvena: as one

The first group of worshippers are those who worship Him as “One”. This is “Advaita” philosophy of Sankara. They worship “Him” as “Omnipresent” and consider that the Supreme who is real dwells in all and the physical body is only an illusion (“maya”.) They have realised the “Tat Tvam Asi” of the Chandogya Upanisad which declares “Thou Art That.”

Prithaktvena: as manifold/different.

The second group are those who worship Him as a different to themselves. This is “Dwaita” philosophy which holds that “He” is distinct from the “Jagat” and the “Jivatmas” of the Jagat. They say that the Universe and the manifold beings in it are different from Him who created the life on this universe. They consider that the universe and the life in it is dependent upon Him and worship Him accordingly.

Viswathomukham: the all faced

This is the third group of devotees of the Lord. This is the school of “Vishishta Advaita” (qualified non-dualism.) They consider that He is universal and exists everywhere. Every face one sees is the face of the Supreme. He is the Paramatma and according to them there is nothing else but “He” only. They see and experience “Him” in all the worlds. Hence the statement “all-faced.”

The common factor is that each one of them worships “Him.”

According to Sri Krishna all the three are the worshippers of the Lord. He does not consider that any one group is superior to the others.

We should therefore learn to accept that there are other ways of worshiping the Lord and as long as the worship involves “compassion, Friendship, non-hatred,” to fellow human beings and all forms of life and brings out the final result which is “welfare of all, Universal Peace and harmony” we are said to be in the right track to attain the goal of life.

The attitude and the way of worship depends upon the samskara of each individual.

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

The method of worship by each group is in one sense a “Jnana Yajna” with the knowledge they have acquired of the Supreme. “Jnana” in this sense is the knowledge of the Brahman (whichever form one would like to worship) and “yajna” in this sense is “dedicated acts” to that “Supreme.”

Sloka 16

**AHAM KRATURAHAM YAJNAHA SVADAHAM AHAM AUSHADAM
MANTROHAM AHAM EVAJYAM AHAM AGNIR AHAM HUTAM**

I am the kratu, sacrifice I am, I am the offering to the pitris, I am the medicinal herbs, I am the mantra, I am also the clarified butter, I am the fire and the offering.

“Kratu”:

There are a number of Vedic sacrifices and every one of them is a “kratu.”

Herein we have a number of illustrations to highlight the truth that the “Supreme” is universal.

In a way this sloka is similar to sloka 24, chapter 4 (Brahmarpanou Brahma).

Whatever acts one conducts, as long as it is a “dedicated act” in the truest sense to the Supreme is “yajna” and that “Yajna” itself is the “Supreme.” The act of sacrifice in all the yajnas is the result of developing pure Satvic quality and that sacrifice is Brahman.

Svadha: it is the offering to the ancestors.

The Hindu sastras do stress the importance of remembering the dear departed ancestors and on offering them annual “tarpana” by conducting “Sradha”. This offering also is “The Supreme”.

Let us briefly analyse the meaning of the word “Pitru”. Our fathers, forefathers, their forefathers all come under the title “Pitru”. If we try to go farther and farther back into our ancestry, this will reach finally “Brahma” who is the creator of all life on earth. Brahma gave the Vedas for mankind to assist in their prosperity. Actions conducted as per the vedic teachings in the spirit of “Nishkama karma and Karma phala tyaga” become offerings to the pitrus.

Aushadam: the medicinal herbs.

In the conduct of havans and yajnas a number of articles are poured into the sacrificial fire that include some herbs or extract from the herbs. These are said to have a great medicinal value. The smoke that emits from pouring them into the sacrificial fire is said to purify the atmosphere and benefit one and all.

The mantras: sacred syllables.

The mantras uttered during the sacrificial rites are said to have a great potency that benefit those who recite them and those who listen with a pure mind.

Ajyam: clarified butter.

Every article used in the sacrificial rites is also Brahman, says the Lord.

Really speaking without god there is no object, no thought and no act. The God who is the Atman within brings life on to the body and without the Atman within the body is considered to be dead. The thoughts arise from a living entity and actions are conducted only by living beings. By holding the truth that “He”, the Supreme is everything is the sure way to reach Him provided the thoughts, speech and actions reflect “purity”.

Sloka 17

**PITAHAM ASYA JAGATO MAATA DHAATA PITAMAHAA
VEDYAM PAVITRAM OMKARA RIKSAMA YAJURVEDA CHA**

I am the Father of this world, the Mother, the dispenser, the grandfather. I am the “One” to be known, the purifier and the syllable Om. And also the Rig, Yajur and sama Vedas.

Pitaham: am the Father

Asya: of this

Jagato: the Jagat

Maata: the Mother

Dhata: the dispenser (of the fruits of action)

Pitamaha: the grandfather

Vedyam: to be known

Pavitram: the purifier

Omkara: the syllable Om

In continuation of the theme of what “He” is we are given few more attributes.

We all have a physical father, mother, grandfather in our lives. “He” is the universal father, mother and grandfather of all. The role of the father, mother and grandfather is to take care of the younger generation in their family with love and affection. The more the children show love and respect to their elders, greater will be the return of love from them.

But nobody is eternal and sooner or later someone or other departs to the other world. There is no need to be in constant grief when such elders leave this world. The Lord takes over the role of the elders but this fact is not recognised by majority. As long as we show love and respect to the Higher power: the Lord, He takes care of us all at all times. He will be with us as the Atman within. The more we show respect to the sastras and implement their teachings greater will be the blessings from the Lord.

Dhata: the dispenser.

We have to understand the clear meaning of this important word. Dhata applies to dispensing of results of all actions emanating from the mind, speech and body. The wrong actions result in painful reactions and correct actions result in peaceful life. Every one of us get due rewards or results for our actions, whether be in this life or in future lives. When the painful results come, we should not get angry with the Lord. Every painful reaction is a lesson to learn in life. We have examples of these in our daily family lives. Our parents have punished us and shown us love but only with the sole purpose of encouraging us to do right actions and deter us from conducting wrong actions.

The teachers in schools and colleges do the same. They reward good students with pass, merit marks and fail those who do not show the correct results of what was taught. They even debar the students who behave badly.

Vedyam:

It is said that the one main thing to be known in this world is “The Lord” who creates, sustains and dissolutes the life on earth. Knowing everything else except the Lord is improper understanding and equals to not knowing anything at all.

Pavitram: “He” is the purifier.

Correct understanding of the Lord purifies our gunas. There will be a change from tamasic and rajasic gunas to Satvic gunas. Gunas are the precursor of actions and our actions automatically become pure. The entire purpose of the sastras is to make man “Pure” in heart, in mind, in speech and actions.

Omkara:

“He” is the one syllable OM about which we have studied in detail in the previous chapter.

Finally, “He” is the author of all the Vedas. It is interesting to note that there is omission of “Atharvana” in this narration.

The scholars do not seem to include atharva veda with the other three vedas. It seems to be completely different with the others. Many scholars do not consider it as part of the vedas at all. It deals with spells and charms prevalent at that time. Evidently we have to consider that Lord Krishna did not believe in spells and charms. His emphasis is definitely on karma and jnana and to meditate on duties at all times. This he propagates with the path of bhakti.

This is Lord Krishna's view.

Sloka 18

**GATIR BHARTA PRABHUHU SAKSHEE NIVASAHA SHARANAM SUHRUT
PRABHAVAHA PRALYAHA STHANAHA NIDHANAM BEEJAM AVYAYAM**

I am the goal. Supporter, the Lord, the witness, the abode, the shelter, the friend, I am also the origin, the foundation and dissolution. I am the treasure house, the seed and the Imperishable.

Gatir: goal

Bharta: the supporter

Prabhuhu: the Lord

Sakshee: witness

Nivasaha: the abode

Sharanam: shelter

Suhrut: the friend

Prabhavaha: origin

Pralyaha: dissolution

Sthanaha: foundation

Nidhanam: the treasure house

Bijaha: the seed

Avyayam: the Imperishable.

The goal:

With respect to all sadhakas, the goal is Parabrahman, whatever may be the name or form he/she cognizes as such irrespective of religion, sex, age, caste, creed etc. True seeker always aims for the grace of the Lord and considers Him as his goal of life.

In sports like football, hockey etc there is a goal post ahead of the team that is playing. Scoring the goal is the aim of the team. Scoring the goal brings joy.

“Ananda” which does not diminish in its intensity in the passage of time is the true happiness sought by the seekers all over the world.

Bharta: the one who supports is a bharta.

In Telugu, the word means “husband.” A husband is expected to look after his family at all times and works for the welfare of all in his family. The entire universe is His family and He is the supporter of all at all times.

Prabhu:

“He” is the Lord of all Lords who was the Lord in the past, the Lord now and will be the Lord in future. That is why He is decorated with a crown on top of his head and the crown depicts the role of “Prabhu” undertaken by the Lord.

Sakshee:

As the Atman within He is the witness for all our thoughts, actions and talk. We are familiar with the roles of witnesses in the court of Law. The Judges always give more importance to the neutral witnesses. “He” is the neutral witness who witnesses all our actions and at the same time lets us conduct our actions without intervention. Let us remember that “He” is the eternal witness for each one of us and whatever wrongs we commit does not miss His attention. The same law applies to any good actions too. He awards marks to all our thoughts, actions and speech. If we are enjoying the life at this minute it is because of the good marks He has given us for what we did in the past. If we are unhappy now, again it is attributable to what wrongs we did commit in the past. Instead of always looking at happiness of others and feeling sorry for ourselves is not correct. We should try to correct our actions and try to score good marks in life.

Nivasaha: the Abode.

The entire universe abides in the envelope called the “Primordial Energy” and different people give different names to the same. The abode is that which has a roof. Our permanent address is “Parabrahman”. Just like we give importance and pride to the residence where we live, we must give greater importance and pride to the Universal abode for all of us. Let us also remember that each one of us do in the heart of hearts want to keep our house as a pride of place and show it off in front of our friends. Why not let us all keep our universal abode as place of pride for future generations that are going to come?

Sharanam:

“He” is considered to be as the shelter for all. While on the road, in times of excessive heat or rain, we tend to take shelter under a tree. Whatever problems we may be facing in this life, let us use Him as our shelter.

Suhrut: He is the friend of all.

A friend is one who is there in times of need. (A friend in need is a friend indeed.) The so called friends in the lives of many are, to say figuratively, opportunistic friend. As long as they have something to get from us, they will show off as our friends. Of course, we also do the same. He is the only constant friend who does not desert us. Not only He stays as the Atman within from birth to death, He continues to be with us in all our future births until we learn to make amends, correct ourselves and finally unite with Him.

We have already discussed about His role as “the Creator, the Sustainer and he who dissolves” the entire universe. Similarly, at individual level, He brings us into this world, looks after us and also takes us away from this world.

Nidhanam:

Because of all the above attributes, He is the treasure house for all. Just like our efforts to get the best in life and treasure it, let us get the Lord and keep Him as our treasured possession.

Bijam: the seed.

The seed we know of sprouts and loses its identity. Whereas the Lord, as the seed of life on this earth, does not lose His identity. He remains as the imperishable seed eternally.

The Lord therefore has to be considered as keeper of "Store house" that has the blue print of the cosmos during dissolution and brings it out again during the new creation.

Sloka 19

**TAPAMYAHAM AHAM VARSHAI NIGRUHNAMY UTSRUJAMI
AMRUTAM CHAIVA MRUTYUSCHA SAD ASAC CAHAM ARJUNA**

O Arjuna, I give heat, I withhold and send forth rain. I am immortality, death, existence and non-existence.

tapami: cause heat

Varsham: rain

Ucchrijami: send forth

Nigrihnami: withhold

Mrityuscha: death

We are given examples of the various aspects of the Parabrahman. In this sloka we have the "Primordial Energy" as the basis behind all these examples.

The manifest form of the Primordial Energy is the "Sun". He is the source of light and energy we all experience. The physicists all agree that the sun is only a planet that is nearer to the earth and there are many more planets beyond the sun we are familiar with. The sun is the nearest form of manifest energy which is a massive source of energy and the light emanates from this source. The light rays travel many a miles and we experience the same.

The rays of sun give the heat that absorbs the water from earth. The droplets of water form the clouds. Thus the manifested form of energy of the Parabrahman as "The Sun" gives "heat, absorbs water, withholds it as clouds" and finally the clouds send forth the rain.

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

"I am immortality":

The Primordial energy we all know has no death. It remains as the un-manifest energy which we cannot perceive. Everything else in this manifest world has a birth and death but not the "Energy." The energy is immortal and:

When this primordial energy manifests it becomes "Existence (Sat)";

And when not manifest remains it is "non-existence (asat)".

The sun is always present. We consider that there is sunset and sunrise which we call as day and light. The sun that is evident during the day is "Sat" and the sun that is not evident during the night is "asat".

The fact is that we do not see the sun at night because of the change in the position of the earth in its rotation along the planetary system. It is us who do not see the sun but the sun is always present.

This aspect gives us an understanding of sat, asat and amrutam (existence, non-existence and immortality), which is the gist of second half of the sloka.

Sloka 20

**TRIVIDYA MAAM SOMAPAHA POOTA PAPA YAJNORISHTVA SAVAGATIM
PRARTHAYANTE
TE' PUNYAMASADYA SURENDRALOKAM ASNANTI DIVYAAN DIVI DEVA BHOGAAN**

The knowers of the three Vedas, the drinkers of soma, purified of sins, worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the stay in heaven. They, having attained the world of Indra, enjoy the heavenly pleasures of the devas.

The important word to note in this sloka is:

Yajnorishtva svagatim prarthayante.

Worshipping Me by sacrifices, pray for the stay in heaven.

We know that the study of the Vedas and implementing the teachings incorporated in them is the means to attain "Moksha", The Ultimate Union with the Parabrahman. The study does purify the sins of the individual.

But majority do get carried away by studying the earlier section of the Vedas, The Karma Kanda and get trapped by the pleasures awarded in this kanda. The Karma kanda is full of rituals which promise heavenly pleasures. It is said that the denizens of heaven do get pleased by the sacrifices performed and grant rewards that give pleasures. They are promised that the yajna would guarantee them entry into heaven where the life is luxurious and where there are no sorrows to experience.

The second part of the sloka that says "the drinkers of soma" purified of sins. This may confuse those who know what "soma" is but have not understood the sloka completely.

"Soma" is an intoxicating juice produced from a plant. It is permitted to drink the same after having completed prescribed "Yajnas." The yajna conducted is a form of worship of the divine. This has to be a pre-requisite for consuming soma juice.

It means that some of the knowers of the Vedas conduct the yajna for the sole purpose of entry into heaven and drink the soma juice at the end of the performance of yajna. Because they conducted the yajna, they do get their wish of entering heaven get fulfilled. They reach the abode of Indra after physical death and are free from troubles during the period of stay in heaven.

One may ask why the Vedas have taken this path of leading man to transient heavenly pleasures?

The answer is simple. The pleasures basically are of two different kinds.

- a) Lower worldly sinful pleasures;
- b) Higher divine pleasures.

Of course the highest pleasure is the pleasure of uniting with the Supreme.

Human mind is weak and does go after pleasures. Hence our spiritual masters have taken the path of guiding mankind who go after pleasures to go for higher divine pleasures.

The Lord has already promised that those people who do good (conduct the yajnas) enjoy the merits of good work, and after fulfilment of the desires obtained by such good works, He would guarantee to put them in surroundings that would guide them to higher levels of spiritual achievement.

So, those who study the Vedas for heavenly pleasures as their aim, do get rewarded for their efforts and the Lord would give them a better environment in their next birth that would help them not to entertain such divine pleasures too. In course of time, one will achieve union with the Parabrahman.

This, we can say is the process of weaning off an individual from lower to higher pleasures and finally to Moksha.

Traividya: the three Vedas: Rik, Yajur, Sama.

Somapaha: drinkers of soma juice

Poota papaha: purified of sins

Yajnou: by sacrifices

Ishtva: worshipping

Svargatim: entry to heaven

Prarthayante: pray for

Surendra lokam: the abode of Indra

Asadya: having attained

Deva bhogaan: heavenly pleasures

Ashnanti: enjoy

Sloka 21

**TE TE BHUKTYA SVARGA LOKE´ VISALAM KSHEENE PUNYE MARTYA LOKE´
VISHANTI
EVAM TRAYEE DHARMAM ANUPRAPANNA GATAGATAM KAMA KAMAA
LABHANTE**

They, having enjoyed the vast world of heaven, enter the world of mortals when their merits are exhausted. Thus, those who desire enjoyments, abiding by the law of the Vedas, have to attain the state of going and returning endlessly.

Te: they

Bhuktya: having enjoyed

Svarga loke: the world of heaven

Visalam: vast

Ksheene punye: exhausting the merits

Martya loke: the world of mortals

Vishanti: enter

Evam: thus

Trayee dharmam: the dharma/law of the Vedas

Anuprapanna: abiding by

Kama kamaha: desiring desires

Gatagatam: going and returning

Labhante: get

In continuation of the last verse where the results of actions conducted according to the Vedas but desiring for enjoyments we are told now the fate of such desire prompted Vedic studies.

We have to understand from this that all the worlds excluding the earth are to be considered as lokas to experience the results of actions conducted on earth, albeit good or bad. Hence the earth we are in is known as “Karma Bhoomi”: the place for actions. We as humans have been blessed with the “buddhi”(Jnana). Hence the earth is to be looked upon by us, the humans as “Jnana Bhoomi”.

The Vedas are the final authority for the Hindus. Even Lord Krishna emphasises so several times in the Gita. They give us the means to work for attaining salvation and warn of the dangers when we deviate from its path. The path being: moving from karma kanda to Upasana kanda and from Upasana kanda to jnana kanda and attain the highest knowledge which is knowledge of the Parabrahman.

They do warn of perils if one deviates from the path. In this sloka we are told that those who do not follow the dharma (acts of righteousness to attain Moksha) as enshrined in the Vedas, will reap the benefit of actions and enjoy luxuries in higher lokas or suffer the painful experiences in the lower worlds.

Elimination of desire prompted actions is the surest way to attain salvation is the essence of this sloka.

Sloka 22

**ANANYAS CHINTAYANTO MAAM YE JANAHA PARYUPASATE
TESHAM NITYABHI YUKTANAM YOGA KSHEMAM VAHAMYAHAM**

Of those men who worship Me alone, thinking of no other, ever united with Me, I secure for them what they do not possess and preserve what they possess.

The life is but a process of acquiring what we need and what we like. We should know how to get what we want. It is not just acquiring but also to preserve and safeguard what we get. This is the essence of the word “yoga kshema”.

“Yoga” is getting what we want and “kshema” is preserving/protecting what we get. This is the “guhya bhasha” in this sloka.

As a matter of fact the purpose of undertaking spiritual studies, learning the sacred text “The Srimad Bhagawadgita” is for yoga kshema.

It is a fact that whatever we get from this physical world we live in is only temporary. We have to part with it or what we get has to part with us sooner or later.

Each one of us does want happiness in our lives and again we know that this happiness is also not permanent.

What we learn from the study of the sacred text is the need for “Peace” which is not measured by the amount of happiness. It is a state of mind that is not perturbed either by happiness or sorrows of life. Our efforts in life will have to develop this mental balance of “Peace” and to preserve the same in all adversities of life.

There is only one source we can get this “Peace” and it is by developing “unswerving devotion” to the Supreme. This is expressed in this sloka by the word “yo me’ paryupasate” and this has to be “ananyans chintayanto”.

Yo me’ paryupasate: those who worship Me
Ananyas chintayanto: constantly remembering (Him).

Constantly remembering Him: How can one do so while being engaged in the activities of life while being part of the society? This is the question many would like to ask.

The Gita tells us that divinity is the essence of all and a spark of Supreme divine exists in all. Associating with nama and roopa to what we come across in our daily life to fulfil our role in the society is essential pre-requisite for all. This role is strengthened and our work gets more power to it if we keep in mind “Sat, Chit, Ananda” and show our respect to “Tat” Parabrahman.

The Lord is not to be seen only in temples. At the same time He is not in a remote part of the Higher world that is not accessible to us. He is everywhere (sarva vyapi, omnipresent). The Lord comes in various forms to teach us the essence of life. He shows us both the good and bad, (daivic and asuric) qualities. We have to learn to ask the question ourselves:

If this is good and I like it, do I have that good quality in me? If not can I develop this quality?

On the other hand, if I consider this as not good and I do not like it, do I have that quality in me and if so can I try to change myself to be good?

This is the way to constantly remember Him.

But, we are told that we should not only remember Him but also to worship Him constantly. This is very important statement. Worship is not just limited to the worship in prayer rooms or the temples of worship as a ritual. The devotion to the Supreme gets stronger when we realise that nothing is possible in this world without His presence in it. Our journey of life from birth till death is not possible without His constant presence inside our physical body. Our maintenance is not possible if there is no energy around. The energy around in various forms gives us the sustenance needed to live. Again, if there were no learned people around us, caring people around us we cannot progress from the state of ignorance at birth to become learned people of the society as we grow. Parents, teachers, scientists, professional people of various sections in society who are also expressions of divine on earth help us to live our daily life. All these aspects of divinity and various other aspects we can think of will be the tools to develop the “Love of God” and worship Him.

Different religions have their own expression of God and worshipping that expression which they are familiar is a starting point. Maturity as we grow in the form of realising the same divinity in other groups/sects of people is the progress one has to strive for. Various names and forms of God we are familiar with are only the tools to understand divinity. Devotion to the God with name, form and qualities (“sakara nad Saguna”) is easier approach to reach the Supreme. Unfortunately in the spiritual journey majority get stuck at this level. Not just that but a number of wars have been waged in the name of God by those blindly believing in their way of religion/sect and hating all other groups.

So, let us all remove this ignorance in us, see the divinity all round and respect the same. We should pray God to give us this knowledge and also learn to thank Him. The Christians have the habit of thanking the Lord when they see the first daylight of the day and thank Him for giving them another day in life when they go to bed at night. They also say “O Lord, thank you for the daily bread you have given us.”

The third quarter of the sloka: tesham nityabhi yuktanaam: “of these who are ever united with Me” is stressing the fact that this remembering and worshipping Him has to be at all times of the day and every day of life. There should not be a moment when He should be forgotten.

To such people the Lord promises “Yoga kshemam vahamyaham”: I will grant them with that they are trying to unite (Supreme) and will help to preserve what they have achieved. He is promising to take care of responsibility of His devotees who is ever united with Him. This is possible only when the devotee realises that there is nothing as his own in the world and everything belongs to that Supreme. (He is only the caretaker of what the Lord has granted for him in this life.)

This promise is without any distinction of caste, creed, age, sex or religion. It is applicable to all.

Faith in this statement will get us all over the turbulences of life and the boat will surely reach the shore at the other end.

Sloka 23

**YEPI ANYA DEVATA BHAKTA YAJANTE SRADDHAYANVITAH
TE'PI MAM' EVA KOUNTEYA YAJANTY AVIDHI POORVAKAM**

O Arjuna, even those devotees who endowed with faith worship other gods, worship Me alone, by the wrong method.

Similarities to this sloka are to be found in Slokas 20, 21 of the seventh chapter.

It is a fact that “faith in any field of activity will bring results in due course.” Faith in worship also brings its rewards.

Those who worship other gods worship Me alone: by this statement we are told that there is only one god whatever name and form we attribute to that. By this statement we are warned not to be fanatical in our religious beliefs and practices because of the faith we have developed.

Different gods may be approached by different devotees aspiring after fulfilment of desires. As the approach is for a reward it is “wrong method.” To achieve something we do not have is not true Liberation. We will end up again in the whirlpool of samsara.

Let us remember that one can rise only as high as the object and objective of his worship.

With this understanding let us undertake a deeper analysis of this sloka.

What is the “wrong method” the Lord is referring to in this sloka?

“Desire fulfilling” is the basis behind the worship undertaken by many. This is the “wrong method” referred to.

Desires, especially worldly desires, get us caught in the web known as “samsara”. It is falling into the cycle of innumerable births and deaths and with it experiencing pleasures and sorrows of life.

What is a “desire”?

Desire is “unsatisfied longing.” To fulfil what we do not have we approach somebody/some higher power who can grant it to us. One such source is to approach the “devas” who are to be looked upon as “minor deities” in the pantheon of God in the system.

Who is a “devotee”?

Let us look at the Oxford dictionary for some of the common word used in this sense:

Devote: give up oneself, one’s efforts, a possession exclusively to a person or purpose or pursuit.

Devoted: zealously loyal or loving.

Devotee: a worshipper, votary of a deity or person or pursuit. Devotes oneself to a religion.

Devotion: self surrender, prayers and religious exercises,

Devotional: assisting the devotions.

In this context, which applies to majority of worshippers, the devotee is he who is a votary of a pursuit. The greater the desire to fulfil a longing, stronger will be the results if he/she develops a deep rooted faith in that power/deity of choice. The Puranas present to the mankind a number of deities who belong to the pantheon of gods/goddesses.

We can also look upon the word “other gods” as meaning any named god in the number of religious denominations that are present now.

This is the meaning of the first half of the sloka.

Coming to the second half of this sloka: worship Me by the wrong method.

This chapter is Raja Vidya and Raja Guhya, we have to understand the secret message behind this statement.

The Lord truly is without any qualities, name and form. (Nirguna, Nirakara Brahman)
To give Him a name and form is the first in the process of worshipping Him by the wrong method.

Secondly: “He” is of the “Universal Form” (Viswa Roopa.). “His” form is Universal.

By the deeper study of the Vedas and Upanisads and understanding the same, we will learn that every individual is a form of representation of Lord on this universe. Worshipping of any is actually worshipping a representation of the Supreme. Hence the word “He worships Me alone”.

Now, “worships by the wrong method”:

Worship of the Supreme has to be simply for the sake of worship and not for gaining any rewards. Worship is to experience the “Bliss” (Ananda) in the myriad world of fleeting happiness and sorrows. By worshipping to fulfil a desire or to get relief from pains/sorrows of life we are deviating from this ideal. This is not true worship but is simply a business transaction. “I offer myself and my prayers to you and you give me the reward” is the attitude of many devotees.

The Lord is therefore making this statement and reminding us to worship Him for the sake of worship and not for any rewards.

A true devotee is he/she who gives up oneself, one’s efforts, a possession exclusively towards pursuit of “Ananda”. Every other pursuit is “wrong method.”

Finally let us remember that the “Ananda” one is looking for is “within oneself.” By the practice of “Meditation” on this reality, the true seeker experiences the “Bliss” within.

It does not mean that one should not worship the gods. The worship of a named god, in course of time one is expected to learn about the pure qualities of that power. We will also learn that wrong actions will make the higher power angry/displeased. The devotee is expected to learn the lesson and not commit acts that are harmful to others. To learn the art of not experiencing the wrath of the higher power is one step in correcting our faults.

But this worship should not be a blind worship but a step towards progress to higher spiritual heights.

Sloka 24

**AHAM HI SARVA YAJNANAAM BHOKTA CHA PRABHUREVA CHA
NA TU MAAM ABHIJANANTI TAVENATAS CYAVANTI TE**

I alone am the enjoyer in, and the Lord of all sacrifices. But they do not know Me in essence and hence they fall.

Sarva yajnanaam: of all sacrifices
Bhokta cha: the enjoyer
Prabhu eva cha: The Lord also
Aham eva: I alone
Maam tu: but Me
Te: they
Tatvena: in essence
Na abhijanati: not known
Chyavanti: fall

In continuation of the last two slokas: reference is to the devotees who have love and faith in God and would want to achieve Moksha. But they get stuck in the fixation of a particular deva for the procurement of desires entertained and do not make further progress in their spiritual journey.

The essence of all Vedic teaching is that the Lord is the one Total Reality and everything else we know of and attribute to is non-real. The Vedic dictum is Jagat mithya and Brahman Satya - the world is unreal and Brahman is real.

It is essential to realise the universal presence of the Lord - Omnipresent.

One of the mantra in the 1008 names of Lord Vishnu is “Achyuta”. It means “he who does not fall.” “He” is at the peak of the so called spiritual mountain. He never falls down from this peak.

All aspirants for Liberation have to climb this spiritual mountain and in the process have to face the probability of falling down at one stage or other during the progress in climbing.

The aim of the seeker is to unite with that “He” and try not to fall down in the process. This is to be understood by understanding the meaning of the word “chyavanti” in this sloka.

Understanding the Vedas and Upanisads is to get the knowledge and wisdom that “Truth” in essence is the reality of the presence of the Lord in all names and forms.

Once this is clear we can understand the import in this sloka: I alone am the enjoyer in and the Lord of all sacrifices.

The actions of the seeker are in the sense “yajnas” and as the presiding deity in any, the Lord becomes the enjoyer of the results of actions.

Sloka 25

**YANTI DEVA VRATA DEVAAN PITRUN YANTI PITRUVRATAHA
BHUTANI YANTI BHUTEJYA YANTI MADYAJINO PI MAAM.**

**The worshippers of the devas go to the devas. The worshippers of ancestors go to the ancestors.
Worshippers of bhutas go to the bhutas. And the worshippers of Me go to Me.**

Deva vrata: worshippers of devas
Yanti: go

Pitru vrataha: worshippers of the ancestors
Bhutejya: worshippers of the bhutas
Madyajeen api: My worshippers

The Lord is not giving us a new theory to succeed in achieving Liberation.
There is a simple universal law which is, as you think, so you become.

The worshippers in any form of worship contemplate on the object of worship but the object of contemplation differs in different groups.

We are now given broadly the different groups of worshippers. Each one of the group trying to achieve a goal set for them by themselves.

Devas, we have discussed before are the presiding deities over our sense organs.

Also in the pantheon of Gods, the Hindus have a number of devas, and worshippers of a particular deva worship Him/Her to get their desires fulfilled.

We experience the world outside through the five sense organs and the mind. In this sense, worshippers of the devas has to be understood as:

Attempts to get the happiness from the external world around us, worshipping the presiding deity of that sense organ and thereby to fulfil the desire entertained. (earth, water, fire, air and space for the five sense organs and Indra the Lord of heavens for the mind)

Pitrus are the departed ancestral souls. There are some who do worship the ancestors to get their desires fulfilled.

Bhutas: one can look at this word in two different ways.

a) The study of objective sciences about the nature is the study of the bhutas. In this sense one can include the scientists as the worshippers of the bhutas. They do get their due rewards proportionate to their dedicated efforts.

b) There are another group of worshippers who worship super natural forces, known as bhutas by few. They may get some psychic powers which increases their vanity and attachment to worldly pleasures.

One thing is common for all these groups of worshippers. None of them succeed in fulfilling the desire of Liberation as they do get side tracked into the lower pleasures of life.

Hence, the masters say “Be a atmavrata” and worship the Atman and succeed in achieving Liberation.

Sloka 26

**PATRAM PUSHAM PHALAM TOYAM YO ME' BHAKTYA PRAYACCHATI
TAD AHAM BHAKTYUPAHRUTAM ASHNAMI PRAYATATMANAHA**

Whoever offers Me with devotion, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, that I accept, offered by the pure-minded with devotion.

Patram: a leaf
Pushpam: a flower
Phalam: a fruit
Toyam: water
Yaha: who

Me': to Me
Bhaktya: with devotion
Prayacchati: offers
Prayatmanaha: of that pure-minded man
Bhaktiyupahrutam: offered with devotion
Ashnaami: accept

In continuation of the previous verses, we now have a simple statement from the Lord to those who would like to worship Him.

A number of rituals/procedures are described in scriptures for the worship of the devas including Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara. Special days are allotted for the worship of a particular deity.

In this sloka, we get instructions directly from the Lord Himself on the method to follow in worshipping Him. The Lord has put two conditions for the worship and they have to be fulfilled first. These are:

- Pure mind
- Devotion

It is important to note that there is no mention of the religion, caste, creed, sex etc and therefore we can say that it applies to any human being in any part of the world. "As long as the devotee has a pure mind and shows pure devotion in his worship," I accept what he offers, says Sri Krishna, The Bhagawan.

All the different religions in the world also advocate offering something or other that belongs to us to the God.

Before we proceed further let us remember the fact very clearly that the entire creation is "His" only and we as His representatives on earth should be acting as caretakers of what He has bestowed on us. How can we say that we offer a named item to the Lord and say it is "from me"? Giving back to Him what is originally His and saying "I gave it" is like giving a stolen article.

"There should not be any selfish/ulterior motive in approaching higher power".

Even in the offering of a flower taken from one's own garden to the temple should be in the spirit of "O Lord, it is yours and I am offering it to you" and not in the spirit of "it is from my garden and I am taking it as an offering to you." Of course we have a duty to take tender care of the plant that gives flower and use it only for the purpose of worship.

After all, we are not there to do a business transaction with Him. We are not in a position to give Him anything in return for the grace He will bestow on us because in the first instance whatever we have is not really ours.

Even though the particular sloka is about the articles for offering for His worship, there are certain points we should understand clearly, and this comes from a clear understanding of the entire Gita.

By saying I accept "a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even water" we have a proof to the fact that riches do not please the Lord but only pure devotion. This method of worship is within easy reach of all. The wealth and the status of the person is irrelevant. No elaborate sacrifices and no large charities are needed to please Him.

It is a well known fact that there are a number of people who are poor and cannot afford to pay for one square meal a day. They do want to worship the Lord and can do so with these simple offerings but with pure mind and devotion.

Through this sloka the Lord is telling them that He would be more than happy to receive such simple articles.

While accepting that their present predicament is because of their past, they should show reverence in the act of offering to the Lord.

For the rest of the community, there is a need to offer for worship articles that is within their reach and with pure generosity of heart. Whatever they offer should not be in a spirit of showing off their wealth, pride of position etc.

This is because:

The principle of “Universal Welfare” (loka kalyana) is highlighted in the sacred text several times. There are a number of people/other forms of life that need support in the world we live in. These people/forms of life are also divinity in essence. Let us remember the saying “The Lord comes in so many forms to teach us lessons and help us to move upwards in the spiritual path.”

Such of those who can afford to do so, should be considerate and compassionate towards the needy members of the society.

Acting against the injunctions of the sastras, earning by unrighteous means and then offering part of the wealth obtained is against the injunctions and the Lord does not approve of the same. Hence specifically the word “Pure Minded” in this sloka.

Finally please note that the Lord does not name any particular leaf, flower or fruit. This is because, human mind being what it is, there are many who would like to make profit if any specific named fruit, leaf or flower was mentioned by the Lord. They would make such a named item scarce or too dear and beyond the reach of the common man.

These simple articles can be taken to the Lord any time/any day of the year and no elaborate preparations are needed for the worship.

I would like to add another explanation for this sloka given to me from His Holiness, the late Sri Hari Har Ji Maharaj. It goes as follows:

Offering of a leaf:

Just by looking at a leaf, the botanist can come out with a full hereditary characters of the plant that it came from. Similarly, even by the offer of a simple leaf, the Lord will know all about the devotee who offered it to Him. Let us therefore be very careful in the way we lead our daily life. Any time we approach Him for worship, with whatever articles we offer, He knows all about us. Whatever we offer, He expects pure mind and devotion behind the act.

Offering a flower:

This refers to the “Intellectual flower of wisdom.” Let us study and learn the sastras/The Gita, understand the subject clearly, make changes in our thoughts, sow the seeds of good qualities in our mind, nurture them properly, kill the evil weeds in our mind. Thus we can grow flowers of wisdom in our intellect that would bring out good actions from our physical body. These are the flowers that we offer to the Lord.

The best flower to offer is the flower of the heart - “Hritkamala” which is “The lotus flower of the heart”. The heart should be pumping fully with tender love to every section of the society.

Quote from Narada Bhakti Sutras about the eight types of flowers that are very dear to the Lord:

Ahimsa pushpam: flower of Non-injury

Indriya nigraha pushpa; flower of self-control over the senses and the mind (sama, dama)

sarva bhoota daya pushpa: flower of compassion to all forms of life (adveshta sarva bhootanaam
maitra karuna eva cha - sloka 13, chapter 12)
satya pushpa: flower of “Truth” (in actions conducted by mind and speech)
jnana pushpa: flower of “Knowledge”
tapo pushpa: flower of tapas (purity of mind, speech and actions)
kriya pushpa: flower of actions (sloka 47, chapter 2, karmanyevadhikarasthe)
dhyana pushpa: flower of meditation on “The Truth”

Offering of a fruit:

Fruit in Sanskrit is “Phala”. The Gita is all about “Karma Phala” which is the result of actions conducted. Sloka 47, chapter 2 is the answer to understand this section. Let us conduct actions that are according to dharma at various stages of our life, let us not work for the fruits of actions we conduct, let not the fruits of actions be the motive for work and at the same time let us not be idle and escape from work.

In Ramayana we have the episode of Sabari who offered simple fruits to Rama and He accepted them without any hesitation.

Finally, offering of water:

Water is the easily available material in this world. It is used to wash off the dirt. It quenches our thirst. It is one of the main ingredients in cooking the food. It sustains life. Such a simple article and yet so useful. When we have nothing else to offer, water would be sufficient, so says the Lord.

The true devotee sheds tears of joy on any aspect of the divine. Just recollecting His name, form, qualities and listening to His glory is enough to bring tears of joy from the devotee. This is enough, says the Lord.

Sloka 27

**YAT KAROSHI YAD ASHNASI YAI JUHO'SI DADASI YAT
YAT TAPASYASI KOUNTEYA TAT KURUSHVA MADARPANAM**

O Kounteya, whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you give as charity, whatever you practice as austerity, do it as an offering to Me.

Yat: whatever
Karoshi: you do
Ashnasi: eat
Juho'si: offer as sacrifice
Dadasi: offer as gifts
Tapasyasi: perform as sacrifice
Tat: that
Mad arpanam: as an offering to Me
Kurushva: do

The principle of sloka 47, chapter 2 applies to this sloka.

It applies to everything that fits in with the principle of “dharma” and not to any acts of unrighteousness or to the food that is prohibited in the sacred texts.

We should learn to say with sincerity “Sree Krishnarpanamastu” to the different ways we give offering to the Lord as enumerated in this sloka.

Constantly remembering the Lord in all of our daily activities is the surest way we can show our respect/reverence to the divinity/life in us.

The list mentioned here is applicable to the activities conducted/to be conducted on a 24/7 basis.
Whatever we do in a day,
Whatever we eat in a day,
What sacrifice we conduct in a day,
Whatever charitable acts we do in a day,
Whatever acts of purification we undertake every day,
Should be in the spirit of “Sri Krishnarpanamastu.”
“O Lord, all of the above are my humble offerings to You.”

Indirectly, the lord is reminding us all that all the above acts should be conducted on a 24/7 basis.

Let us dwell into each one of these in some detail.

Whatever we do:

Every day from the time we get up till we go to bed we have to conduct some action or other. Each one of us has to put on different hats at different times of the day. (It means that we do not do the same work 24hrs a day. For example, we attend to our personal needs in morning, prepare/partake breakfast, take care of the needs of young members and dependants of the family, go to work etc etc.) As members of the family/society we live in, we have obligatory duties to perform and we have a duty to keep ourselves clean and healthy too. Instead of feeling that I have to do these tasks and feel sorry for ourselves, let us look at every other form of life that comes in contact with us in a day is a form of representation of God and do the needful as an act of service to God. Let us be grateful to God for giving us the opportunity to be of service. Man is after all a social being and has to interact with the society.

Whatever we eat:

Usually we understand eating as the food we eat. It has more deeper meaning to it than simple eating.

As we have to do it as an offering we have to follow the code of purity in all aspects of eating including getting the food we need, preparing the food we need etc.

The food we eat, sloka 14, chapter 15, is said to be digested by the digestive power known as “Vaishwanara”. If not for the digestive power within, we cannot digest the amount of food we eat in a day. The other energies within the body help to circulate the food to various parts of the body as needed and also help to eliminate the food that is not good for the body.

We will learn later on that we have to offer the food prepared to the Lord with prayers, to a poor man, lower forms of life, recite the appropriate prayers (sloka 24, chapter,4; sloka 14 chapter 15) and eat the food.

We should not forget moderation in food (sloka 17, chapter 6).
Then it becomes a true offering to God.

Eating is not just physical act but it applies to all the senses including the mind. We take in impulses from various sources around us and they should be considered as feeding the respective sense organ. Because this has to be offering to the Lord, we should show discretion in what sensual impulses to take in and what to reject.

We should train the mind not to develop the liking for sensual pleasures but take impulses as needed by the body and then it becomes an offering to lord.

Whatever you offer as sacrifice:

What is sacrifice?

Sacrifice is an act of giving up something usually for something in return.

We sacrifice our time and efforts for the family in return for the love and affection we get.

The mother sacrifices her sleep for the welfare of the baby.

The employer offers the wages for the employees who sacrifice their time for him.

We sacrifice our time for some charitable acts.

There is a material gain in some and spiritual gain in some other form of sacrifices.

Sacrifice should not be for gain of personal pleasures.

Sacrifice could be for satisfaction,

Better would be for accumulation of merit points in our spiritual journey.

Whatever you give as charity:

The same principle as for the previous two applies here.

Charity should not be an act of show off but in giving away what is earned by righteous means towards the needy in the society at the right time and the right place as specified in the sacred texts.

Whatever practices of austerity:

Tapas/austerity is really an act of purification of mind, speech and body. (chapter 17 deals with this in detail)

It should not be for strengthening one's own vanity.

The austerities conducted by Ravana to fulfil his selfish desires does not fit in with the essence of this sloka and the Bhagwadgita itself.

In summary we are expected to practice and learn the art of:

Changing from secular to sacred;

And to climb from the level of stone man to God man on earth.

Let us also understand the meaning of the word "Me" in this sloka:

It refers to the "Parabrahman" which is "Tat".

It also refers to His manifestation which is nothing but the various forms of life and the Pancha Maha Bhootas that form the universe we live in.

Sloka 28

**SHUBHASHUBHA PHALAIR EVAM MOKSHYASE KARMA BANDHANAIH
SAMNYASA-YOGA-YUKTATMA VIMUKTO MAAM UPAISYASI**

Thus you shall be liberated from the bonds of actions yielding good and evil fruits. With steadfast mind in the yoga of renunciation, you shall come to Me, by being liberated from karma.

Shubha: good
Ashubha: evil
Phalair: fruits
Evam: thus
Karma bandaniah: from the bonds of actions
Sanyasa yoga yuktatma: with the mind steadfast in the yoga of renunciation
Vimuktaha: liberated
Upaishyasi: shall come
Mokshyase: freed

The aim of the spiritual seeker is to be freed from the cycle of births and deaths into this myriad world.
This is “Moksha” as suggested in this sloka.
This is the spiritual sadhana for all seekers of Moksha.

We are all at different stages of evolution spiritually.
The lowest is being “stone man” and highest is “God man”.
The stage we are in depends upon the thought imprints/vasanas we carry with us.
The way we conduct actions and get attached to the fruits of actions, helps us in climbing up from the level of “stone man to god man” or
Pushes us down from the level of “god man to stone man”.

Good actions give us good results and assist us in climbing up the ladder.
Bad actions drop us down in the ladder of evolution.

Actions yielding good results is “shubha phala”.
In the earlier stages of sadhana, we should therefore conduct good actions, get good phala and climb up the ladder.
This lifts us from being tamasic to rajasic and from rajasic to satvic in turn.
We should be attached to conducting good actions and getting good results and climb up from lower levels of evolution.

Wrong actions yield bad results and it is ashubha phala. We should renounce bad actions and the fruits of bad action.

Attachment to either good or bad actions and the fruits of action keeps us bound to this world. We have to be born again to enjoy the results of good fruits or to suffer the results of bad fruits.
The means to escape from the entry into this world is only one:
Surrender both the results of good and bad actions.

We need to understand this clearly.
The feeling of good or bad results comes only in the frame of mind. If there is a sense of “I”ness in us, we experience the result as “good or bad”.
If there is no “I”ness, there is no such thing as good or bad. It is only in the mind of the seeker.

So, let us say:
First of all let us conduct actions as a duty to our master;
Then,
Krishnarpanamastu and offer all the results of good actions at the feet of the Lord. (and not pat our back);
And most importantly,
For the results of actions that bring pain,
Let us first of all accept it as the grace of the Lord to correct us so that we do not repeat wrong actions in future,
And do not feel sorry for ourselves.

When there is no “I”ness, there is neither feeling of sorry for ourselves nor feeling of happiness.
The only feeling is “Trupti” (contentment) for being the servants of the master.
The renunciation of “I”ness is the yoga to be practiced,
It is true “yoga of renunciation”,
It is true liberation from karma.
“Sanyasa” mentioned in this sloka is “karma phala sanyasa.”

Sloka 29

**SAMOHAM SARVA BHOOTESHU NA ME´ DWESHYOSTI NA PRIYAH
YE BHAJANTI TU MAAM BHAKTYA MAYI TE´ TESHU CHAPYAHAM**

The same am I to all beings. There is none hateful or dear to Me. Those who worship Me with devotion, are in Me and I am also in them.

It is an important declaration from Bhagawan and we should make a clear note of what He says.

We can understand this sloka by looking at examples from day to day life.

- 1) The sun is shining on all but it is us who block its entry. Closing all doors and curtains in the house does not let the sunlight in even though it is sun is shining outside.
- 2) The fireplace in the house when lit is to let the heat from it warm the individuals. Those who come near the fire place when it is lit will experience the warmth of the fire. Those who choose to stay away from it will not experience the heat.
- 3) The air around us is free for all. By opening the doors and windows of the house there is room for circulation of air.

Therefore the sun, the warmth from the fire place and the air circulation is same for all. None of these show any partiality to any single person.

Similarly,

Samoham: the same am I

Sarva bhooteshu: to all beings.

As the creator of the entire universe with so many different forms of life, both moving and non-moving (chara, achara,) He has provided abundant wealth in the form of nature. The bounty in nature is for all. But it is we, who allocate some of that wealth for us exclusively and call it as our own.

The Lord has not put up a notice on the tree saying that the fruits from any tree are for any named individuals.

He has not put any notice on a piece of land saying that the produce is for any named individual.

In course of time, from the time of formation of life on earth, we, the humans, have developed a great sense of possession and attribute the abundance in nature to ourselves.

Thus all aspects of the five elements of nature (earth, water, fire, air and space) are His external manifestation and are for the entire life on earth. “He”, the Lord is the same for all.

Na Dweshyosi: I do not hate (anyone in particular)

Na priyaha: no one is particularly dear to Me.

The Lord has no specific hatred or liking for any particular being. He hates “Unrightousness” and would like to destroy the same in any being and not the individual as such. After all, it is the same Atman who resides in all.

He loves those who show “Bhakti” (devotion). It is not external show of devotion to a named God as such but the qualities of Bhakti he exhibits. We come to know about this in chapter 12 where we come across a number of qualities in the individual that make the Lord dear to him.

Ye tu: those who

Maam: Me

Bhaktya: with devotion

Bhajanti: worship

Te’: they

Mayi: in Me

Teshu chapi: and in them also

Aham: I

Those who verily worship Me with devotion, they are in Me and I am in them.

It is a fairly common occurrence in that when we are in trouble we complain against God. Sukha and dukha are parts and parcel in one’s life and He has nothing to do with those experiences. These are the “Karma Phala” of our own actions. (some cases it is corporate actions of a group of people) The learned say “we reap what we sow.”

It is the ego in us that makes us hate or love someone. The Lord has no ego and He does not show love or hatred to any named individual.

Sri Ramakrishna says that God is in all beings and all beings are not in God and it is the cause of their suffering.

Sloka 30

**API CHET SUDURACHARO BHAJATE MAAM ANANYABHAK
SADHUREVA SA MANTAVYAHA SAMYAG VYAVASITO HI SAHA**

**Even if most sinful worship Me, with undivided heart, he too should be regarded as righteous,
for he has rightly resolved.**

Api: even

Chet: if

Sudurachara: very wicked person

Bhajate: worships

Maam: Me

Ananyabhag: with devotion to none else

Sadhuhu: righteous

Eva: verily

Sa: he

Manyataha: should be regarded

Samyak: rightly

Vyavastitaha: resolved

Hi: indeed

There is a message in this verse which is for wicked persons who have committed sinful act and have come to realise their faults and would sincerely want a way out,

And

For the society in dealing with such people.

The Lord has used a superlative here:
Durachari refers to a wicked person,
And sudurachari refers to the most wicked person. (addition of “su” is the superlative used in this word)

We are all human and we do tend to commit mistakes knowingly or un-knowingly. Some mistakes may even turn out to be wicked deeds.
The first step is to realise the mistake and repent for the wrong actions conducted.

When we come to realise that there is the Supreme Highest Power (Parabrahman) and surrender to that power totally (mind, speech, actions – mano – vak - kaya) we are said to be on the path to unite with Him/that power. This is the meaning of the word “ananyabhak” in this verse and it is an important word that needs to be understood clearly.

The individual has to worship the Lord totally with devotion to none else.
When Krishna says, “Maam”, it is not referred to only Krishna, son of Vasudeva and Devaki. He is not selfish and not asking people to worship him only and nobody else.
This is “Rajavidya and Rajaguhya”. It refers to the “Imperishable, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient” who is designated as “Parabrahman.” As we have studied so far, this Parabrahman, the primordial energy, resides in every form of life as the “living force” which is referred to as “The Atman”. Each one of us has a duty to show divinity in our actions and recognise divinity in every form of life. When this change occurs in the wicked, the individual is said to have taken the right resolve and worshipping the Lord with undivided heart.

The Lord is saying through this sloka that He welcomes such individuals also whole heartedly into His kingdom.

This is the message for those who have conducted sinful actions and let them know that there is no such thing as “eternal damnation”.

Manyataha: should be regarded.

This word is for the society who have to deal with such persons.

It does not mean that the society who impose penalties on such people through the judiciary system should do away with punishment. Legally punishment should fit the crime and the judiciary of any country should take actions as per the law of the land.

We have in here, the law of the universe presided over by the Parabrahman.

As per this law, we are made to understand that we should excuse the person who has repented and shown changes in his way of life.

“Total surrender to the divinity and change in the way of life” makes him a righteous person. Yes, he might have been a wicked person in the past but by his approach to the divinity he will be righteous now and in future.

Such persons should be accepted and respected for their righteous way of living by the society.

The same divine law applies also to the members in a family or in a circle of friends where an individual has committed wicked deeds but has changed his way of life.

Sage Valmiki who wrote the great epic Ramayana is the best example to understand.

Sage Valmiki was known by the name of “Agnisharma”. Due to some adverse events in the life, he turned out to be a highway robber living in the forest stealing from those who passed through that forest. He felt he had to do so to feed his family that included his elderly parents.

One day sage Narada and others rishis were passing through the forest and as was his habit, Agnisharma decided to rob them. Sage Narada asked him why he was leading such a wicked life. In reply, Agnisharma said that he had to do so to look after his family.

Narada asked him,

“You are accumulating sin from your actions and do you think your family who you protect, will take a share of the sin you have accumulated?”

Agnisharma was positive that they would do so.

Narada asks him to go and put this question to his family members.

Alas, when Agnisharma went home and put this question to the member of his family, each one of them replied with a simple and straightforward “No”.

Each one of them said that the sin accumulated by him was his own to suffer for. As dependants he had a duty to look after every member of his family and if he resolved to sinful way of living to fulfil his duties, it was his fate to suffer and not theirs.

This changed his way of life and with total sincerity he started living righteously. He took the guidance for this way of life by sage Narada himself.

There was a total transformation in him and he went along to write the famous epic Ramayana in a poetry form. He is revered and respected by every Hindu and will continue to get the same reverence and respect in future.

This gives to us from the highest authority, Lord Krishna Himself, the divine incarnate that there is no damnation pronounced on the sinner. The sinner is due to his sinful deeds and when his deeds change as given in this sloka, he is not a sinner anymore. The Vedic literature does not condemn the sinner but only the sin.

If one can change the texture of thoughts flowing through the mind, the texture of his behaviour could also be changed.

Sloka 31

**KSIPRAM BHAVATI DHARMATMA SHASHVACCHANTI NIGACCHATI
KOUNTEYA PRATIJANEHI NA ME' BHAKTAHA PRANASHYATI**

Soon he becomes righteous and attains eternal peace. O Kounteya, know for certain, My devotee is never destroyed.

This is the continuation of the theme from the last verse. What benefit one gets by becoming righteous is answered in this sloka.

The benefit being:

“Eternal Peace”.

Whatever the pleasures may be from the secular life we lead in our day to day activities, are just temporary and related to the passage of time. The happiness one gets from those pleasures will never guarantee “Eternal Peace.”

“Even if the most sinful worships Me”, the Lord said in the last sloka.

“Worship” includes: (jnana, karma, Bhakti and dhyana)

Regular study of the sacred texts;

Control of senses;

Acts of devotion like prayers etc;

Implementing the message of “Universal welfare” as advocated in the sacred texts through conduct of “Nitya karmas and Naimittika karmas.” (refer to chapter 3, Karma yoga)

Learning the sacred texts and Bhagawadgita is only one aspect in progress.

Understanding the same;

Developing the wisdom by implementing the knowledge gained in practical life and learning by mistakes;

Not getting elated by success;

Are the steps to be taken in the spiritual journey.

Only such people become true “Dharmatmas” in course of time and will get His Grace showered on them.

First step is to transcend the tamas in us and reach rajas.

The next step is transcending from rajas to Satvic.

This is the step for eligibility in the beginning of becoming “Dharmatmas.”

Through these various methods of worship, actions will eventually become divine and this in turn will purify the mind.

We need to have a firm belief in God and accept Him as our sole saviour. The sacred texts and the blessings of the guru will assist in this process. The mind has to remain pure at all times and no impurities should be allowed to enter through the sense organs. This is the way to become righteous.

The Lord calls such righteous people as “Dharmatmas”.

A true devotee is he who has a true love of God.

True love is total identification with the loved one.

To achieve this state, the ego has to be annihilated. This is “Mano nasha”.

When the ego is destroyed, there is no feeling of “pain or pleasure”.

When there are “no pains and pleasures”, there is “Eternal peace.”

In simple words, the message which is in the form of a promise by the Lord is:

Take the decision that the Paramatma alone is real, the universe is maya and that He alone is the ultimate saviour who will bless us with “Eternal peace.”

Kshipram: soon

Dharmatma: righteous

Bhavati: becomes

Shashvat: eternal

Shantim: peace

Nigachati: attains

Me’: my

Bhaktaha: devotee

Na pranashyati: never destroyed

Pratijaneehi: know

Kshipram: one may ask “how soon”?

One cannot and should not fix a time limit. Patience is the virtue to be developed. It takes a long time to clear the stored vasanas from our past lives. Let us start the task of clearing the stored vasanas and be vigilant so that no new vasanas enter the mind. Even this beginning is only by His Grace.

We are under the control of “Time” and only on transcending the “Time”, we will achieve the “Eternal Peace.”

“Transcending the Time”: We have learnt already that the only one who is beyond the “Time” is “Parabrahman.” The main obstacle between us and the “Parabrahman” is “Ego” and as soon as we start the process of removing the “Ego” we are on the path to success. We can do so only by His Grace.

Sloka 32

**MAAM HI PARTHA VYAPASHRITYA YE'PI SYUHU PAPAYONAYAHA
STRIYO VAISHYASTHATHA SHUDRASTEPI YANTI PARAM GATIM**

O Arjuna; taking refuge in Me even those may be of sinful births, as well as women, Vaishyas and Sudras also attain the Supreme Goal.

Ye': those

Api: even

Syuhu: may be

Papayonayaha: of sinful births

Striyaha: women

Vaishya: Vaishyas

Tatha: also

Shudra: Sudras

Vyapashritya: taking refuge in

Param gatim: the Supreme goal

Yantihi: verily attain

Sri Krishna has specifically brought in four categories of people here and let us look into this first.

- “Sinful births”: this refers to the most wicked in the society. (the worst of the worst)
- Women
- Vaishyas
- Shudras.

Not just the most wicked but also women, vaishyas and shudras the Lord has specified.

First point to note is that He is referring to those who resolve to take shelter in Him. We have studied in

Sloka 30: Even if the most wicked worship Me, with undivided heart, he too should be regarded as righteous, for he has rightly resolved.

Sloka 31: Soon he becomes righteous and attains Eternal peace.

The important message from this sloka is that He is not barring entry to anybody into His abode. Everyone is entitled to “Eternal peace.” There is no bar because of age, sex, creed or caste, religion or nationality. It applies universally to every individual.

The only condition is “Take refuge in Me.”

“Me” refers to Formless Brahman with no qualities. It is taking refuge in “Satya, Dharma”. (Eternal Truth and Righteousness in speech, thought and actions at social, spiritual and moral planes of existence.)

Those who fulfil the above criterion of taking refuge in “Me” will attain “Supreme Goal.”

Why has the Lord specifically mentioned the other three classes of people?

- Women:

The Gita was composed more than 5000yrs ago by the sage poet Veda Vyasa. By studying his composition, we will get an idea of the way of the society during those days. Women were considered as inferior to men. This has been ongoing for thousands of years. It is only in the last 100yrs or so that there has been a movement in society wherein women have started taking superior roles in the society.

During those days there were regions controlled by strong men in that region who were called as kings. With the help of the army the king kept his kingdom, guarded the boundary and protected his subjects.

There were a number of wars between neighbouring kingdoms. In those wars, men, physically being strong fought for their country. A number had to lose their lives in the battle. It meant that there was a need for many men to take up the role of fighting for their state. Giving birth to children became a major role to women and with it the maintenance of the household. Men took up the position outside in the society.

Brahmana and Kshatriya children needed to study sastras so that they could conduct their actions in the society according to dharma.

Because of these restrictions, women did not have an opportunity to study the sacred texts.

But Bhakti does not bar anyone to express their love to the Supreme. When this is accompanied by jnana automatically actions become pure. Purity in speech, thought and actions is the path to attain the Supreme Goal. Total surrender to the Lord gets total protection by the lord.

We have examples wherein in Mahabharata Droupadi was rescued by Krishna when she totally surrendered to Him.

b) The vaishyas and the shudras:
(refer to sloka 13, chapter 4)

We can see that the caste system of Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra was in vogue even during those days.

Let us remember that the four fold system was created by the Lord according to the gunas and not according to birth right. It is the gunas (thought imprints) that makes us what we are in the society. Each one of us have all the three gunas of satva, rajas and tamas in us and the proportion of the three varies from individual to individual and also in the same individual there is at any one time an outward expression of one guna. The predominant guna is expressed as what we are in the society.

As gunas are due to the vasanas, vasanas due to the thoughts, it is possible for anyone individual to change the texture of thoughts and change from lower to higher castes or fall down from higher to lower caste.

We are born into any one caste group means, we are born with our existing vasanas. We have a divine right to change the texture of our thoughts and an equal right to attain Godhood.

By changing the thoughts to pure from thoughts that are passionate or lazy we can show actions of a true Brahmana. (the qualities of Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra are to be found in slokas 42-44, chapter 18)

In the spiritual path to attain Supreme Goal (Param gatim) we need to climb from the level of actions of a shudra to the level of actions of a Brahmana.

So, overall, the sloka is referring to those who are other than Brahmins in their thoughts and actions. It says that anyone is eligible to become pure and attain Godhood even in this life. The society may disqualify one on the basis of sex, birth, caste etc. but not the Lord.

Sloka 33

**KIM PUNAR BRAHMANAHA PUNYAHA BHAKTA RAJARSHAYASTATHA
ANITYAM ASUKHAM LOKAM IMAM PRAPYA BHAJASTYA MAAM**

How much more (easily) then the holy brahmanas and the royal saints attain the goal. Having entered this world (which is) impermanent and unhappy, do worship Me devotedly.

Kim punaha: how much more
Punyaha: holy
Rajarshayaha: royal saints
Tatha: also
Anityam: impermanent
Asukham: unhappy
Lokam: world
Idam: this
Prapya: having obtained

In the last verse the Lord mentioned about the vasyas and sudras and said that by taking refuge in Him, they would attain the Parabrahman.

Let us understand a little about the word “Rajarshi”.

Rishi is the title for a saintly person whose actions are purely Satvic,
“Raja” is the title for a king who has a combination of Satva and Rajas in him and is capable to looking after his subjects.
“Rajarshi” is a “King” who has a right to rule over the subjects in his kingdom and at the same time saintly in his thoughts, actions and speech.

In the olden days those who were eligible to ascend to the throne in a kingdom were sent for spiritual education from the age of about 7yrs where they also learnt the art of ruling over the kingdom. They were showing mainly rajas in their actions but also had a good proportion of satva included in it.

In those who receive the title of “Rajarshi” there would be almost total “Satva” with a small proportion of rajas. They have more qualities of a Brahmana in them. King Janaka, father of Mother Sita, consort of Sri Rama was given the title of “Rajarshi”.

The first quarter in this sloka refers to such Rajarshis and the Lord tells us that it is very easy for them to attain union with the Parabrahman and experience the joy of “Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.” (Truth, Peace and Beauty.)

The Lord next tells about the Brahmana who expresses all the qualities of a true Brahmana (sloka 42, chapter 18) and the word used by the Lord when referring to such Brahmanas is “Holy Brahmanas.”

These holy brahmanas and the royal saints having taken birth into this samsara of births and deaths will reach the abode of the Lord very easily and quickly.

Just to complete the understanding of the word “Rajarshi” there are two more categories of rishis, “Brahmarshi and Devarshi” we should know about even though it is not relevant to this sloka but it is good to have an idea of the same.

Brahmarshi is that holy saint who is totally immersed in the world of Parabrahman and is not affected by any sorrows or pleasures of this world. We have the example in our mythology of Sage Vasishtha who was a “Brahmarshi”. Once the sage Viswamitra who was Kshatriya by birth wanted to achieve the recognition as a “Brahmarshi” like sage Vasishtha. He conducted severe penances and got a boon by Lord Brahma that he would be given the title of “Rajarshi”. This did not please him. He went to the extent of waging a war against sage Vasishtha. He even killed all the sons of the sage but sage Vasishtha was not perturbed. He remained in deep meditation on the Brahman. True to his title of “Brahmarshi” he did not fight but received the magical arrows directed against him by Viswamitra. The blessings of the Lord did not let the arrows reach Vasishtha and harm him.

Next in the ladder of ascendancy is “Devarshi”. He is a rishi equal to god. The sage who has this title is “Sage Narada” who lives in eternal bliss singing the glory of Lord Narayana during his travel round the three worlds. He has free entry at all times to the abode of Lord Vishnu.

The magical word used by the Lord is “Worship Me whole heartedly”. Depending on the intensity of worship which is reflected in the quality of “equanimity to pains and pleasures” expressed, the seeker climbs up the spiritual ladder and soon attains union with the Parabrahman. This world is “Anityam and Asukham” we are told. The world we live in is a world full of births and deaths of pains and pleasures. The only way for salvation is “Ananyaschintayanto maam.” (sloka 22, chapter 9) All these slokas are explanatory slokas to understand the significance of “Total surrender.”

Sloka 34

**MANMANA BHAVA MADBHAKTO MADYAJEEM MAAM NAMASKURU
MAMEVAISHYASI YUKTAIVAM ATMANAM MAT PARAYANAHA**

Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice unto Me, bow down to Me. Having thus made yourself steadfast in Me, taking Me as the Supreme Goal, you will come to Me.

Manmama: mind fixed on Me
Mad bhakto: be devoted to me
Madyajee: sacrifice unto Me
Maam namaskuru: bow down to Me
Mamevaishyasi: thou shall come to Me
Yuktaivam: having united thus
Matparayanaha: taking Me as the Supreme Goal

There is a saying:
“As you think so you become.”
And this sloka fits in with this proverb.

“Me” in this context represents “Brahman, the ultimate knowledge.”

We must fix our mind on the knowledge that we are the “Atman” within and not the “physical body” and that the world around is again “Brahman” but with names and forms attached. Fix the mind on the divinity within all. This is what we have to understand by the word “Manmana” (fix your mind on Me.) This is action at the level of “The mind.”

The aim of an individual who is aiming at the target (bull's eye) is to fix the gaze on the target and not let anything else come in the field of vision and distract the sight of the target.

The world is full of sensual objects which make us develop "raga, dwesha" (desires, hatreds) towards them. These tend to distract the mind from its concentration on the target.

Arjuna, during his earlier days was a student of teacher Dronacharya. The teacher considered Arjuna as the best student because of his capacity to aim at the target and not get side distracted from other objects.

This cannot happen unless we take Him as the Supreme Goal: Matparayanaha. We need a strong will to implement this wish. The mind has to surrender to the intellect and request for guidance. "I will do as you command" should be the attitude of the mind to the intellect. This is the intellectual level of analysis of this sloka.

One should develop a strong will to unite with Him. It is like making sure of the destination one wants to reach. It is important that we are definite where we want to go and make necessary preparations to reach the place safely. We must master the art of overcoming the hurdles that come in the way. The intellect should be the master and guide the mind in this task.

The sastras, the learned elders and gurus are the guide for us to know about "The Supreme Purusha". We need to approach the guide for the necessary help.

Madbhaktaha: "Be devoted to Me": This is applicable to the sense organs (Jnanendriyas). One must learn the art of filtering away the sensual from divine in the impulses carried by the sense organs to the mind. This can happen only when there is true love. He who has true love will develop a special sense of perception in whatever he perceives with his sense organs. Greater the love towards the Supreme, greater will be the efforts put in to reach Him.

True devotion is love towards the object of love without any expectation of reward. Expecting something in return is like making a business transaction and amount to "selfishness."

We still have to live and discharge our duties to the family and to the society. We are bound to face ups and downs and experience happiness and sorrow. Both these experiences should not reduce our "devotion and faith" in Him.

Madyaji: Sacrifice to Me. This is applicable to the organs of action (karmendriyas). Let all the actions be in the spirit of "Sree krishnarpanamastu." Results of whatever actions we conduct with our organs of action should be surrendered to the Lord. This automatically implies that one should know what are good and what are bad actions. Only results of good actions are to be surrendered. One must be prepared to take the consequences of bad action on himself and not blame the God for the results of such actions.

Mam namaskuru: Bow down to Me. This is applicable to the "ego." The ego within us must bow down to the Supreme at all times and not lift its ugly head at any time. This means that one has to bow down to "Knowledge and Truth." By mind, thoughts and actions we must learn to bow down to the Lord.

This clear understanding of what is implied in the sloka is true "Raja Vidya and Raja Guhya" and let us all put our sincere efforts to understand the sacred text and implement its teachings in our day to day life.

Learn to bow down to:

Guru, the Jagadguru who is the knower, the knowledge and the saviour.

When Krishna tells Arjuna to bow down to Me, it is not to Krishna, the Sakha (friend) of Arjuna but Krishna, the Jagadguru.

Thus completes the ninth chapter, "RAJA VIDYA RAJA GUHYA YOGA" in the Srimad Bhagawadgita which is a Upanisad, Brahma Vidya and Yoga sastras in the form of a dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.