

!! Om Shri Pramatmaney Namah !!

The Benedictory Gita



*(Compiled from Paramsraddheya Swamiji Shree
Ramsukhdasji Maharaj's Discourses)*

॥ ॐ श्री परम॑त॒मने॒य नमः॑ ॥

The Benedictory Gītā

(Compiled from Paramśraddheya Swāmījī Shree
Rāmsukhdāsī Mahārāj's Discourses)

Kripāmayi

Bhagavad Gītā

The Benedictory Gītā

(Compiled from *Paramśraddheya Swāmījī Shri Rāmsukhdāsī Mahārāj's Discourses*)

tvameva mata ca pita tvameva
tvameva bandhusca sakha tvameva
tvameva vidya dravinam tvameva
tvameva sarvam mama devadeva

[O Lord! You alone are my mother, you alone are my father,
You alone are my brother and friend.
You alone are my knowledge and wealth.
O Lord of Lords! You are everything for me.]

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The Benedictory Gītā

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॥ Ōm Shri Paramātmaney Namaḥ ॥

Dedication!

*Tvadeeyam vastu Govind
tubhyamev samarpaye:*

*O Lord! I offer unto You
What is really Yours only!*

The Benedictory Gītā

॥ Ōm Shri Paramātmāney Namaḥ ॥

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Translator’s Submission

No translation, howsoever accurate, can truly capture the pristine splendor of the original. We have tried our level best to stay true to the original, both in intent and purpose, while at the same time presenting a translation that is at once idiomatic, expressive, and free-flowing. This translation is not intended so much for scholars as it is for the spiritual aspirants desirous of a faithful yet readable translation.

The following three principles have been used as “guiding principles” in accomplishing this English translation:

- I. Utmost care and circumspection have been exercised in trying to find the “exact English equivalents” of the respective Hindi words and phrases.
- ii. To preserve the sanctity of the original, all the important words and phrases are also presented in a Romanized Devanāgarī script within the round brackets () next to the English translation. To avoid awkwardness, sometimes only a Romanized Devanāgarī version of a word or a phrase is presented.

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- III. In making the English translation, throughout, the translator has aspired to *harmonize* the word-meaning (*shabdārtha*) and the inner-sense/meaning (*antaranga-bhāvārtha*). However, wherever there was a clash between *shabdārtha* and *bhāvārtha*, the translator has tended to side with the *bhāvārtha* or *bhāvānuvād*.

Ultimately, every work of translation falls short of the majesty of the original. It is even more so when the subject-matter involved is of such a highest profundity and depth. Arthur Schnabel, an Austrian classical pianist, having played Beethoven's piano music all his life, is reported to have said this of Beethoven's music: "This music is better than it can ever be played." We feel the same way about our translation and the subject-matter of this short treatise.

This translation is at best a work-in-progress. It is quite possible that despite our best efforts, several deficiencies and inaccuracies may still remain as the work stands in its present form. We earnestly welcome all suggestions for its improvement at the following email ID: musafir57@gmail.com. So, kindly please send your suggestions unhesitatingly. One is endlessly tempted to revise the translation to make it as accurate as humanly possible. Nevertheless, we are also reminded of a Chinese author who said, "If I were to wait for perfection, my book will never be finished."

Paramśraddheya Swāmījī Rāmsukhdāsī Mahārāj

If the reader finds any merit in the translation, all glory to Swāmījī Rāmsukhdāsī Mahārāj whose inspiration has accomplished this translation. Whatever deficiencies remain, they are verily due to the translator's limited understanding of Swāmījī's sublime teachings. In the final reckoning, the Blessed Lord is the doer of all and everything; the translator is His mere instrument—*an imperfect instrument at that*.

In conclusion, we will like to quote a Sanskrit verse that captures our feelings admirably well:

***Yadatra dōshanam kinchattan teshām mameva tat
Yadatra bhōshanam kinchit tatttu teshām na eva
mam***

Whatever deficiencies are found in this work, they do not belong to the masters—they are verily mine; whatever excellence is found here is theirs and certainly not mine.

Kundaldhām (Gujrāt)

Gītā Jayanti, 2013

In Shri Hariḥ Smṛtti,
Sant-charan-raj rataḥ,
Satinder Dhiman

A Note to the Reader

The special quality of the original is hard to capture in a translation. Usually, in translation, several ideas of the author do not get expressed fully. Therefore, the discerning readers are earnestly requested, if they have the knowledge of the Hindi language, to read the original book in Hindi.



॥ Ōm Shri Paramātmānam ॥

Benedictory Bhagavad Gītā

A Humble Submission:

Swāmījī Rāmasukhdāsajī

By listening to several great souls and saints and by reading various books, it became evident to me that the Bhagavad Gītā is a marvelous, transcendental scripture. It contains complete guidance for a seeker, regardless of seeker's social classification, life-stage, sect or community. It is because the Gītā does not deal with upholding or condemning any particular school of thought or viewpoint. Rather it deals with the pure essence of Reality. The truth is, that by forsaking attraction for the ever-changing world, one is naturally able to experience (or realize) That which is ever-eternally immutable and uninform. Only that seeker is exclusively fit for its realization who finds no solace in the transient and who does not get struck in the fleeting pleasures.

The Gītā scripture is of small size. Its Sanskrit is simple. However, its meaning is very deep and profound. In describing various spiritual disciplines, in making their meaning abundantly clear, and in restating every single discipline in various ways, it

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spares no elaboration. Yet, the size of this scripture has not become too voluminous. We have not come across another scripture like this which is so *brief in its details!*

Every human being can realize the Divine in every life-situation; verily, God-realization is every human being's birthright. One can attain one's spiritual welfare even amidst a terribly extreme situation like a war—In this manner, the Gītā teaches the great art of seeking the highest spiritual good amidst the ordinary practical matters (*vyavahār mein paramārath ki kalā*)—the art of Supreme fulfillment through secular behavior. We have not come across another scripture of its kind that shows the path for the salvation of all of the humankind.

Merely reciting the Gītā devotedly brings about peace and tranquility. Merely reading the Gītā attentively evokes myriad feelings which are very peaceful. If there is any doubt in the mind, it gets cleared away while reading the Gītā. I have no doubt about it whatsoever that one benefits greatly by merely pondering over the Gītā's meaning and significance. Therefore, every brother and sister should enshrine the message of the Gītā in their heart and should live one's life according to it.

Paramśraddheya Swāmīji Shrī Rāmasukhdāsaji Mahārāj

September 1982, Vrindāvan



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॥ Om Shri Paramātmānamah ॥

A Brief Introduction to the Gītā

(1)

It is believed that the Gītā was composed about 3,000 years before the present era (a little over 5,000 years ago). It was revealed on the 11th day of the waxing moon (*ekādaṣī*) of the *Mārgaṣīrṣa* month (November-December) in the *Vedic* calendar; that is why on this very day, the festival of '*Gītā-Jayantī*' (the day of the origin of the Gītā) is celebrated.

(2)

The Gītā is a sublime song sung by the Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna, His dear friend, is the listener of the Gītā. Mahārṣi Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvaipayana Ved Vyāsa is the compiler/composer and the Lord Ganeśa, the great granter of intelligence, is its writer. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa had cited several scriptural verses (*śrutīs*) in support of His teaching. Ved Vyāsa incorporated those scriptural verses along with rendering what the Lord had stated in the prose form in his own versified language besides rendering in verse form what Arjuna, Sañjaya, and Dhartarāṣṭra have said. The very same gem of a scripture, in the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna-Dialogue, and divided into 18 chapters

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comprising 700¹ verses (*ślokās*), is the Bhagavad Gītā.

(3)

The Gītā is the Divine Melody graced by the auspicious-lips of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, verily the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As there are 18 main *Purāṇas*; 18,000 verses (*ślokās*) of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*; 18 *parvas* (sections) of the *Mahābhārata*; the army consisted of 18 *akshauhini* (divisions: the Kauravas controlled 11 while the Pāṇḍavas controlled 7); the Kurukṣetra battle lasted for 18 days; in the same manner there are only 18 chapters in the Bhagavad Gītā.

(4)

If it is contended that in the Gītā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān’s teachings begin from the second chapter; then why chapter one is included in the Gītā after all? To this we reply: There are the Lord’s words included in the chapter one also—‘***uvāca pārtha paśyaitān samavetān kurūn iti***’ (Gītā 1/25): “Behold, O Pārtha, all the Kurus assembled here!” But for these words, the teachings of the Gītā would not have taken place.

¹ Ever since the great commentator, Ādi Śankara (early 8th century CE), fixed the total number of verses to be 700, this number is considered to be the most authentic and all modern editions of the Gītā contain 700 verses, although some *Kashmirī* editions contain up to 742 verses.

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The Lord's infinite and boundless Grace is instrumental in the revelation of the Gītā's teachings. Arjuna only wanted the chariot to be placed in between the two armies. If the Lord had placed the chariot anywhere, the teachings of the Gītā would not have started at all. But the Lord placed the chariot right in front of Bhīṣma and Drōṇa, and said, 'Behold these Kauravas assembled here.' If the Lord, instead of saying 'behold these Kauravas assembled here,' had said, 'Behold the sons of Dhaṛtarāṣṭra,' Arjuna would not have felt the sorrow, without which the teachings of the Gītā would not have begun. For, Arjuna was certainly ready to engage in the battle with the sons of Dhaṛtarāṣṭra.

Secondly, the Lord has addressed the issues raised by Arjuna in the verses thirty one to forty four of chapter one in the following chapters of the Gītā. This also proves that chapter one has a vital link with the Gītā.

Thirdly, the Gītā starts from the beginning of the twenty-fifth chapter within the Bhīṣma Parva of *Mahābhārata*, and this twenty-fifth chapter forms the first chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā.

(5)

The teachings of the Gītā took place in Kurukṣetra at the beginning of the *Mahābhārata* war.

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Here a doubt can arise that when the war was ready to begin, it was not possible to impart the teachings of the Gītā in such a short period of time. Perhaps the Lord might have stated His teachings only very briefly which Ved Vyāsī might have elaborated later. The resolution of this doubt is that, there was enough time since the war had not begun yet. It is only after the Lord has taught the gospel of the Gītā that the war started.

The Bhagavad Gītā occurs within the great Hindu epic, *Mahābhārata*, during chapters 25-42 of the Bhīṣma Parva (The Book of Bhīṣma). In chapter 43 of Bhīṣma Parva, we read that Yudhiṣṭhira went to Bhīṣma etc., bowed down to them reverently and sought their permission to fight. Then Yudhiṣṭhira declared that if any warrior wanted to come to their side, they may do so now. Hearing this, Yuyutsu came boldly forward on the side of the Pāṇḍavas (*Mahābhārata*, Bhīṣma Parva, 43/94-100). The war began only after this. Therefore, it becomes clear that there was enough time to relay the message of the Bhagavad Gītā.

(6)

Some people say that the Gītā's teachings were imparted to prod Arjuna to engage in the war. But, this is not so in reality. The Lord did not prompt Arjuna to war but made him aware of his righteous

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duty. Besides, given the fact that Arjuna was from the warrior class, war was his rightful or allotted duty anyway. It was Arjuna's own idea after all to engage in the war (Gītā 1/ 20-22); he himself became inclined to the war—that is why he himself invited the Lord to the war. But Arjuna became disinclined to the war due to the sorrow and delusion (*shōka-mōha*) [aroused by filial piety] and was retreating from fulfilling his allotted duty (as a member of the warrior-class).

After watching his kinsmen, Arjuna became confused and entertained the thought that 'I will not fight'—'*na yotsye*' (Gītā 2/9). After listening to the message of the Lord, Arjuna did not say, 'Okay, I will fight now.' Rather, he said, 'I will do as You command'—'*kariṣye vacanam tava*' (Gītā 18/73); that is, I will fulfill my duty. From these words of Arjuna, it becomes evident that Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not prompt Arjuna to war but only made him aware of his duty.²

The war was unavoidable after all, for no one could have averted it. The Lord Himself, at the time when Arjuna was shown the Cosmic Vision of the Universal Form, had told him that 'I am the inflamed *Kāla* (The Great Time Devourer), the destroyer of the worlds....Even without you, all those warriors arrayed

² After presenting the entire teachings of the Gītā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa points out, "Thus has this wisdom, more mysterious than the mystery itself, been imparted to you by Me. Fully pondering over it, do as you like." (Gītā 18.63)

in the enemy's camp must die' (Gītā 11/32). Therefore, this mass-destruction of the humans was inevitable. Even if Arjuna had not fought, this mass-destruction would still have taken place. If Arjuna has not fought, Yudhiṣṭhira would have certainly fought, having received the command of his esteemed mother, Kuntī—the same Yudhiṣṭhira who, at the command of his mother, had agreed to marry with Draupadi along with his four brothers. Mother Kuntī's command to Yudhiṣṭhira was—'You let Arjuna and Bhīma, who are ever eager to fight, know that the time for which the mother of the warriors gives birth to her sons has now arrived:'

***Etad Dhannjayo vaacchyo nityoyuddhukto
varakodarah II
Yadaratham kshetryaa sutey tasya
kaalo'yamaagatah I***

(*Mahābhārata*, Udyōg Parva: 137/ 9-10)

Bhīmsen would also not have restrained himself from the war because he had taken a vow to kill the Kauravas (*Mahābhārata*, Sabhā Parva: 77/22). Draupadī had gone to the extent of declaring that if my husbands (the Pāṇḍavas) would not fight with the Kauravas, then my old father (Drupada), brother (Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna), and my five sons and Abhimanyu would fight with the Kauravas (*Mahābhārata*, Udyog Parva: 82/37-38). Arjuna was not fearful of the war; he was fearful of [losing] righteousness. He was not afraid to be killed, but to kill. He was scared of

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committing any non-virtuous act which would deter his spiritual progress. Therefore it is not proper to maintain that the Lord taught Arjuna the message of the Gītā to prompt him to war.

Hence the purpose of the teachings of the Gītā was neither to prompt Arjuna to fight nor even to tell him what his duty was. The sole purpose of the teachings was to impart the important message of spiritual emancipation to all of humankind. For this purpose alone, the Gītā narrates several paths. Thus, the Gītā teaches the fine art of seeking one's supreme spiritual welfare under all circumstances—circumstances even as critical as war.

(7)

Some people believe that the teachings of the Gītā are meant for the renunciates (*san'nyāsīs*) only and one who reads the Gītā becomes a renunciate. Therefore, such people are afraid to let their children read the Gītā. But the reality is not so; for, the Gītā's narrator Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the listener Arjuna were both householders and lead a householder's life. When Arjuna, after listening to the message of the Gītā, engaged in what appeared to be a terrible act of war, how could then the purpose of the Gītā be the renunciation (of actions). The Gītā, after doing away with the confusion of a person about the righteous duty, verily shows the proper path to duty.

(8)

The Glory of Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā is highly unusual and unique. What can one say about it; the human speech is verily incapable of describing its glory. We do not have such words with which we can sing the glory of the Gītā. There is no end to the extent of different meanings contained in the Gītā. A human being, who is very well within the limits of measurement, may carry such deep meanings and feelings within that one may not be able to fathom them easily; who can then say anything about God!— God is endless and God’s narratives are endless (*Hari annanta Hari kathā annantā—Manas, Bālkānda 140/3*). God is infinite; God’s Names are infinite; God’s Essence is infinite; God’s mysteries are infinite; then how can one find an end to the meaning and significance of God’s words.

If you are interested in your spiritual welfare, then you should definitely study the Holy Gītā. Whether one is a lay person or a highly learned scholar—everyone will discover ever-new meanings in the Gītā. Even an ordinary person—who will read the Gītā, having surrendered to the Lord, and dive deeply into it—will discover several new meanings in it. These observations are not merely of theoretical nature; I have seen them and experienced them [that is, I have *experienced* their truth].

I have not discovered anything higher than the Gītā’s doctrine that ‘God is all there is’— **‘Vāsudevah**

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Sarvam' (Gītā 7/19). On this doctrine end all the philosophies such as the Patanjali Yog Darśan, etc.! When there is no other Reality at all, then how can the purification of the mind be (possible)?

(9)

The Gītā is a transcendental scripture. Read and recite it, ponder over it, and understand its deep meaning. In it there are many simple things explained in an easy manner. Just devote yourself, with a simple heart, to the attainment of God; in this manner, you will find God's love in whatever task you are doing. There are so many unique teachings mentioned in the Gītā! What can one say about it! I never feel satisfied enough discoursing about the Gītā. I do not feel satisfied enough explaining its meaning; and I do not know much either. I just have an ordinary practice of it; still, I find ever-new meanings; I perceive ever-new unusual meanings in it. Such is the Bhagavad Gītā. All of you should study it.

The Gītā is a universally respected scripture. The Gītā is neither interested in supporting or rejecting a particular philosophy or viewpoint. That is why we find numerous commentaries on it by the followers of various spiritual traditions. The Lord himself has said, "Gītā me hr̥dyam Pārtha: O Pārtha! The Gītā is My very heart." It is a small gem of a scripture in which we can find the complete essence of the paths of selfless action, knowledge, and

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devotion. In it, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has revealed the innermost spiritual secrets to his utmost dear friend and devotee, Arjuna. Such matters are not meant to be revealed to all and sundry. It is an endearing dialogue between two friends. It is a supremely mysterious scripture.

The main topic of the Gītā is *śarnāgati* or total surrender. It starts with Arjuna's surrender in verse seven of chapter two when Arjuna implores Śrī Kṛṣṇa to accept him as disciple and to teach him. It ends in *śarnāgati* when Arjuna, says in the end: 'I will do Thy bidding'—'**karīṣye vacanam tava**' (18.73). This is very important point to delve into the mysteries of the Gītā.

How rare is the message of the Gītā? We can imagine by reading the following dialogue between Arjuna and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as narrated in Anu Gītā.

Said Arjuna: "O Almighty-armed one! Your greatness became known to me upon the approach of the battle. O son of Devakī! Your form, as the Lord of the universe, then became known to me! What your holy Self said, through affection, to me at that time, O Keśava, has all been forgotten by me, O chief of men, in consequence of the fickleness of my mind. Again and again, however, I feel a curiosity about those topics. You, O Mādhava, will repair to Dwārakā soon."

Vāsudeva said: "I discoursed to you on the Supreme Brahman, having concentrated myself in

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Yog....It is impossible for me, O Dhanañjaya, to repeat, in detail, all that I said on that occasion. That doctrine (about which I discoursed to you then) is more than sufficient for understanding the Brahman. And, O Dhanañjaya! it is not possible for me to repeat in full (what I said before)....I made you listen to truths that are regarded as mysteries. I imparted to you truths that are eternal. The recollection of all that I told you on that occasion will not come to me now.”

We bow down to the great sage Ved Vyāsa for immortalizing and bequeathing this incomparable scripture to all future generations of spiritual aspirants.



॥ Om Shri Paramātmānamah ॥

The Glory of the Gītā

Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā is a highly transcendental and unusual scripture. Its glory is unfathomable and limitless. It contains complete guidance for a spiritual aspirant, regardless of aspirant's nation, appearance, community, sect, social classification, and stage of life. It is because the Gītā does not deal with upholding or condemning any particular school of thought. Rather it describes Reality in its true essence. The Essential Reality (God) is That which is utterly beyond the changeable material nature (*Prakṛti*) and its evolutes (objects), and remains eternally and constantly as self-same Nectar amidst all places, times, objects, persons, situations, etc. Howsoever and wherever a person is, the Essential Reality is present there completely and perfectly as it is. But it is not experienced due to the attraction-aversion of changeable objects and persons that originate from material nature. It is experienced naturally and spontaneously by being free from the attraction and aversion (*rāga-dvēṣa*).

The Bhagavad Gītā scripture is considered to be a part of the triple-scriptural-canon (*prasthāna-traya*). A footpath (natural trail) is referred to as a 'system' (*padatti*) and a royal path (*rājpatha*) that is

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broad is referred to as ‘*prasthāna*.’ For the sole purpose of the salvation of the humankind, the three royal paths are referred to as *prasthāna-traya* (three sets of foundational scriptural texts)—one set of scriptural texts that are of *Vedic* origin are called ‘*Upanishads*,’ another set that is of philosophical nature is called ‘*Brahma-Sutras*,’ and still another, which is *Smārta prasthāna*, is called the ‘Bhagavad Gītā.’ Among the three canonical texts, the Bhagavad Gītā is very unique since it contains the essence of both the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma-Sutras*. The *Upanishads* contain *mantras* (sacred formulas or incantations); the *Brahma-Sutras* contain the *sutras* (aphorisms); and the Bhagavad Gītā contains *ślokas* (verses). Despite being the *ślokas*, since they are the very voice of God, these *ślokas* are verily *mantras*. Since these *ślokas* contain very deep meaning and import, they can also be referred to as *sutras*. The ‘*Upanishads*’ are of use and value for only those who are duly qualified to study them; and the ‘*Brahma-Sutras*’ are for the learned and the erudite; however, the ‘Bhagavad Gītā’ is meant for one and all.

The Gītā is the essence of all the *Upanishads*. As a matter of fact, the message of the Gītā is even more special than the *Upanishads*. It is because the ‘effect’ is more distinctive than the ‘cause.’ For example, the space has one property called ‘sound;’ but its effect—the air—has two properties: ‘sound’ and ‘touch.’

The Vedas are the breath of God; and the Gītā is the voice of God. The breath is a natural phenomenon; but the Lord spoke the Gītā having established Himself in the *Yōg*.³ Thus, the Gītā is even more special than the *Vedas*.

All the philosophical systems are contained within the Gītā, but the Gītā is not contained within any philosophical system. In a philosophical system, one *studies* what is the world (*jagat*), what is the embodied soul (*jīva*), and what is the Absolute Truth (Brahman). But the Gītā does not make one learn about the concepts; it makes one *experience* the Reality directly.

Many commentaries have been written on the Gītā and many more are being written; still the Gītā keeps on inspiring ever-fresh ideas in the minds of the learned, the saints, and the great-souls. Different

³ ***Na shakyaṃ tanmayā bhuyastathā vaktumsheshataḥ II
Param hi Brahma kathitaṃ yōgayukteṃ tanmayā I***
(*Mahābhārata*, Ashvamedhika Parva 16/ 12-13)

Śrī Bhagavān said: It is not within my power now to repeat, in detail, all that I said on that occasion. At that time, I discoursed to you on the Supreme Self, having concentrated myself in *Yōga*.... The recollection of all that I told you on that occasion will not come to me now.

The significance of discoursing on the Gītā, having established in *Yōga*, means to ensure this: In what lies the supreme good of the listener? What should be said for the listener's welfare? What will lead to the supreme good of its listeners or readers in the future?—In this manner, the Gītā is revealed after having concentrated on the supreme welfare of all spiritual aspirants.

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learned teachers of different traditions (sects) have written separate commentaries on the Gītā. Following their commentaries may lead to one's spiritual welfare but one cannot know the meaning of the Gītā in its entirety. **Even if we combine all the commentaries to date, still they will not be able to reveal the complete meaning of the Gītā.** As a well remains ever-full even if countless people draw water from it for centuries, even so the Gītā remains as inexhaustible despite there being countless commentaries written on it. There is just no end to its meaning and ideas. There is a limit after all to the water of the well; but there is no limit to the (brimming) ideas of the Gītā. Therefore, anyone who writes about the Gītā gives an evidence of his or her intellect only—Even if everyone knows Your grandeur, O Lord! Still no one can resist singing Your Glories! (*'sab jānat Prabhu prabhutā soī; tadapi kahein binu rahā na koī'*—*Manas*, Bāl Kānda 13/1). Howsoever may one contemplate on this solemn scripture, still one cannot fathom its depths. As one keeps on diving deeper into it, even so, one keeps on discovering matters of deepest significance in it. When one cannot even find an end to the ideas of a learned person so easily, how then one can find an end to the ideas contained in the words of the Lord, whose name, form etc., are verily limitless.

God's words are more exalted and carry more weight than the utterances of the great saints and seers because God is the source of even the great

saints and seers—‘I am the prime source in all respects of gods as well as great seers’ (*aham ādir hi devānāṃ maharṣīṇāṃ ca sarvaśaḥ*: Gītā 10.2). Thus, howsoever exalted the saints, seers, and great-souls may be and howsoever preeminent their speech (or words) may be, but they cannot compare with the utmost exalted and divine words of the Bhagavad Gītā.

This small gem of a scripture has so much uniqueness that anyone interested in his or her spiritual welfare, regardless of his or her social class, life-stage, country, tradition, belief, etc., gets drawn to it immediately upon reading it even for once. Even if one reads or recites it just a little bit, one will receive several satisfactory resources for one’s spiritual advancement. **Every philosophical system has different types of people who are entitled to study it; however, it is the uniqueness of the Gītā that everyone interested in their salvation is entitled to study it.**

In describing various spiritual disciplines, in making their meaning abundantly clear, and in restating every single discipline in various ways, the Gītā spares no elaboration. Yet, the size of this scripture has not become too voluminous. We have not come across any other such scripture that is so *brief in its details* in describing the essential matter in its entirety! One who has an intense desire for spiritual welfare can attain God-realization under each

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and every circumstance. One can attain one's spiritual welfare even amidst a terribly extreme situation like war—In this manner, the Gītā teaches the great art of seeking the highest spiritual good in the mundane practical matters (*vyavahār mein paramārath ki kalā*). **We have not come across another scripture of its kind [that shows the path for the salvation of all of humankind].**



॥ Om Shri Paramātmānamah ॥

Purpose of the Gītā

Stated briefly, the purpose of the Gītā is—to bring about the supreme welfare of all of the humankind. In the scriptures, various methods are recommended for one’s spiritual welfare. When we look at the various commentaries on the Gītā, we discover that the commentaries are written from the standpoint of various philosophical systems—*Advaita* (non-dualism), *Dvaita* (dualism), *Vishishtādvaita* (qualified non-dualism), *Shuddhādvaita* (absolute non-dualism), *Dvaitādvaita* (dualism-non-dualism), *Achintya Bhedābheda* (beyond dualism and non-dualism). Despite these different ‘isms,’ doctrines, and traditions, the Gītā has no opposition to anyone of these viewpoints. The Gītā has not criticized any doctrine. However, it has stated its unique position in such an exceptional way that all bow to it in reverence. It is because the teachings of the Gītā are not presented from the standpoint of any one particular system or school of thought. Rather, the Gītā’s message is revealed for the supreme spiritual welfare of all of the humankind.

The Gītā does not insist on any one particular viewpoint; rather, it insists only on the spiritual welfare of all beings. The difference of opinion lies with the

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commentators and not with the Gītā. Conducting oneself according to the teachings of the Gītā, there cannot be any dispute between the worshipers of *saguṇa* (with attributes) and *nirguṇa* (attributeless). **In the Gītā, the Lord leads the spiritual aspirant towards the Integral.** *Saguṇa-nirguṇa, sākār-nirākār*, two-armed form, four-armed form, and a thousand-armed form—all forms are included in the Aggregate or Integral Form of the Lord. In the Integral Form, there is no form that is left behind. One may worship anyone—all worships are contained in the Universal Form of the Lord. Likewise, all philosophical systems are contained in the Universal Form. Thus, all and everything is verily included in the Lord. There is nothing whatsoever besides God—in this conviction lies the whole [message of the] Gītā.

The highest principle of all in the Gītā is—*‘Vāsudeva (God) is all there is’ ‘Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam’—7.19*. That is, all is verily God only. Regarding the world, there are many differences in the views of various philosophers. Some believe in the perspective of non-causality or no creation (*ajātvād*), some believe in the ‘perception-creation theory’ that ‘all what is seen exists and depends on the seer’ (*dṛṣṭisṛṣṭivād*), some look at it from perspective ‘the effect is merely an apparent transformation of its cause’ (*virvaratavād*), others believe in the perspective that ‘the effect is the real *parinama* (or transformation) of the cause (*parināmvād*), yet others look at the world from the

perspective of the origination (*ārambhavād*). But the Gītā does not believe in any system (*vād*), and instead accepts '**Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam**' as the main principle. In '**Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam**,' all controversies, opinions come to an end. As long as there remains a subtle trace of egoism, till then there remain differences between philosophers and philosophical systems. But in '**Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam**,' there remains not even the subtlest trace of sense of 'I' (egoism or pride).

Accepting any other reality besides One God-Reality gives birth to the inclination to engage in actions (*pravṛtti* or life of activity); and with the ending of the acceptance of 'second reality' comes steadfastness in the inclination to renunciation (*nivṛtti* or life of renunciation). The arising of the desire to engage in actions is indulgence (*bhoga*); the steadfastness in renunciation (of the desire for actions) is *Yōg*. The Gītā accepts and gives importance only to the principle, that 'All is verily God.' In order to express that 'I-and-only-I' alone pervade in the universe—in the form of cause, effect, glory, and by way of all the forms—Śrī Bhagavān has described His glories at four places in the Bhagavad Gītā (in the seventh, ninth, tenth, and fifteenth chapter). The Absolute *Brahman* (attributeless-formless); the whole of *Adhyātama* (infinite beings of infinite life-forms); the entire field of action or *Karma* (the entire gamut of creation, preservation, dissolution, etc.); the *Adhibhūta* (the entire field of matter comprising five

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elements including our physical body); the *Adhidaiva* (the support of mind, senses etc. as the Brahma, demi-gods, etc.); and *Adhiyajña* (the indwelling controller, Lord Vishnu, and all His forms)—all these in their entirety are included under ‘**Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam**’ (seventh chapter, verses 29-30). It means that, *Sat* (existent), *Asat* (non-existent) and whatever is beyond *Sat* and *Asat*, all that is God only—‘You are that which is existent, that which is non-existent, and also that which is beyond both’: ‘**tvam akṣaram sad asat tatparam yat**’ (Gītā 11/37). The world is perceived on account of its attraction and attachment. Due to attachment, identification, etc., one verily perceives a second reality. If there is no attachment, one perceives nothing besides One Supreme Being. For example, Śrī Bhagavān has said—‘And it is I who remain seated in the heart of all’: ‘**sarvasya cāhaṃ hṛdi samniviṣṭo**’ (Gītā 15.15). In the same heart wherein God is seated, reside attraction and aversion (*rāga-dvēṣa*), disturbance, and unrest. It is the heart which feels the joy and it is the same heart which feels the sorrow. During the churning of the ocean, both the poison and the Nectar arose at the same place. The Lord Śiva drank the poison and the Nectar manifested itself. Similarly when we let go of attachment and aversion (*rāga-dvēṣa*), God manifests. Attachment and aversion do not reside in the heart of saints and seers; that is, God resides in their heart.

God is all there is—this is meditation with open eyes. In this, one does not need to close one’s eyes (as in *dhyāna*); or to close one’s ears (as in *nādānusandhān*); or to close one’s nose (as in *prānāyāma*). This is neither affected by the union nor by the separation; neither by someone’s coming nor by someone’s leaving. *When God is all there is, then where would the other come from, and how?*

The Gītā believes in the Integral Universal Being; that is why, the Gītā begins and ends in surrender or refuge in God (*śarnāgati*). One attains to the Integral Being only through *śarnāgati*. Despite that all forms comprise a part of God’s Integral Form, still there is primacy of God’s form with attributes (*saguṇa*). It is because *nirguṇa* comes under the scope of *saguṇa*; *saguṇa* does not come under the scope of *nirguṇa*, since the attributes are denied under *nirguṇa*. Thus, only *saguṇa* (God with attributes) can be the Integral Universal Being.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Integral Universal Being—‘Know Me in entirety and without any doubt:’ ***‘asamśayaṃ samagraṃ māṃ’*** (Gītā 7.1). The Gītā is the Divine Voice of the Integral; that is why the Gītā contains all and everything. In whatever manner a person approaches the Gītā, the Gītā appears to that person in that very manner—‘In whatever manner people worship Me, even so do I respond to them:’ ***ye yathā māṃ prapadyante tāṃs tathaiva bhajāmyaham*** (Gītā 4.11)

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Some scholars regard the following order of practising the spiritual disciplines (*Yōgas*) to be the proper order: '*Karmayōg-Jñānayōg-Bhaktiyōg*.'⁴ While others consider '*Jñānayōg-Karmayōg-Bhaktiyōg*' to be the proper sequence for practising these disciplines. But the Gītā considers the proper sequence of the disciplines to be: '*Jñānayōg-Karmayōg-Bhaktiyōg*.' The Gītā considers the path of action (*Karmayōg*) as special as compared to the path of knowledge (*Jñānayōg*)—'The discipline of action is superior to the discipline of knowledge:' '***tayos tu karmasamnyāsāt karmayōgo viśiṣyate***' (5.2). It is because, although practising *Karmayōg* is possible without *Jñānayōg*—'It is through proper action (i.e., without attachment) alone that Janaka and other wise persons reached perfection:' '***karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ***' (3.20); 'all actions performed merely for the sake of sacrifice get destroyed completely (that is, actions performed as sacrifice do not bind):'***yajñāyācarataḥ karma samagram pravilīyate***' (4.23); however, practising *Jñānayōg* without *Karmayōg* is difficult—'It is hard to attain perfection in *Jñānayōg* without first engaging in the discipline of *Karmayōg*:' '***samnyāsas tu mahābāho duḥkham āptum ayōgtah***' (5.6). In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* also, the sequence is stated as follows: *Jñānayōg-Karmayōg-Bhaktiyōg*.⁵

⁴ That is, the path of action (*Karmayōg*), the path of knowledge (*Jñānayōg*), and the path of devotion (*Bhaktiyōg*).

⁵ ***Yōgas trayo mayaa proktaa narnaam shreyo-vidhitsaya;***

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There is one more unique point in this regard: the Gītā regards both *Karmayōg* and *Jñānayōg* to be *samakaksha* (belonging to the same category) and ‘*laukika*’ *sādhans* (‘worldly disciplines’—pertaining to the world: *jagat*—in *Karmayōg*; and the embodied being—*jīva*—in *Jñānayōg*)—‘In this world, I have enunciated two courses of spiritual disciplines:’ **‘lokesmin dvividhā niṣṭhā’** (3.3). Both the perishable (the world) and the imperishable (the embodied soul) are *laukika* (belonging to the world)—‘In the world there are two types of entities (*puruṣas*)—perishable (bodies of all beings) and the imperishable (souls):’ **‘dvāv imau puruṣau loke kṣaraś cākṣara eva ca’** (15.16). However, the Lord is ‘*alaukika*’ (of ‘transcendental’ nature)—‘The Supreme Person, the Imperishable Lord, is distinct from both:’ **‘uttamaḥ puruṣas tv anyah’** (15.17). The *Karmayōg* proceeds keeping in view the perishable (*kṣara*) while *Jñānayōg* proceeds keeping the imperishable (*akṣara*) in view. However, the *Bhaktiyōg* proceeds keeping the Supreme Lord in view; therefore, *Bhaktiyōg* is a transcendental (*alaukika*) discipline.

Jnaanam karma ca bhaktis ca nopaayo anyo asti kutracit.
(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 11.20.6)

‘I have enunciated three paths for those who want to attain spiritual welfare—the Path of Knowledge (*Jñānayōga*), the Path of Selfless Actions (*Karmayōga*), and the Path of Devotion (*Bhaktiyōga*). Besides these three, there is absolutely no other path for the spiritual advancement of human beings.’

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The Gītā has regarded *Bhaktiyōg* to be the best among all disciplines (*yōgs*)—‘One who devoutly worships Me is considered the best even among all the *yōgis*:’ **‘śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām sa me yuktatamo mataḥ** (6.37). The devotion (*bhakti*) of the Gītā is not dualistic; rather it is non-dualistic (*advait*) in nature. Essentially speaking, there is (inherent) dualism in *jñāna* and there is a sense of oneness in the *bhakti*. It is because, in *jñāna*, there is duality of sentience and insentience (*jada-chetan*), body and soul (*śarīr-śarīrī*), existent and non-existent (*sat-asat*), matter and spirit (*Prakṛti and Puruṣa*) etc. But in *bhakti*, there is only God—‘God is all:’ **‘Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam**’ (7.19)—‘I am being and non-being both:’ **‘sad asac cāham**’ (9.19). The Lord has mentioned *bhakti* even while describing the means to knowledge—‘unflinching devotion to Me:’ **‘mayi cānanyayōgena**’ (13.10). And *bhakti* is also enjoined as a strategy to transcend the modes of material nature—‘constantly worshiping Me through the *Yog* of unswerving devotion:’ **‘mām ca yoyabhicāreṇa bhaktiyōgena sevate**’ (14.26). One also attains to supreme devotion (*parābhakti*) through consummation in Knowledge (*jñāna kī prānīsthā*)—‘attains to My Devotion Supreme:’ **‘madbhaktim labhate parām**’ (18.54). Through this supreme devotion, one is able to realize all three aspects of the Lord—‘able to be known and seen in essence, and also be entered into:’ **‘jñātum draṣṭum ca tattvena praveṣṭum ca paraṃtapa** (11.54). The Lord blesses His devotee conferring in

effect both *Karmayōg* and *Jñānayōg*—I grant that *Yōg* of wisdom (equanimity) by which they reach Me:’ **‘dadāmi buddhiyōgṃ taṃ yena mām upayānti te’** (10.10); ‘I dispel the darkness born of ignorance with the luminous lamp of Knowledge:’ **‘nāśayāmy ātmabhāvastho jñānadīpena bhāsvatā’** (10.11). The Lord has called His devotee to be the best *Yōgi*— ‘...is considered by Me to be the best *Yōgi*:’ **‘sa me yuktatamo mataḥ’** (6.47); ‘they are considered to be the most perfect *yōgis* according to me:’ **‘te me yuktatamā matāḥ’** (12.2); ‘such a *Yōgi* is considered to be the highest of all:’ **‘sa yōgī paramo mataḥ’** (6.32). The *bhakti* is also present in the *Dhyānayōg*— ‘...having Me as the supreme goal:’ **‘yukta āsīta matparah’** (6.14). The Lord has also mentioned *bhakti* in the context of *Karmayōg*—‘...remaining focused on Me:’ **‘yukta āsīta matparah’** (2.61). The Lord has mentioned (reliance on) His devotion (*bhakti*) in the context of all the disciplines (*yōgs*)—this is the distinction of *bhakti*! Arjuna’s question was not related to devotion; still the Lord has described about devotion out of His own will (verses 56-66 of chapter 18). One attains to the Integral Supreme Lord through devotion (verses 29-30 of chapter 7).

We find the seventh, the ninth, and the fifteenth chapter; the beginning of the tenth chapter, and verses 56-66 of the eighteenth chapter to be very unique. There is no mention of ‘Arjuna said’ (**‘Arjuna uvāca’**) in these chapters and/or verses. The Lord,

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out of His boundless compassion, has recited these from His own side.

In the Gītā, under the description of *Karmayōg*, *Jñānayōg* and *Bhaktiyōg* are implicit; under the description of *Jñānayōg*, *Karmayōg* and *Bhaktiyōg* are implicit; and under the description of the *Bhaktiyōg*, *Karmayōg* and *Jñānayōg* are implicit. It means that, whatever discipline a spiritual aspirant may practice [to perfection], he or she attains the result of all three disciplines (*yōgs*). In other words, such an aspirant attains both liberation (*mukṭi*) and devotion (*bhakti*). It is because both the Higher Nature (*parā*) and the Lower (*aparā*) Nature (*Prakṛtis*)⁶ verily belong to God. The *Jñānayōg* proceeds by taking into consideration the higher (*parā*) material nature; the *Karmayōg* proceeds by taking into consideration the lower material nature (*aparā*). Therefore, one attains to perfection in all the three disciplines (*yōgs*) by perfecting any one discipline (*yōg*). But there is one condition though; that is, the spiritual aspirant should not insist on (and be biased about) his or her own spiritual discipline and should not condemn other spiritual disciplines; or consider another's view to be

⁶ The '*parā Prakṛti*' is the 'higher spiritual nature'; that is, the sentient soul which sustains the '*aparā Prakṛti*.' The '*aparā Prakṛti*' is the lower material nature, the non-sentient matter. Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains them as above and further elaborates that the lower material nature is made up of eight constituents—Five gross entities—viz., Sky, Air, Fire, Water, and Earth and three subtle entities of Mind, Intellect, and Ego. (Gītā 7.4-5)

of lesser value. By insisting on one’s own view, and by considering another’s view to be of lesser value or by condemning it, the spiritual aspirant may come to the knowledge of essential reality (*tattva-jñāna*) but that aspirant will not attain the devotion supreme or the love supreme (*param-prem*)—that is, such an aspirant will not attain the integral universality (*samagaratā*). According to the teachings of the Gītā, through *Karmayōg* and *Jñānayōg*, one attains salvation (*mukti*); and through *Bhaktiyōg*, one attains to the Love Supreme (*param-prem*). *And in the attainment of that Love Supreme lies the fulfillment of human life.*

Gītā-Māhātmya

***Gītā me hṛdayam Pārtha Gītā me
sāramuttamam;***

***Gītā me jñānamatyugraṁ Gītā me
jñānamavyayam.***

***Gītā me ca uttamam sthānam Gītā me paramam
padam;***

***Gītā me paramam guhyam Gītā me paramo
guruḥ.***

***Gītāśraye’haṁ tishthāmi Gītā me paramam
gṛham;***

Gītājñānam samāśṛtya trilōkaṁ pālayāmyaham.

(Vaiṣṇavīyatāntrasāra)

(Śrī Bhagavān said—)

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O Pārtha! The Gītā is My very heart; the Gītā is My supreme essence.

The Gītā is my utmost effulgent and imperishable [transcendental] knowledge.

The Gītā is my supreme place indeed; the Gītā is My supreme state.

The Gītā is my supremely secret mystery; the Gītā is My supreme teacher.

I take refuge in the Gītā; and the Gītā is My supreme abode.

I sustain the three worlds with the knowledge of the Gītā.



Uniqueness of the Gītā

The *Upanishads* represent the essence of all the *Vedas* and the *Gītā* is the essence of the *Upanishads*. Despite being the essence of the *Upanishads*, the *Gītā* is a very extra-ordinary (*alaukika*) scripture. Like in the mango tree, the sap or sapidity is present from its roots to its leaves; still, the sweetness that is present in the fruit is not found in its branches and leaves. Likewise, despite being the essence of all the scriptures, *Vedas*, and *Upanishads*, the uniqueness (*vilakṣantā*) that is present in the *Gītā* is not found in the scriptures, *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, etc. Therefore, the *Gītā* is an independent scripture. Its doctrine is not dependent on the scriptures. Thus, **one will not be able to understand the teachings of the Gītā on the strength of their study of the scriptures. The special knowledge of the scriptures will actually hamper the understanding of the Gītā; the meaning and implications of the Gītā will not be understood properly.** It is because the prior impressions (*saṅskār*) and ideas that have been formed based on the scriptures, sects etc., do not change so easily.

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The Gītā is not enunciated from the perspective of scholarship, but verily for the purpose of spiritual welfare of all human beings. The Lord has scorned Arjuna for empty scholarship—‘you speak like the learned:’ ***‘prajñāvādāmś ca bhāṣase’*** (2.11). Thus, to understand the Gītā, it is the desire for liberation that matters the most and not the knowledge of the scriptures, competence, intelligence, etc. **If one is interested in understanding the Gītā, then one should first give up insistence on any scripture, sect etc., and study the Gītā, approaching it as quite unlearned, relying exclusively on the grace of God.**

The Gītā is a scripture that is blessed with the divine grace (*ek prasādik grantha*). This scripture spontaneously blesses the one who has taken refuge in it; and generously manifests itself, revealing its meaning. I have seen such people who had no knowledge of the Sanskrit language but were still able to explain its meaning. Without any knowledge of the language, the meaning and the implications of the doctrine of the Gītā were revealed in their heart. About sixty to sixty five years ago, there was an accountant who used to live in Calcutta. He did not know how to write correctly in Hindi. One day, he said that he wanted to memorize the Gītā. But he did not have the means to pay for a teacher to help him. I told him that he should start reading the Gītā with a reverential mind, having taken refuge in the Lord. He went home and, placing the

picture of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in front of him, devoutly burnt incense etc. He set about to reading the Gītā after uttering the words ‘I bow down to Lord Krishna, the teacher of the entire world:’ ***Kṛṣṇam vande jagadgurum.*** He memorized the Gītā in a very little time. I have heard him recite all the eighteen chapters of the Gītā. There were very few errors in his recitation.

One cannot memorize the Gītā on the strength of one’s scholarship alone. I also have such examples before me. There used to be a good scholar who was highly knowledgeable about the *Rāmāyana*. On the auspicious day of the Gītā *Jayantī*, he became interested in the Gītā after listening to my talks about the Gītā. He indicated that once he hears a verse from anybody, he is able to remember it; thus, he expressed the desire to know the import of the Gītā. I asked him to come back after having memorized chapter twelve of the Gītā so that I could explain its meaning to him. He met with me after a few days and indicated that even after having tried very hard, he had not been able to memorize the Gītā. I understood that the reason why he had not been able to memorize the Gītā was his pride only—that he considered himself so learned that he could memorize the verses so very easily. Such pride is a great impediment on the spiritual path. One who humbly surrenders to (and takes refuge in) the Gītā in a simple, straightforward manner, such a person is able to understand the essence of the Gītā.

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When one reads and recites the Gītā, having first reverently surrendered to it, very distinctive, peaceful, and extraordinary ideas become evident spontaneously. One feels great peace just by reciting the Gītā with an attentive mind. One method for such recitation is as follows: First one should memorize all the verses of the Gītā, fully comprehending their meaning. Then, sitting in a secluded place, without looking at the book, one should recite the entire Gītā in the reverse order, starting from its last verse— **‘yatra yōgeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo.’** ‘wherever there is Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Yog...’ to its first verse— **‘dharmakṣetre kurukṣetre.’** ‘on the sacred land of Kurukṣetra.’ By reciting the Gītā in this manner one will experience great peace of mind. By reciting the entire Gītā once or several times every day, its special meaning becomes evident. And if there are any doubts, they get resolved on their own while one is reciting the Gītā.

In fact, no one is capable of describing the glory of the Gītā. Who can describe the glory of the infinitely glorious scripture? **What were to be said through infinite voices, the Lord has said it through one voice in the Gītā!** That is why the Gītā’s commentator, Śrīdharaswāmī writes—

**çeñāçeña-mukha-vyākhyā-cāturaà tv eka-
vaktrataù |
dadhānam adbhutaà vande paramānanda-
mādhavam ||**

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I bow down to the Omnipotent Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of supreme bliss, who by His own mouth expressed what had been taught with dexterity by *Seshanāga*'s innumerable mouths.



Procedure of Utilization of the Gītā's Verses

Whatever verse of the Gītā needs to be perfected, recite the entire Gītā with the '*Sampuṭa*' of that verse. By doing so, that verse (*mantra*) will get perfected.

Even as compared to the *Sampuṭa* recitation, to do the recitation of the Gītā with '*Sampuṭa-valli*' is vastly better. To recite the verse once that needs to be perfected both before and after each verse of the Gītā is called '*Sampuṭa* recitation;' and to recite it twice is called '*Sampuṭa-valli* recitation.'

If for some reason one has not been able to perfect a mantra and there is an intense desire to fulfill a desired task, then the desire can be fulfilled by reciting the mantra even while it is being perfected.

To accomplish the desired task, recite the mantra perfected in the foregoing manner while standing in the water of the holy Ganges. If this is not so possible, then make a seat of stones in the Ganges, and spreading a seat of wool over it, chant the verse sitting over that seat. Even if that also cannot be possible, then one should chant the mantra sitting on a wool seat spread on the sand at the bank of the Ganges. If proximity of the Ganges is not

available, then, in your own house, prepare a seat in a secluded room applying cow's dung and cow's urine mixed in water on the floor. Then spread your seat of wool over it and do the recitation of the mantra sitting on it.

The perfected mantras of the Gītā can be used in [the accomplishment of] the following tasks—

- (1) To ask something from God, or to find a solution to some problem: 'should I follow the path of knowledge or devotion,'—if this matter needs to be resolved, then sit in a secluded room at night on the wool seat. Turn the lights off in the room. Only light one incense stick. In the dark, keep you vision focused on the incense stick glowing in the dark and meditate on God. The Lord is standing right in front of me, and I, in the guise of Arjuna, am asking Lord Kṛṣṇa—keeping this sentiment one should recite the following verse and simultaneously go on contemplating its meaning—

***kārpaṇyadoṣopahatasvabhāvaḥ
pṛcchāmi tvām dharmasaṃmūḍhacetāḥ
yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṃ brūhi tan me
śiṣyastehaṃ śādhi mām tvām prapannam***
(Gītā 2.7)

'My [warrior-] nature has been overcome by faint-heartedness; and my mind is confused with regard to duty. Therefore, I pray to You to tell me that which is decidedly good for me; I am your disciple. Please instruct me, who have taken refuge in you.'

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While doing the recitation, start reciting that very part of the verse which your mind feels interested in at the time; for example— ***‘ṛcchāmi tvāṃ dharmasaṃmūḍhacetāḥ; ṛcchāmi tvāṃ dharmasaṃmūḍhacetāḥ;’*** or ***‘nīscitaṃ brūhi tan me; nīscitaṃ brūhi tan me;’*** or ***‘śādhi māṃ tvāṃ prapannam; śādhi māṃ tvāṃ prapannam;’***—keep repeating one phrase like this. If you start feeling sleepy, then fall asleep while doing the recitation. By doing so, one gets the hint by the Lord during sleep. From that hint, one should understand that this is verily God’s intent. If the hint is not clearly understandable, then recite the mantra again the next day and pray to God, O Lord! Kindly please provide the hint in writing. By doing so, the hint will appear in writing during the dream. If the written hint is not clearly understood, then recite the mantra again the next day and pray to God, O Lord! Kindly please provide the hint by saying it. By doing so, you will hear the voice during the dream and with the voice you will wake up.

If you do not get such a dream at night, then according to the foregoing procedure, recite the verse daily during the night. This recitation can be done for eleven or twenty-one days. In this, the greater the intensity of interest, the sooner the desire gets fulfilled.

- (2) If there are two matters that are bothering and need to be resolved, then get the following verse perfected according to the procedure stated above—

***vyāmiśreṇeva vākyena buddhiṃ
mohayasīva me
tad ekaṃ vada niścitya yena śreyoḥam
āpnuyām***

(Gītā 3.2)

- (3) To remove the affliction of ghosts etc., get the following verse perfected according to the procedure stated above—

***sthāne hṛṣīkeśa tava prakīrtiyā
jagat prahṛṣyaty anurajyate ca
rakṣāṃsi bhītāni diśo dravanti
sarve namasyanti ca siddhasaṃghāḥ*** (Gītā
11.36)

He who has been afflicted by the ghost etc., that person, while reciting this verse should do the *jhāḍā* with the feathers of the peacock; or, taking a vessel full of pure water in the hand, keep blowing on the water while reciting this verse and then give the water to the affected person to drink. In both of these experiments, this verse can be recited for seven times or twenty-one times or one hundred and eight times. Write this verse with *astha-gantha* on the *bhoja*-leave or white paper with pen made from the twig of pomegranate; and enclosing it in an amulet with red thread, put it on the neck of the patient.

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- (4) To gain victory in scriptural polemic, disputation, recite the following verse—

**yatra yōgeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho
dhanurdharaḥ**

tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītir matir mama
(Gītā 18.78)

- (5) To have the divine perception everywhere, recite the following two verses—

**mattaḥ parataraṃ nānyat kiṃcid asti dhanamjaya
mayi sarvam idaṃ protaṃ sūtre maṇigaṇā iva**

(Gītā 7.7)

**bahūnāṃ janmanām ante jñānavān māṃ
prapadyate**

**vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā
sudurlabhaḥ** (Gītā 7.19)

- (6) To attain to the devotion of the Lord, recite any one of the following verses—

**manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī māṃ
namaskuru**

**mām evaiśyasi yuktvaivam ātmānaṃ
matparāyaṇaḥ** (9.34)

**bhaktiyā tv ananyayā śakya aham evaṃvidhorjuna
jñātum draṣṭum ca tattvena praveṣṭum ca
paramtapa** (Gītā 11.54)

**matkarmaḥṇ matparamo madbhaktaḥ
saṅgavarjitāḥ**

nirvairah sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ sa mām eti pāṇḍava
(Gītā 11.55)

mayy eva mana ādhatsva mayi buddhiṃ niveśaya
nivasiṣyasi mayy eva ata ūrdhvaṃ na
saṃśayaḥ (Gītā 12.8)

manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām
namaskuru
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṃ te pratijāne priyosi me
(Gītā 18.65)
sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṃ śaraṇaṃ
vraja
ahaṃ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayaiṣyāmi mā
śucaḥ (18.66)

In this manner, whatever verses seems appropriate for whatever purpose, by reciting that verse, the respective task can be fulfilled. If that verse is of Arjuna, then keeping the mental attitude of Arjuna, pray to the Lord; and if the verse is of the Lord, then recite the verse keeping the sentiment that ‘the Lord is addressing me.’ The greater the trust and faith in the verses of the Gītā, the sooner will the task get fulfilled.



A Female Ghost ran away with the influence of the Gītā

What to say of the merit of listening to and studying the Gītā, there is a great value of merely keeping the Gītā [with oneself]. There was a soldier. He was coming to his home from somewhere. On the way, in the moon light, he saw a beautiful woman sitting under a tree. When he talked to the woman, she said—May I come with you? The soldier said—Yes, you can. Hearing this, that woman, who was in fact a female ghost, followed the soldier. Now she would come to the soldier every night, sleep with him, and leave in the morning. In this manner, she started exploiting the soldier. Once they were lying down in the bed and the light was on. The soldier said to her to turn the light off. She, while lying down, [mysteriously] extended her arm and turned the light off. Now the soldier realized that she was not an ordinary woman; she was a female ghost indeed. He became scared. The female ghost threatened him that she would kill him if he told anyone about her. In this manner, she used to come at night time and leave in the morning. The soldier's body started becoming weaker and weaker day by day. People started asking him that why he had been losing so much weight and

getting so weak. They will ask, what's the matter? But being scared of the female ghost, he would not tell anyone anything.

One day, the soldier went to a shop to fetch some medicine. The shopkeeper gave him the medicine in a small packet, wrapped in a piece of paper. The soldier went home after putting that small packet of medicine in his pocket. At night when the female ghost came, she, while standing far off, asked the soldier to throw out that small packet of medicine out of his pocket. The soldier became convinced that there must be some mysterious power in the small packet of medicine that he had in his pocket; that is why the female ghost is not coming near him. The soldier told her that he will not throw away the packet of medicine. The female ghost insisted on it a lot, but the soldier did not listen to her at all. When she could not prevail on the soldier, she went away. When the soldier took the small packet of medicine out of his pocket and started looking at it, he noticed that the medicine was wrapped in a torn page of the Gītā. Realizing the great effect of the Gītā in this manner, the soldier started keeping the Gītā in his pocket all the time. That female ghost never came back to him again.



Glory of the Gītā's Recitation

Someone asked that how much minimum spiritual practice a person should do. I told him that he should do at least that much that he did not fall below [the level] where he was at the time. As we have the human form now; so, after death we should at least get the human form. For this, the solution is that every day one should recite the Gītā. It is because the person who recites the Gītā every day, indeed, receives the human form again after death—

***adhyayam sloka padam va nityam yah pathate
narah***

sa yati naratam yavan manvantaram vasundhare
(Varaha Purana)

If one reads a quarter of a chapter or even part of a verse daily, he, O Earth, retains a human body till the end of a world-cycle.

Therefore, every human being must at least recite the following five verses of the Gītā daily—

***ajopi sann avyayātmā bhūtānām īśvaropi san
prakṛtiṃ svām adhiṣṭhāya saṃbhavāmy
ātmamāyayā***

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānaṃ sṛjāmy
aham*

*paritrāṇāya sādḥunāṃ vināsāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharmasaṃsthāpanārthāya saṃbhavāmi yuge
yuge*

*janma karma ca me divyam evaṃ yo vetti
tattvataḥ*

*tyaktvā dehaṃ punarjanma naiti mām eti sorjuna
vītarāgabhayakrodhā manmayā mām upāśritāḥ
bahavo jñānapasā pūtā madbhāvam āgatāḥ*

(Gītā 4.6-10)



Drops of Nectar from the Gītā

1. The gist of the Gītā lies in—‘**Vāsudevaḥ Sarvam**’ (7.19): ‘The Lord that pervades all and everything (*Vāsudevaḥ*) is all there is.’
2. The Gītā has regarded devotion (*bhakti*) to be the best of all spiritual disciplines—‘**sa me yuktatamo mataḥ**’ (6.47): ‘[Of all the *Yōgis*, the one who devoutly worships Me, with mind fixed on Me, such a *Yōgi*] is considered by Me to be the best *Yōgi*.’ The devotion of the Gītā is not dualistic but non-dualistic.
3. In the Gītā, the word ‘*Yōg*’ especially refers to ‘*Karmayōg*;⁷—the discipline of selfless actions.
4. The Gītā accepts the following sequence of spiritual disciplines—first *Jñānayōg*, then *Karmayōg*, and then *Bhaktiyōg*.

⁷ Swāmī Rāmsukhdāsī used to say that the word *Yōg* (union) should more properly be used in the context of *Karmayōg* because, with regards to the Paths of Knowledge (*Jñānayōg*) and Devotion (*Bhaktiyōg*), the ‘union’ is quite natural. The Seer, after realizing that God is all, remains naturally established in the experience of Oneness; and the devotee likewise constantly experiences reverential union with the Lord by keeping the mind and the thoughts fixed on God. It is because the path of actions is marred by selfish desire (and attachment to results) that we need to ‘attain union’—*yōg*—through *Karmayōg*.

5. The Gītā's *Karmayōg*, *Jñānayōg*, and *Bhaktiyōg*—all of these three disciplines are independent of the 'instruments' (*karan-nirapekṣa*) such as the 'senses' and the inner faculty (*aṅtahkaran*)—that is, these *Yōgs* are accomplished through one's own 'self.'
6. The Gītā regards 'Yōg' as an axiomatic state of natural self-abidance in equanimity that is ever free from its affinity with mind's modifications. Once one is established in that of state of equanimity—the perpetual state of eternal union (*nityayōg*), there is never a separation from it, nor there is relapse or deviation from it.
7. The entire Gītā is within the domain of righteousness or natural moral duty (*dharma*);⁸ by following one's natural moral duty, one is able to honor the principles of the Gītā. And by performing dutiful deeds according to the doctrines of the Gītā, one is able to fulfill one's *dharma*.
8. When one is ecstatic and blissful, one spontaneously starts singing a song (Gītā). Likewise, the Lord has sung the Gītā in a state of ecstasy—that is why it is called the Gītā (or song). Although according to the rules of the Sanskrit grammar, its name should have been '*Gītam*;' yet being of the form of an *Upanishad*, the feminine word 'Gītā' has been used.

⁸ It is interesting to note that the first letter of the first word of the first *śloka* of the Gītā—'*dharmakṣetre*' (1.1)—and the last letter of the last word of the last *śloka* of the Gītā—'*mama*' (18.78)—virtually form the word '*dharma*.' Hence, the *dharma* (innate moral duty or righteousness) is the province of the entire Gītā!

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9. The teachings of the Gītā begin with the discrimination of the body (*sharīr*) and the indwelling self (*sharīrī*).⁹ While other philosophical treatises describe the 'self' and the 'non-self' in an objective manner, the Gītā, instead of describing the 'self' and the 'non-self' objectively, describes '*deha-dehi*,' '*sharīr-sharīrī*' (the physical body and its owner) based on the personal experience of every one. This is the uniqueness of the Gītā.
10. By pondering over the meaning and import of the Gītā, it becomes evident that the path of knowledge (*Sāṅkhyayōg*) and the path of action (*Karmayōg*) are two independent disciplines. They are not dependent upon any social classification (*varṇa*) or stage of life (*āśrama*) at all.
11. The Gītā teaches the unique art of attaining the highest spiritual good amidst the practical affairs; by which one can, under every situation, performing all ordained actions, verily attain one's spiritual welfare.
12. One will attain the same goal (God-realization) by conducting oneself according to the Gītā that has been attained by the sages and seers by undergoing years and years of spiritual regimen. Performing one's [allotted] duties unselfishly, remaining equanimous in success and failure, is verily conducting oneself according to the Gītā.

⁹ Swāmī Rāmsukhdāsī avers that salvation is possible only by discriminating the 'self' from the 'body.' So long as one holds to the idea 'I-am-the-body,' one may listen to all the scriptures, may even preach them to others, or may practice spiritual disciplines, salvation is not possible. *Sādhaka-Saṅgīvanī*, p. 78.

13. In the Gītā’s estimation, to be able to focus the mind is no big deal. The big deal according to the Gītā is the evenness of mind or the equanimity (*samatā*). Whether other characteristics are accomplished or not, if a person is able to attain equanimity, that person is a *siddha* (perfected being) according to the Gītā. The Gītā does not regard that person a *siddha* who has cultivated all other qualities but lacks the essential equanimity!¹⁰
14. This is the unique style (*shailī*) of the Gītā that by whatever spiritual discipline (*sādhan*)—*Karmayōg*, *Bhaktiyōg*, etc.—a spiritual aspirant may become fulfilled, that fulfillment is described by that very discipline in the most complete measure [in the Gītā].
15. In the Gītā, wherever Arjuna has asked a question from the standpoint of the prominence of activity (*kriyā kī pradhāntā*), the Lord has answered it from the

¹⁰ According to Swāmī Rāmsukhdāsji, evenness of mind or equanimity (*samatā*) is the ‘acid-test’ of realization according to all three disciplines (*Karmayōg*, *Jñānayōg*, *Bhaktiyōg*). In the Bhagavad Gītā, the very first definition of *Yōg* (communion with Divine) is said to be ‘*samatā*’—‘*samatvam yōgah ucyate*’ (BG 2.48). Then in BG 6.23, we read ‘*dukha-sanjog-viyōg yōg sanjittam*’—That state is called *Yōg* which transcends the contact of sorrow. This is the “dexterity/skillfulness” in actions—‘*yōga karmsu kaushalam*’ (BG 2.50). Swāmī Rāmsukhdāsji states that the verses 2.48 and 6.23 “define” what the *Yōg* is according to the Gītā; and the verse 2.50 states the glory of *Yōg*. So, *Yōg* according to the Gītā is *samatā*. An important half verse (BG 5.19) states—‘*nirdoṣam hi samam brahma*’—the Absolute (Brahman) is pure and distinction-less/equanimous. When our mind has become pure and our intellect ‘*sama*’—‘balanced and equanimous’—we have attained oneness with the highest principle of existence. Such is the supreme importance of *samatā*!

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standpoint of the primacy of faith or feeling (*bhāv*) and realization (*bodha*). It is because in activity, it is verily the feeling or conviction and the understanding [or realization] that are primary.

16. By a careful study of the Gītā, it becomes evident that dependence on God [or surrender to God] is the primary cause of success in any spiritual discipline. Thus, dependence on God is highly extolled in the Gītā.
17. The teachings of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā are based on the experience of all of the humankind.
18. Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā teaches the art of attaining spiritual perfection while conducting oneself in the practical matters—the art of supreme fulfillment through secular behavior. Its intent is to urge one to perform dutiful deeds, and not to renounce them. That's why the Lord has spoken about performing actions in the context of both the disciplines—*Karmayōg* and *Jñānayōg*.
19. Many people consider only the activities of the gross body to be actions; but the Gītā considers the activities of the mind to be actions also. The Gītā has regarded all of the activities of the body, mind, and speech to be actions—***śarīravānmanobhir yat karma prārabhate naraḥ*** (Gītā 18.15): whatever actions man performs with the mind, speech and body.
20. In the Gītā, the organs of cognition or knowledge (*jñāna-indriyās*) are included under the organs of action (*karma-indriyās*). That is why, the word '*karma-indriya*' is mentioned in the Gītā but the word '*jñāna-*

indriya’ is nowhere mentioned in the Gītā. In the verses 8-9 of the fifth chapter, activities of the ‘*jñāna-indriyās*’ such as seeing, hearing, touching, etc., are also included under the activities of the *karma-indriyās*. This proves that the Gītā verily considers the *jñāna-indriyās* to be the *karma-indriyās* also. The Gītā also regards the activities of the mind as actions. (Gītā 18.15)

21. Whether one should renounce actions or not—this is not really the doctrine of the Gītā. According to the Gītā, it is verily the attachment to actions (being a fault) that needs to be renounced.
22. The Gītā, according to its teaching methodology, first interprets the presented topic; then it tells the benefit in doing it and the harm in not doing it; after that, it commands to commence it.
23. According to the Gītā, all of action is called an offering or a ‘sacrifice’ (*yajñā*¹¹).
24. In the Gītā, the Lord’s teaching methodology has been that he describes diverse characteristics of God-Realized, perfected great-souls based on diverse characteristics of the spiritual aspirants following diverse paths to God-realization.
25. It is the teaching methodology of the Gītā that the Lord briefly restates, in a later verse, the main point of the subject (which is especially useful for the spiritual aspirants) described in the previous verse (*śloka*).

¹¹ Action performed for the good of the others is verily of the nature of a sacrifice (*yajñā*) and is not binding in its effect.

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26. One cannot *obliterate* the flow of actions dictated by one's own nature; but one can *alter* the flow. That is, one can make it free from attachment and aversion— *this is a highly profound doctrine of the Gītā.*
27. One's own nature/duty (*Svadharmā*¹²—Gītā 3.35; 18.47) indeed has been variously called in the Gītā as spontaneous action (*sahajakarma*—Gītā 18.48), one's own action (*svakarma*—Gītā 18.46), natural or inborn action (*svabhāvajakarma*—Gītā 18.42-44).
28. In the Gītā, the Lord has discussed the *Karmayōg* in a simple and thorough manner through various effective strategies. Such a comprehensive description of *Karmayōg* is not found in the *Purāṇas* and the *Upanishads*.
29. To remain unattached while performing actions and to perform actions for the well-being of other beings while remaining unattached—both of these are indeed the principles of the Gītā.¹³

¹² *Svadharmā* (Skt., *sva*, 'own', + *dharma*, 'duty'): In Hinduism, it denotes one's own right, duty, or nature; one's own role in the social and cosmic order. *Svadharmā* is relative to one's caste and stage of life (cf. *varṇāśramadharmā*). —*The Concise Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*

¹³ To perform actions while remaining unattached is to know the truth about 'action.' To remain unattached while performing actions is to know the truth about 'non-action' (cf. Gītā 4.18). At first reading, these two sentences may appear to be implying the same thing. However, there is great difference between them. The first sentence describes the state of a *sādhaka* (seeker) and is marked by the primacy of 'action.' The second sentence signifies the state of a *siddha* (perfected being) and is marked by the primacy of '*nirliptatā*' (the state of being unattached).

30. Deep self-reflection over the meaning of the Gītā is verily the sacrifice in the form of knowledge (*svādhyāyajñānayajñā*—Gītā 4.28) according to the Gītā. To ponder over the import of the Gītā by going deep into it, to try to understand the essence of the Gītā—these are all sacrifices in the form of knowledge through the profound study of the Gītā.
31. In the Gītā, first *Sāṅkhyayōg*, then *Karmayōg*, and then *Bhaktiyōg*—is the order in which these [spiritual disciplines] are discussed.
32. While retaining the association with untruth, howsoever spiritual practice may one undertake, howsoever meditative absorption may one accomplish—or one may even go to the caves of the mountains—still one will not be termed as a *yōgī* according to the doctrine of the Gītā.
33. To become spiritual preceptor (*guru*) or to seek a *guru* is not the doctrine of the Gītā. Man himself is his own *guru*. Therefore one has to preach to oneself only. When God is all there is (*vāsudevaḥ sarvam*—Gītā 7.19), then how can anyone else become the *guru* and who should preach to whom?
34. The Gītā's *yōg* is indeed the evenness of mind (*'samatā'*)—*'samatvaṃ yōga ucyate'* (2/48). In the Gītā's view, if equanimity is attained, no other characteristic is required. That is, a person who has achieved true equanimity, in him all virtues and goodness will manifest automatically and he will triumph over the world—*'ihaiva tair jitaḥ sargo yeṣāṃ sāmye sthitaṃ manaḥ'* (Gītā 5.19): Even

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here is this world conquered by those whose mind is established in equanimity.

35. By severing the accepted relationship with the sorrowful untruth, one experiences this eternal communion (*nityayōg*). This is the main spiritual discipline (*yōg*) of the Gītā. And only to experience this *yōg*, the Gītā has described such spiritual means as *Karmayōg*, *Jñānayōg*, *Dhyanayōg*, *Bhaktiyōg*, etc.
36. In the Gītā, the Lord has primarily referred to the devotee (*bhakta*) alone as the realized soul (*jñāni*) (7/16-18); because only devotee is the ultimate and the truly realized soul.
37. The Gītā regards all of the humankind to be entitled to God-Realization and says it categorically and in so many words that howsoever sinful a person may be in the present; born of impious birth due to the past sins; and men and woman from all four social classification—all of them can attain to the Supreme goal by taking refuge in the Lord. (9.30-33)
38. In the Gītā, the Lord has used the word ‘great-soul’ (*mahātmā*) only with regard to the devotee (*bhakta*).
39. An impartial reflection proves that in the Gītā, there is no prominence of the Brahman; but there is a prominence of the *Īśvara* or the Lord.
40. In the Gītā, the Lord has not used the word ‘great-soul’ (*mahātmā*) with regard to the *Karmayōg*, *Jñānayōg*, etc. The Lord has used the word ‘great-soul’ (*mahātmā*) only with regard to the *Bhaktiyōg*. This proves that in the Gītā, the Lord considers only the *Bhaktiyōg* as the supreme [spiritual path].

41. After studying the Gītā one realizes that the Lord has sung, in a very special manner, the glory of His devotion in the Gītā.
42. Due to fact of being the harbinger of the welfare of all of the creatures, the Gītā is dear and respectable to the whole world....Arjuna is the representative of all of the creatures. Therefore, the Lord says the supreme words for the purpose of his welfare—that is, for the welfare of all of the creatures. There is no welfare of the creatures indeed other than their spiritual welfare. The nectarine words of the Lord are also the harbinger of the spiritual welfare and His purpose is also to augur the spiritual welfare. Therefore, the Lord’s words are filled with special (supreme) welfare of all of the creatures.
43. There is indeed difference of opinion in the words of others, but the Lord’s words are acceptable to all. The Lord is narrating the Gītā while being steadfast in the *Yog*; therefore, His words are especially the bestowers of spiritual welfare.
44. The description of the Lord’s Glories in the Gītā is not ancillary; rather, it is the primary means for God-Realization, whose perfection lies in ‘**vāsudevah sarvam**’—God is all there is....The purpose of the description of the Divine Glories is to do away with the reality, importance, and dearness of the cyclic existence (*saṅsāra*) and to enable man to experience the reality of ‘**vāsudevah sarvam**,’ which is the chief objective of the Gītā.
45. The Lord has revealed the Gītā verily from his own side out of His boundless compassion.

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46. In the Gītā, the matter of restraining the senses occurs in a special manner in the context of worshipping the Attributeless-Divine and *Karmayōg*; it does not occur in a special manner to this extent in the context of worshipping the Divine with attributes.
47. In the Gītā, the significance of the evenness of mind (*samabuddhi*) lies in the ‘equanimity of seeing’ (*samadarshan*) and not in the ‘equanimity of conduct’ (*samavartan*).
48. The Gītā has regarded the Divine with attributes/qualities (*saguṇa*) to be the Integral Divine Universal Being (*samagrām-rupa*); and *Brahman* (the Attributeless, Formless Absolute), *jīva* (individual soul), *karma* (the entire gamut of creation and dissolution etc.), *adhibhūta* (the entire field of creation of five elements), *adhidaiva* (*Brahmā*, demi-gods, etc.), and *adhiyajña* (basis of all sacrificial deeds)—all these have been included under the Integral Divine Universal Being (*samagrām-rupa*). (Gītā 7.29-30)
49. By studying the Gītā, it appears that the worship of the Attributeless-Absolute (*Brahman*) is the worship of one aspect of the Universal Lord in entirety (*samagrām-rupa*). And the worship of the Divine with attributes/qualities (*saguṇa*) is indeed the worship of the Universal Lord in entirety (*samagrām-rupa*).
50. It is the teaching methodology of the Gītā that it recapitulates later in a summary form the subject that has been described earlier.
51. The Gītā does not lay as much emphasis on any other spiritual means as it does on the relinquishment of the fruit of actions. The relinquishment of the fruit of

actions is also mentioned while describing other spiritual means.

52. In the Gītā, the phrase ‘pleasure-pain’ (*suḥkha-duḥkha*) occurs in the context of favorable-unfavorable situation (which is responsible for producing joy-sorrow) as well as in the context of the perturbations of ‘joy-sorrow’ taking place in the inner organ of perception (*antaḥkaraṇa*).
53. In the Gītā, wherever the matter of ‘being equanimous in pleasure-pain’ has been mentioned, it should be understood as being equanimous in the *situation* of pleasure-pain; and where the matter of ‘being free from pleasure-pain’ has been mentioned, it should be understood as ‘being free from joy-sorrow’ caused by favorable and unfavorable situation.
54. In the Gītā, the perfected great-souls are described as being ever-free from the disorders of attraction and aversion (*rāga-dvēṣa*).
55. It is a great distinctive feature of the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā that it presents its own [considered] view on a subject, without criticizing any other viewpoint.
56. The Gītā primarily calls the [attachment born of] attraction (*rāga*) to be the [binding] quality of *rajoguṇa*.¹⁴

¹⁴ *Rajōguṇa* is one of the three strands (*guṇas*) born of the material nature (*Prakṛti*), the other two being *sattvagūṇa* and *tamogūṇa*. *Sattvagūṇa* refers to qualities such as purity, goodness; *rajogūṇa* denotes such qualities as activity, passion, etc.; and *tamogūṇa* refers to qualities such as inertia, dullness, etc. The Gītā (18.40) declares that there is no being anywhere in the material world free from these three *guṇas* born of *Prakṛti*.

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57. The perishable (*kṣara*), the Imperishable (*akṣara*), and the Supreme Being (*Purṣottama*)—these three words have occurred in the Gītā in all the three gender forms (masculine, feminine, and neuter).
58. In the Gītā, the description of the Supreme Soul (*Paramātmā*) and the individual soul (*jīvātman*) is usually found in the equal measure.
59. In the Gītā, the word ‘all-knowing’ (*sarva-vit*—Gītā 15.19) has been used only with regard to the devotee (*bhakta*).¹⁵
60. In the Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā, the dialog between Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna is meant for the welfare of all of the living beings. They had the audience of *kali-yuga* before them, since the *dwāpara-yuga* was coming to an end. Arjuna has asked the questions by keeping in mind the *jīvās* who will be born next during the *kali-yuga*.
61. In the Gītā, the word *yajña* (sacrificial rite) is used in a very comprehensive manner, under which are included all dutiful actions such as sacrifice, donation, penance, fasting, etc.

Guṇa also means a rope—that which binds. All *guṇas* in some measure bind the soul to *saṅsara* (or the conditioned worldly life). *Sattvagūṇa* binds through attachment to happiness and pride of knowledge (14.6); *Rajogūṇa* binds the individual soul (*jīva*) to *saṅsara* through attachment to actions and their fruit (14.7); and *tamogūṇa* binds through heedlessness, sloth, and sleep (14.8). Hence, the Gītā extols the ideal of transcending the triad of *guṇas* (*guṇātīta*). (2.45; 14.19, 14.22-26)

¹⁵ Swāmī Rāmsukhdāsī explains that since the devotee knows both the immanent (*laukika*) and transcendental (*alaukika*) aspects of the Divine Being in entirety—that is why the devotee is all-knowing (*sarva-vit*).—Gītā Prabōdhani, pp. 443-444.

62. It is a remarkable matter that the *sattvaguṇa* described in the Gītā becomes 'truth' (or attributeless) being capable of directing us toward God by severing our relationship with the [ever-turning wheel of] cyclic existence (*saṅsara*).
63. By studying the Gītā from start to finish, one gathers the impression that its only purpose is to bring about the spiritual welfare of all of the humankind.
64. According to the Gītā, to work for the welfare of others is verily the 'sacrifice' (*'yajña'*); to remain happy all the time is verily the 'penance' (*tapa*); and to give back a thing to Him to whom it belongs is verily the 'donation' (*dāna*). The sacrifice-penance-donation performed with a selfish mind is verily of the demoniac nature.
65. The eighth chapter of the Gītā should be recited to a person nearing death if he has interest in the Gītā; because in this chapter, the matter of the soul's deliverance has been described in a special manner. By listening to it, the person nearing death will regain remembrance of God.
66. In the Gītā, wherever the matter of renouncing the attachment is mentioned, one should understand from it to relinquish the fruit [of actions] also; and wherever the matter of relinquishing the fruit [of actions] is mentioned, one should understand from it to renounce the attachment also.
67. In the Gītā, relinquishing the *desire* for fruit [of actions] alone has been considered to be the relinquishment of *fruit*.

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68. The Gītā, despite considering the *rajoguṇa* to be kinesthetic (of the nature of activity), verily regards it to be of the nature of attachment/attraction—‘**rajo rāgātmakam viddhi**’...(14/7)—know *rajas* to be of the nature of passion [...*tṛṣṇāsaṅgasamudbhavam*—born of craving and attachment]. Really speaking, it is verily the attraction/attachment (*rāga*) that binds and not the activity itself.
69. The strand of purity (*sāttvika*) is capable of enabling a person to go beyond the three strands (*guṇātīta*) and severing the relationship with the cyclic existence (*saṅsara*). That is why there is the discernment of bondage and liberation in it. —‘**bandham mokṣam ca yā veti**’ (18.30): understanding what is bondage and what is liberation.
70. Mainly there are three spiritual disciplines (*yōgs*) that are stated in the Gītā—*Karmayōg*, *Jñānayōg*, and *Bhaktiyōg*.
71. The Gītā has sung the special glory of love of the Lord despite the [presence of] devotion in all three spiritual disciplines.
72. Looking at the entire Gītā, throughout, [it becomes clear that] the virtue of equanimity (*samatā*) has been extolled greatly. Attaining equanimity, a person verily becomes a *jñānī*, *dhyānī*, *yōgī*, *bhakta*, etc., all at once. But if equanimity has not been attained, then the Lord does not regard it perfection despite the attainment of many other good virtues.
73. ‘**sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṃ śaraṇam vraja**’ (18.66): ‘Giving up dependence on all duties

take refuge in Me alone’—this is the utmost secret and supreme teaching of the entire Gītā.

74. Just as the expression ‘**sarvaguhyatamam**’ [(18.64): the supreme secret of all] occurs only once in the entire Gītā, in the same manner, the sentence ‘**sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṃ śaraṇam vraja**’ (giving up dependence on all duties, take refuge in Me alone’) occurs only once in the entire Gītā.

75. The Lord says the ‘most supreme words’ only in the context of the devotion (*bhakti*).

76. According to the Gītā, to offer all duties, i.e., actions to the Lord, indeed is the ultimate duty.

77. In the Gītā, Arjuna has asked several types of questions regarding his spiritual welfare and the Lord had answered them also. Despite all those disciplines, if we look at the entire Gītā (before and after), it becomes evident that the essence of all the disciplines, the most exalted discipline is to take refuge in the Lord exclusively.

78. Taking refuge in the Lord (*śarnāgatī*) is the quintessence of the entire message of the Gītā, which the Lord has stated out of his utmost grace. In surrendering to the Lord lies the culmination of the Gītā’s teachings. Without this, [the message of] the Gītā would have remained incomplete.

79. This is a remarkable art of the Gītā that man attains to the highest perfection (God-realization) by worshiping the Lord selflessly through the performance of one’s own natural duties (Gītā 18.46); and he who also dedicates the bodily functions such as eating-drinking,

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bathing, etc. to the Lord, he too, freed from the bondage of action in the form of auspicious-inauspicious results (Gītā 9.27-28), attains to the Lord. And then what to say of the one who attains to the Lord by virtue of promoting the message of the Gītā with the sole purpose of God's devotion.

80. In the Bhagavadgītā, there are such unique, easy and simple techniques to attain the spiritual welfare which can be followed by all of humankind.
81. A person who promotes his own religion, tradition, doctrine may be dear to the Lord but cannot be the dearest most. The dearest person will be the one who preaches the gospel of the Gītā in any form.
82. The Gītā does not ask for a change in appearance, stage of life, state, activity etc.; rather, it asks for their purification. That is, it only asks us to purify our intent (mental attitude) and purpose.
83. The spiritual welfare of all of mankind under every situation can be easily attained with the help of the teachings of the Gītā.
84. The Gītā contains the essence of the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* and the real sentiment of the Lord's heart, following which man can fulfill the ultimate purpose of human birth easily [even] under the most catastrophic conditions.
85. It is usually mentioned in the scriptures that man can follow the spiritual path (and attain spiritual welfare) only by renouncing the world. This conviction is also settled in people's mind that only upon becoming an ascetic-monk by renouncing the home can one obtain one's spiritual welfare. But the Gītā says, whatever

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may be the situation, condition, event, place, time, etc., humans can attain their spiritual welfare by making its proper use.

86. This Gītā scripture as recited by the great Lord of the Yogās is the scripture of Yoga (*yōgashāstra*). This Gītā scripture is the utmost supreme and the most secret one. There seems to be no dialogue as supreme and as secret as the Gītā to be found anywhere.

—Compiled from ‘Sādhak-Saṅjīvanī’



The Benedictory Gītā

॥ Ōm Shri Paramātmāney Namaḥ ॥

Essence of the Gītā

Essence of the First Chapter

Overpowered by the delusion of the mortal world, humans get confused about their real duty by being caught up in this dilemma—‘What should I do and what should I not do.’ Therefore, one should not become victim of delusion or get attached to sense pleasures.

Essence of the Second Chapter

The (physical) body is perishable and the self (soul) which knows it is imperishable. Giving importance to this discriminative wisdom (*viveka*) and fulfilling one’s duty—by putting to use any one of these two methods, worries and sorrows come to an end.

Essence of the Third Chapter

Fulfilling one’s duty unselfishly for the well-being of others verily leads to spiritual welfare (or liberation).

Essence of the Fourth Chapter

There are two ways to be free from the bondage of actions: Performing actions unselfishly by understanding the true essence of actions or by

realizing (or attaining) the knowledge of the essential reality (*tattva-jñāna*).

Essence of the Fifth Chapter

A person should not become happy or unhappy upon the arrival of favorable or unfavorable circumstances. Because one who becomes happy or unhappy due to circumstances, cannot rise above the mundane world to experience the Supreme Bliss.

Essence of the Sixth Chapter

Whatever be the spiritual practice, one should achieve equanimity (*samatā*) of mind. Without equanimity of mind, a person cannot become completely free from the agitations of the mind (or the sway of the thoughts).

Essence of the Seventh Chapter

‘God is all there is’—to accept this is the best spiritual practice.

Essence of the Eighth Chapter

The fate of an embodied soul is determined according to its state of mind at the time of death. Therefore, remembering God at all times, one should perform one’s duties so that the remembrance of God may subsist at the time of death.

Essence of the Ninth Chapter

All human beings are eligible (qualified) for God-realization, whatever be their social classification, stage of life, tradition, country, outer appearance, etc.

Essence of the Tenth Chapter

Wherever any uniqueness, special quality, beauty, prominence, brilliance, strength, etc., are observed in the world, considering them to be verily of the Lord's, one should contemplate on God alone.

Essence of the Eleventh Chapter

Regarding this universe verily as God's cosmic form, everyone can have a vision of God's universal form.

Essence of the Twelfth Chapter

A devotee, who surrenders himself to God, together with his body, senses, mind, and intellect, is dear to God.

Essence of the Thirteenth Chapter

There is only One Supreme Reality (*Paramātaṁ-tattva*) which is to be known; knowing which one attains to immortality.

Essence of the Fourteenth Chapter

To be free from the bondage of *saṁsāra* (mortal world), one has to rise above the triad of *sattva*, *rajas*,

and tamas—the three modes of the material nature. One becomes free from these three modes by exclusive devotion to God.

Essence of the Fifteenth Chapter

The sole support of this universe and the infinitely superior Supreme Person is the one Lord alone—knowing thus, one should worship the Lord with exclusive devotion.

Essence of the Sixteenth Chapter

Due to bad qualities and bad conduct only, an embodied soul roams about in 84 lakhs life forms or lower regions and suffers. Therefore it is essential to give up bad qualities and bad conduct in order to be free from the cycle of birth and death.

Essence of the Seventeenth Chapter

Whatever auspicious task one begins with faith, one should begin it by remembering God and by uttering His Holy Name.

Essence of the Eighteenth Chapter

The *Vedas* are the essence of all scriptures; *Upanishads* are the essence of all *Vedas*; the *Gītā* is the essence of *Upanishads*; and the essence of the *Gītā* lies in taking refuge in God (*Bhagavān ki śarnāgati*). The Lord frees that person of all the sins who takes refuge exclusively in the Lord.

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Hari Om Tat Sat!

Hari Om Tat Sat!!

Hari OmTat Sat!!!

Bhagavad Gītā—In the eyes of International Scholars

1. What can I write about the book which is best among the all in the world? Although there are many great religious scriptures besides the Gītā, but the Gītā's uniqueness is quite a different matter. It is the Divine Melody of the Almighty Lord of all Lords. — George Sydney Arundel
2. Bhagavadgītā is the crest jewel of the magnanimous religious scriptures of India as well as the profound religious scriptures of the world. — Charles Johnston
3. The Gītā indeed is worthy of becoming the formulaic religious scripture of the universal world religion. This priceless jewel of the proud ancient era of India will provide unique help in the building of the proud bright world of humanity. The Gītā is India's contribution to the future religion of the world. — F. T. Brooks
4. There is no Indian scripture other than the Gītā which has earned so much fame in India as well in other nations of far and wide and which is so much loved as the Divine Melody by the people of India. — Professor Otto Strauss
5. The message of the Gītā is so transcendental and divine that the great learned wise people study it; but their learned intellect gets bewildered in its

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maelstrom. They are not able to fathom its depth; they are not able to understand it! Such extraordinary and unique are its teachings that it has accorded peace, hope, and assurance to many despondent and weary travellers on the path of life and has saved them from crumbling down into pieces forever— exactly like it had saved Arjuna. — K. Browning

6. The English literature will certainly remain incomplete without this amiable poetical-philosophical scripture of India. — Sir Edwin Arnold
7. In the entire literature of the world, whether from the standpoint of universal benefit or from the standpoint of practical influence, there is no other poem similar to the Gītā. — J.N. Farquhar
8. The Gītā is not only a scripture belonging to Hindus, but it belongs to all caste, creed, and religion. Every human being should read and contemplate this eternal scripture devoid of all favoritism in spite of him being follower of any religion or Guru. It will not be an exaggeration at all if we call Gītā as a mine of Divine knowledge. —Kekhusru J Dastoor
9. Millions of human being have heard, read, and taught the Gītā and this book has proved very hopeful in turning the soul towards the Lord. —Dr. Leonale D. Barrett
10. Bhagavad Gītā is best among all the treasures which have come from the Eastern World....In the Gītā, there is such a sublime and ubiquitous knowledge that despite the lapse of innumerable years since the time of its divine writer, there is still no other scripture written to date like this....In comparison with the Gītā,

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our modern world and its entire literature seem puny and trivial to me....I bath my heart and mind everyday morning with the holy water of the Gītā regularly. — Henry David Thoreau

11. The Gītā's teachings are unrivaled in taking any race to the pinnacle of glory. —Warren Hastings

12. There is no other scripture of India worthy of the exalted place like that of the Bhagavadgītā —Richard Garbe



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Om Śrī Kṛṣṇarpanamastu

॥ Ōm Shri Paramātmāney Namaḥ ॥

[Back page matter]

The Glory of Promoting the Gita's Teachings

*ya idaṃ paramaṃ guhyaṃ madbhakteṣu
abhidhāsyati
bhaktiṃ mayi parāṃ kṛtvā mām evaiṣyaty
asamśayaḥ
na ca tasmān manuṣyeṣu kaścin me
priyakṛttamaḥ
bhavitā na ca me tasmād anyāḥ priyataro bhuvi*

(Gita 18/68-69)

(Śrī Bhagavān said—) ‘Whosoever will, with the sole purpose of attaining my consummate devotion (*parā-bhakti*), narrate this most profound Gita scripture among my devotees, that person will undoubtedly attain to Me. Not only this, among humans in this world, there is none who does Me a more loving service, nor shall there be another on the entire globe dearer to Me than a person who preaches My gospel to My devotees.’