Bhagavad Gita

The Song of God

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Unity in Difference

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Introduction

The Bhagavad Gita is considered a concise summary of the vast Vedic wisdom and one of the worlds great spiritual texts. Its influence has extended far beyond India and many people around the world have admired its spiritual message and progressive ideas. It's also part of a gripping narrative.

Bhagavad Gita originally appeared as a chapter within the Hindu epic the Mahabharata. The Gita is a conversation between Prince Arjuna and his chariot driver Lord Krishna. Arjuna and his brothers are preparing to fight their relatives in a war for sovereignty of their kingdom.

When people first encounter the Gita, they're often surprised to find a spiritual book with a battlefield setting. God himself is advising Arjuna to fight a terrible war and the aim of the battle is apparently to gain material wealth and power. We expect spiritual activity to be peaceful and tolerant. The spiritual path is often presented as one which rejects violence, wealth and power and instead pursues higher ideals.

This apparent contradiction is our introduction to the concept of dharma. Dharma takes some time for a Western mind to fully understand and appreciate. Arjuna is a member of the Kshatriya or ruling class. According to his dharma or duty, he has a responsibility to protect the citizens and uphold justice. The administration of a society is a practical necessity, someone must maintain order. This duty falls to the Kshatriya and sometimes that duty involves conflict.

Krishna doesn't advise Arjuna to leave his present circumstances and travel to a mountaintop to meditate. Instead, he explains how everyone can combine their practical occupation with the goal of spiritual development. The spiritual advice of the Bhagavad Gita is very practical. A recurring theme in the Gita is how to act without attachment to the results.

We're advised to perform our duty, to do what is right, without considering personal profit or loss. By following our dharma in this way, our actions won't bind us to this world, entangling us in our own schemes for exploitation.

Very few people can personally relate to the occupation of a warrior and the battleground setting, but the quintessential message of the Gita both includes and transcends how to live in this world. From the spiritual or universal point of view we're all standing on a battlefield, the material world of birth and death. Like Arjuna, we must face the knowledge of our own mortality, as well as the mortality of those we love, our friends and relatives. The Gita confronts our common and urgent problem of suffering and death and gives us inspiration and hope.

While the teachings of the Gita are profound and spiritually transforming, one of the most charming features is the picture it paints of God's personality. Lord Krishna isn't an angry or domineering God waiting to punish you for your imperfections, but a God who is your dearest friend. A God who is willing to serve you by driving your chariot, standing by your side, ready to help you.

He gives you knowledge, not commands. Knowledge that will inspire you to rise up and bravely fight for what you decide is honourable and right. At the end of the Gita, after Krishna has explained the nature of the material world, the soul, God, and the various paths of yoga to achieve liberation from suffering, he says to Arjuna: *"Now that you know what you need to know, you can choose what you want to do."*

This presentation of the Gita aims to convey the essential philosophical ideas of the Gita in clear modern language, rather than provide a word-for-word translation.

"Simply hearing this conversation with faith will liberate you from suffering and you will reach the abode of the virtuous souls."

Chapter 18

Chapter 1 – Arjuna's Despair

On the battlefield at Kurukshetra, two great armies have assembled. Their mighty legions stand facing one another, poised to engage in a civil war.

Within the opposing armies are the family members of the royal Kuru dynasty. Unable to reach a peaceful settlement, they have taken up their weapons to fight for sovereignty of their kingdom.

With a war cry like the roar of a lion, Bhishma, the venerable grandfather of the Kuru dynasty, loudly sounded his conch shell.

Lord Krishna and Prince Arjuna, standing in a magnificent chariot drawn by white horses, loudly blew their divine conch shells.

All at once, a tumultuous vibration of conch shells, trumpets, drums and horns arose from the battlefield and resounded throughout the earth and the sky.

Seeing that the battle was about to start, Arjuna picked up his bow and arrows. Observing the soldiers arranged for battle, Arjuna said,

Krishna, please place my chariot between the two armies so I can see the soldiers who have come here to fight and those I must compete with in this battle.

At Arjuna's request, Lord Krishna positioned the chariot between the opposing armies and said, Behold Arjuna, all the members of the Kuru dynasty who are assembled here for battle.

Within both the armies, Arjuna saw his grandfathers, fathers, uncles, cousins, brothers, sons, grandsons, teachers and friends. Seeing all his relatives and friends gathered on the battlefield, Arjuna was overcome with grief and he said,

O Krishna, as I look at all my relatives and friends standing before me so eager to fight, the strength is draining from my limbs and my mouth is becoming parched. I am trembling and the hairs on my body are standing on end.

My bow is slipping from my weakened hand and my skin is burning. I cannot maintain my composure. My head is spinning and I see bad omens. Nothing good can come from killing my relatives in this battle.

I have no desire for victory, sovereignty or the enjoyments of a kingdom. What is the value of a kingdom or royal pleasures when those for whom we desire these things are standing on this battlefield?

My relatives and friends are present before me ready to risk their wealth and their lives. Even if they want to kill me, I have no desire to kill them.

I am unwilling to fight with them in exchange for the entire universe, much less for a kingdom on this earth. Misfortune will overcome us if we kill our teachers and guardians even though they are adversaries.

O Krishna, how can we take the lives of our own relatives? What peace or happiness could we gain by killing our own family?

Greed has overpowered these men, so they cannot see the error in killing their family and destroying the dynasty. But we are aware of the consequences of such actions, so how can we perform such terrible deeds?

My dear Krishna, destroying the dynasty causes the traditional spiritual practices of the family to be lost and thus irreligion permeates the family.

Destroying the spiritual practices of the family ruins the civilised culture of society, as well as the noble lineage. Those who destroy family and religious traditions always reside in a hellish situation.

It is regrettable that we have resolved to commit such terrible and evil deeds. Because of greed for royal power and pleasure, we are prepared to kill our relatives and friends.

I would prefer to die without drawing my weapon or defending myself than to fight with any of them. Then Arjuna sank down on his chariot and cast aside his bow and arrows, his heart overpowered by sorrow.

Chapter 2 – The Nature of the Soul

When Lord Krishna saw that Arjuna was overwhelmed with grief and his eyes were filled with tears he said,

Arjuna, how has this illusion overcome you at such a crucial moment? This attitude is inappropriate for a nobleman who understands the civilised ideals of life. You will not achieve honour by behaving in this way, it will only bring you disgrace.

Do not surrender to this demeaning cowardice. It will injure your courageous reputation. O great hero, abandon this miserly weakness and arise for battle!

Arjuna said, Krishna, these men deserve my worship, how can I attack them with arrows? I would rather survive as a beggar, than gain a kingdom by killing honourable men who are my superiors.

If we kill them, we will enjoy royal pleasures stained with their blood. I do not know which is worse – victory or defeat, because if we kill our relatives and friends, we would no longer wish to live.

I am confused about my real duty and I am distraught over the destruction of our dynasty, so I am turning to you for guidance. Would you tell me which course of action is best? Please advise me.

Even if I win unchallenged sovereignty over the entire earth and dominion over the gods in heaven, I will not be able to overcome this debilitating grief. After speaking in this way, Arjuna declared, "Krishna, I will not fight" and then he was silent.

Lord Krishna was smiling as he said to the despondent Arjuna, You are speaking with such wise words while mourning for things undeserving of sorrow. The wise do not mourn for the living or the dead.

There has never been a time when you, or I, or any of us, did not exist; and there will never be a time in the future when we will cease to exist.

The soul remains unchanged while the body transforms from childhood, to youth, to old age. Similarly, the soul travels into another body at death. These bodily changes do not confuse those who are wise.

The body and the senses produce feelings of heat and cold, pleasure and pain. These sensations are temporary, they come and go, and you must endure them.

If you can remain undisturbed by the experiences of the senses and equal in both joy and sorrow, you will be qualified for immortality.

Those who seek the truth have analysed the nature of the eternal and the temporary. They have concluded that a changeable object has no eternal existence, and an eternal object is not subject to destruction or change.

The soul pervading the entire body cannot be destroyed. The soul is eternal, indestructible and immeasurable. It is only the physical body that can be destroyed. So arise Arjuna, and fight.

Anyone who thinks the soul can kill or be killed does not understand the true nature of the soul. The soul is never born and it never dies. Having once existed, the soul never ceases to exist.

The soul is immortal and indestructible and is not destroyed when the body is destroyed.

Just as someone puts on new clothes, giving up the old garments, the soul continues to accept new material bodies, giving up the old and worn out ones.

Weapons cannot cut the soul. Fire cannot burn it. The soul cannot be dampened with water or withered by the wind. The eternal soul is immovable, all pervading, imperceptible, unchangeable and inconceivable.

Knowing the true nature of the soul, how can there be any cause for sorrow? You should not mourn for the transient body.

Even if you believe the soul is continually subject to birth and death, you still have no reason for grief. One who is born is sure to die, and one who dies is sure to be born. This is inevitable, so why should you mourn?

The soul is imperceptible before birth and after death. In between the two, the soul can be perceived. Where is the sorrow in this Arjuna?

The soul is astonishing and wonderful to contemplate; mystical and exotic to hear about and extraordinary and marvellous to describe. The soul dwelling within the body is eternal and cannot die. Therefore, you do not need to mourn for anyone.

There is no action more favourable for a nobleman than fighting on honourable principles and so you should not hesitate. The noblemen who have the good fortune to receive such an opportunity for battle are joyous, it arrives like an open gate to heaven.

If you reject your duty and your task and choose not to fight this honourable war, you will certainly suffer misfortune. People will always speak of your infamy, and for those of noble blood, dishonour is worse than death.

The kings who now respect you, will assume fear has caused you to leave the battlefield. Your enemies will mock you and deride your prowess and your courage. What could be more painful?

Arjuna, if you die on the battlefield you will reach the celestial sphere. If you are victorious in battle, you will enjoy a kingdom on earth. So arise and resolve yourself to fight.

You should regard joy and sorrow, profit and loss, victory and defeat as equal. If you fight with this attitude, you will never suffer misfortune.

So far, I have revealed knowledge of the soul to you. Now listen and I will tell you how acting with this knowledge will ensure that your actions will free you from the bondage of karma.

On this path, there is no loss or harm. Even the slightest practice of such a spiritual ideal will save you from the greatest fear.

Those on this path are resolute in purpose and I am their only objective. But endless desires for mundane enjoyment divert and disperse the intelligence of the irresolute.

Ignorant people are fond of the ornate language of the Vedic scriptures. They are unaware that the primary directive of the scriptures is the attainment of the supreme truth.

So they recommend sacrifices and activities yielding wealth, worldly pleasures and a high material birth. Deluded by the enchanting language of the scriptures they say these things are the ultimate, and nothing else is needed.

Their hearts are full of desires and they are attached to material enjoyment and opulence. Deluded by their attachment to opulence and sensual enjoyment, they do not attain the resolute determination to dedicate themselves to the Supreme Lord.

The Vedic scriptures deal mainly with the subject of the three modes of material nature. Transcend these modes, Arjuna. Remain unaffected by duality and all efforts for profit and maintenance and remain situated in the truth.

All the objectives that are achieved by a small pool of water can also be achieved by a large expanse of water. In the same way, all the benefits that are obtained from worshipping the gods with the Vedic rituals can be achieved by worship of the Supreme Lord.

You are entitled to work, but you are not entitled to the profits. Do not be motivated by the results of your actions and do not be inclined to give up action. Carry out your duty and be unattached to success or failure. Such equipoised action is known as yoga.

Action with a desire for the profit is inferior to this yoga of wisdom. It is miserly to be motivated by the profits of your actions. The wise abstain from both good and evil actions in this world. Therefore Arjuna, make yoga your goal, because it is the art of all action.

The wise free themselves from the bondage of repeated birth and death by renouncing the results of their actions. Thus, they achieve that situation which is beyond all suffering.

When you emerge from the impenetrable illusion of accepting the body as the self you will be indifferent to everything that has been said and everything that is yet to be said. When you are no longer confused by the apparent contradictions of the scriptures then you will have achieved the perfection of yoga.

Arjuna said, What are the qualities of those who are fully absorbed in spiritual consciousness? How do they speak? How do they walk and how do they act?

Lord Krishna said, A person in spiritual consciousness rejects all desires that enter the mind and finds satisfaction in the soul within.

They are unaffected by sorrow, their yearning for mundane pleasure is gone, and they are devoid of fear and anger. They are not attached to anything in this material world and they do not rejoice on obtaining good, or grieve on obtaining evil.

They are able to control their senses and withdraw them from sense objects just as the tortoise withdraws his limbs into his shell.

Those in material consciousness may renounce sensual pleasures, but they still have a taste for such things. However, even the desire vanishes for people with spiritual knowledge because they have experienced the superior nature of the spiritual.

The senses can forcibly agitate the mind of people who are actively striving to control their senses. Anyone who controls their senses and focuses their consciousness on me achieves steadiness of mind.

But a person whose thoughts dwell on the objects of the senses, develops attachment for them. From attachment, desire arises, and from desire, anger is born. Anger causes delusion, and delusion gives rise to forgetfulness of spiritual principles.

From such forgetfulness, intelligence is lost. When intelligence is gone, one descends into the cycle of birth and death in the material world.

Anyone who controls their senses with their mind and is free from attraction and repulsion, achieves tranquillity. From tranquillity comes a peaceful heart and all their miseries disappear. The tranquil person's intelligence soon becomes steady.

Those without self-control do not have a controlled mind or steady intelligence. Without these, peace of mind is impossible to achieve. And without peace of mind, there can be no happiness.

Any of the senses the mind becomes absorbed in will carry away the intelligence of those lacking self-control, just as an unfavourable wind blows a boat on the ocean off course, Therefore, anyone who restrains their senses has steady intelligence.

The time of awakening for the enlightened soul, is the darkness of night for the unenlightened. What seems like wakeful day for the unenlightened, is the dark night of ignorance for the enlightened sage.

The ocean is always being filled by rivers that enter into it, yet it remains calm. Those who are undisturbed by the continuous flow of desires entering the mind can achieve peace, and not those who try to satisfy those desires.

Only those who abandon all desire, ego and possessiveness can know peace. That is the path of spiritual realisation.

If you can attain this realisation even for a moment, you will be freed from the delusion of material existence and it will lead you to the spiritual realm.

Chapter 3 – The Path of Action

Arjuna said, Krishna, if you consider knowledge superior to action, why do you advise me to fight this dreadful war? I am confused by your ambiguous advice. Please tell me clearly, which is the best course of action?

Lord Krishna said, I have already described the two paths found in this world. Some people try to realise the soul by the path of knowledge and others by the path of selfless action.

You cannot escape from karma by abstaining from action. Perfection cannot be achieved by renunciation alone. No one can remain inactive for even a moment. Everyone is compelled to act by the material nature.

Anyone who externally restrains their senses, but continues to think about the objects of the senses is a fool and a hypocrite. It is far better to control your senses with your mind and carry out your work without attachment.

Carry out your allotted tasks, because action is superior to being idle. You cannot even sustain your existence without working.

Selfless action performed as an offering to the Supreme Lord is known as sacrifice. Action performed for any other reason causes bondage in this material world.

Therefore to remain free of karmic reaction you should remain unattached to the fruits of your actions and perform all your actions for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord.

At the start of the creation, Lord Brahma produced sacrifice along with the progeny of the world and instructed them by saying,

'Take shelter of this religious principle of sacrifice because its performance will fulfil all your desires. By pleasing the gods with sacrifices,

they will in turn please you by supplying all the necessities of life. Thus, through mutual nourishment everyone will prosper.'

Anyone who enjoys the natural gifts of the gods, without first offering them to the gods incurs the karma of a thief. Virtuous people offer their food as a sacrifice before eating. This liberates them from all kinds of impurity. Those who prepare food only for their own pleasure are sustaining their bondage.

The bodies of the living beings are produced from food, and food comes from rain. Rainfall occurs because of the performance of sacrifice, and sacrifice arises from action.

The Vedic scriptures specify required actions, and the Vedas originate from the Supreme Lord. Therefore, the all-pervading and imperishable Supreme Lord is eternally present in the acts of sacrifice offered to him.

My dear Arjuna, anyone who does not respect and follow this natural cycle of sacrifice leads an impious life, for a person who lives only for sensual pleasure lives in vain.

There is no duty to fulfil for those who take pleasure in the self and are fully satisfied within. The self-realised do not gain anything by performing their duties, nor have they any reason not to engage in work. They have no reason to depend on any other living being.

Therefore, you should carry out your responsibilities without attachment to the results. By selflessly executing your duty, you will achieve liberation. Even great personalities have attained perfection by performing their allotted tasks.

In order to instruct the general population, you should carry out your duties. Others will imitate the actions of the superior people. The entire world will follow the ideals created by their admirable actions.

I have no duty to perform within the universe. I lack nothing and I have no need to obtain anything, but I still engage in work. If I did not work, then everyone would follow my example and this entire world would be spoiled.

People without spiritual knowledge carry out their work motivated by the profits they will obtain. The enlightened must also carry out their work but without attachment to the results and for everyone's welfare.

The wise should not confuse the minds of the ignorant, by advising them to stop work. They should be advised to carry out their duties without attachment to the results.

The material nature carries out all action in this world. The ignorant are deluded because they identify with the body, so they think they alone are accomplishing the work.

Those who are enlightened by spiritual knowledge do not try to satisfy their senses, because they are aware that only the senses are engaging with their objects and they are performing no action at all.

Ignorant people who are captivated by the material nature become addicted to sensual enjoyment. The wise should not agitate these people.

Offer your actions to me with the understanding that all your actions are under the control of the Supreme Lord. Absorbed in this consciousness, seeking no profit and without possessiveness or grief, you should fight as your natural duty.

Those who faithfully perform their duties according to my teachings are liberated from the bondage of karma, even though they are engaged in action. But arrogant people who disregard these teachings are lost in ignorance and condemned to suffer or enjoy the results of their actions.

Even knowledgeable people will act according to their own nature. All living beings are forced to abide by their own nature, so what purpose will repression serve?

Although sensual objects attract and repel the senses, you should not let these urges control you because they are the greatest enemy of those striving for self-realisation.

It is better to engage in your own duty with faults than to perform another's duty well. Even death in the course of performing your own duty is better than engaging in someone else's duties, because it is perilous to pursue the path of another.

Arjuna inquired, "Krishna, what compels someone to commit impious acts, even against their will?"

Lord Krishna said, It is lust, which arises from contact with the material mode of passion and can transform into anger. Lust is insatiable and it burns like fire. It is the worst enemy of the living beings within this world.

As smoke veils a fire, as dust covers a mirror, or as the womb encloses an embryo, similarly, lust covers the pure consciousness of the living beings in different degrees of intensity.

Lust dwells within the senses, the mind and the intelligence and conceals the knowledge of the living being causing illusion. Therefore, control your senses and defeat this lust, which ruins knowledge and self-realisation.

The senses are superior to their objects, the mind is superior to the senses, the intelligence is superior to the mind, and the soul is superior to the intelligence.

Knowing the soul to be superior, steady your mind with resolute intelligence, and destroy this formidable enemy called lust.

Chapter 4 – The Path of Divine Knowledge

Lord Krishna said, I previously taught this eternal knowledge of yoga to the sun-god, Vivasvan. He taught it to Manu, the father of humanity and Manu in turn passed it on to his disciple and son.

In this way, the knowledge was passed down through the guru-disciple succession. But over the passage of time, this knowledge has been lost. I will now reveal this eternal knowledge to you, because you are my devoted friend.

Arjuna said, The sun-god, Vivasvan, was born in ancient times, long before you were. So how am I to understand that you previously revealed these teachings to him?

Lord Krishna said, You and I have both passed through many births Arjuna. Because I am the Supreme Lord I can remember all of them. However, you have only finite consciousness so you cannot remember your previous lives.

Although my eternal form is unborn and does not decay; and I am the Supreme Lord of all living beings, I appear within this world in my original spiritual form.

Whenever righteousness diminishes and impiety increases, I personally appear in this world. I appear age after age to liberate the virtuous, vanquish the criminals and firmly establish the principles of true religion.

If you can understand the truth behind my appearance and activities, you will not take birth in this material world again. After leaving your body, you will attain the spiritual realm.

In the past many people have taken shelter of me and become free from material attachment, fear and anger. Their knowledge of me purified them and they all achieved divine love for me.

In whatever way people approach me, I respond to them accordingly. Everyone is following my path, because I am the goal of all philosophies and religions.

I am never affected or implicated by the law of karma, and I do not desire the rewards of action. Action does not entangle anyone who knows this truth about me.

Knowing this, people who desired liberation in previous times performed their duties as a selfless offering to me. You should also perform selfless action, like the sages in times gone by.

Even the intelligent have difficulty understanding what action is and what inaction is. I will now clarify this. Understanding this will free you from misfortune.

It is difficult to comprehend the inner nature of action. You should understand action prescribed by the Vedic scriptures, action forbidden by the Vedic scriptures, and renunciation of action.

The wise can see that selfless action which does not cause material bondage is really inaction. Those who act without a desire for material reward have perfect knowledge.

Giving up all attachment to the fruits of their actions, they are completely content. Although performing all kinds of activities, they do nothing at all.

Controlling the mind and body with the intelligence, they renounce all sense of proprietorship and act only for the sustenance of the body. Working in this way, they incur no karmic reactions.

Satisfied with whatever is easily available, unaffected by dualities like heat and cold, joy and sorrow, they are free of envy and equal in success or failure. Although active, their actions do not bind them to the material world.

The activities of anyone who is enlightened with spiritual knowledge and therefore detached from the results of their actions, does not produce any karmic reaction.

For those people who are fully absorbed in this spiritual consciousness, their actions and all that they sacrifice are spiritual in nature. They are certain to attain the spiritual realm.

Some people offer sacrifices to the gods, others sacrifice their material possessions and still others undergo strict austerities.

Some people practice the eight-fold mystic yoga system, others study the Vedas and still others practice the process of breath control so they can remain in trance.

All of these people who understand the principle of sacrifice are purified of material contamination. They experience the benefits of the remnants of their sacrifice and eventually reach the spiritual realm.

A person who never performs sacrifice cannot achieve fulfilment in this lifetime or the next. The Vedic literature describes all these different types of sacrifice, and you can accomplish all of them through action.

When you understand the principle of action in this way, you will be able to free yourself from the bondage of karma. The sacrifice of knowledge is superior to sacrifice performed with different articles because the perfection of all action is spiritual knowledge.

To attain this knowledge you must approach a spiritual teacher with respect, inquiry and service. The enlightened souls can give you spiritual knowledge because they have realised the truth.

When you have learned the truth, you will no longer be subject to your present illusion. You will see the one spiritual nature in all living beings and know that they are all a part of me.

The ship of spiritual knowledge can carry even the greatest criminal across the material sea of suffering. As a fire reduces wood to ash, the fire of knowledge burns up all karma.

There is nothing in the entire world as purifying as spiritual knowledge. Whoever sincerely searches for this knowledge will eventually find the soul within.

If you are devoted and faithful on this path, you will find the spiritual peace. But without knowledge or faith, you will not achieve spiritual consciousness. If your heart is full of doubt, you cannot find peace anywhere.

Those who have removed their doubts with spiritual knowledge and abandoned attachment to the fruits of their action are never bound by karmic reaction.

So with the sword of knowledge sever the doubts which arise from ignorance. Arjuna, arm yourself with knowledge and arise for battle!

Chapter 5 – The Path of Renunciation of Action

Arjuna said, Krishna, After advising me to renounce action, you have then recommended selfless action. Please tell me clearly, which of the two is superior?

Lord Krishna said, The renunciation of action and selfless action are both beneficial. However, of the two, selfless action is superior.

Anyone who is free from attraction and repulsion is actually renounced even though they are performing action. If you are free from all dualities, you will easily achieve liberation from birth and death.

The wise do not consider the path of renunciation and the path of action as separate paths. Anyone who follows either of these paths will achieve the same result.

The goal achieved by renunciation can also be achieved by selfless action. Anyone who sees that the two paths are the same, sees the truth.

Without selfless action, merely renouncing activities does not remove suffering. The wise who engage in selfless action swiftly attain the spiritual realm.

Those who perform selfless action, control their mind and senses, and show compassion to all living beings, are not implicated by their actions.

Although people in spiritual consciousness perform the activities of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping and breathing; they realise only the material senses are interacting with their objects and they are not performing any action at all.

Carry out all your activities without attachment and selflessly offer all your actions to the Supreme Lord. Then karma will not touch you, as water does not touch the lotus leaf.

The wise abandon all attachment and act with their senses, body, mind and intelligence only to achieve self-purification.

If you give up attachment to the fruits of your actions and offer the results of all your activities to me, you will achieve constant peace. However, if you desire the fruits of your activities, your deeds will entangle you.

By mentally renouncing all actions and controlling their senses, the living beings can live happily within the material body.

The Supreme Lord does not create activities, the desire for the results of activities, or the passion to act. The illusion of the living being in accepting the body as the self causes all this.

The Supreme Lord does not accept anyone's good or evil deeds. Ignorance shrouds the knowledge of the living beings because of their desire to enjoy the material world.

Although consciousness is their inherent nature, the living beings are deluded because they have accepted the material body as the self.

Those who are enlightened with spiritual knowledge dispel their ignorance and their knowledge reveals the supreme reality, as the sun illuminates the world.

Thus, they think of me constantly, meditate on me alone and take complete shelter of me. Being engaged in this way they transcend the material world.

The enlightened souls perceive the spirit within all species of living beings, whether a saint, a cow, an elephant, a dog or a lowborn person.

Anyone who has equal and impartial vision towards everything, and is free from attraction and repulsion has already conquered birth and death. Their perfect knowledge places them eternally in the spiritual reality, even though they are still present in this world.

Absorbed in the spiritual reality and endowed with steady intelligence, a knower of the divine is not overjoyed when they achieve something desirable or miserable when they obtain something undesirable.

Detaching the mind from external sense pleasures, the liberated soul enjoys the joy within. The self-realised enjoy endless joy because they are absorbed in the spiritual reality.

The pleasure which arises from the contact of the senses with their objects is transitory and a source of misery. The wise find no satisfaction there. If you can tolerate the impulses of the senses and restrain the forces of desire and anger, you can find happiness.

Those who experience the bliss of the self within achieve the spiritual reality and they achieve liberation from the material plane. Anyone who is free from doubt, self controlled and dedicated to the welfare of all living beings, achieves such liberation.

Those who are free from desire and anger and have achieved knowledge of the spiritual nature of the soul, are liberated whether they live or die.

Anyone who knows me as the supreme goal of all sacrifices, the Supreme Lord, the benefactor and dear friend of all living entities, attains the bliss of their own internal spiritual identity.

Chapter 6 – The Path of Meditation

Lord Krishna said, Anyone who performs their duties without attachment to the results is the true yogi and ascetic. You cannot achieve complete renunciation by giving up your duties or by becoming physically inactive.

Yoga is the same as complete renunciation because without renouncing the desire for material and sensual enjoyment one cannot be considered a true yogi.

Action is the prescribed method for those who are beginners on the path of yoga. Renunciation of all material activities is the method for those who have already attained to yoga.

The yoga practitioner who remains unattached to the objects of the senses and renounces all thoughts of material enjoyment has attained yoga.

You should use your mind to free yourself from the material world and not allow the mind to corrupt the soul. The mind can be your friend or your enemy.

If you control the mind, it will be your greatest friend. But if you are unable to control the mind, it will work against you like your greatest enemy.

Anyone who controls the mind attains serenity. They remain peaceful and undisturbed by joy and sorrow, heat and cold, honour and dishonour.

A true yogi is satisfied by their spiritual knowledge and realisation. They have controlled their senses and they look upon dirt, stone or gold equally.

Even superior to this is the eminent yogi who has a vision of equality towards friends and enemies, saints and sinners.

A yogi should live alone in a secluded place and always control the mind and body. Remaining free from desires and expectations, they should focus their mind in spiritual consciousness.

The yogi should go to a private place and establish a seat made of straw covered with a cloth. The seat should not be too high or too low and it should be in a pure and clean place.

Sitting on that seat, the yogi should control the mind and senses and practice meditation in order to purify the heart. Keeping the body, neck and head straight and upright, the yogi should fix the gaze at the tip of the nose.

With a serene mind, fearless and celibate, the yogi should meditate on me. By controlling the body, mind and activities, the yogi who has abandoned desire for material enjoyment, achieves the peace of liberation from material existence.

Those who overeat or do not eat enough, oversleep or do not sleep enough, cannot practice yoga. If you are disciplined in your eating, sleeping, work and leisure, you can dispel all suffering by practising this yoga system.

When the yogi withdraws the mind from mundane thoughts and centres it on the self, free from mundane desires, they have attained yoga – or linking with the Absolute.

Like a lamp in a windless place that does not flicker, the mind of a yogi absorbed in the self does not waver in its concentration.

The mind controlled by yoga practice is tranquil, pacified by detachment from mundane association. The yogi remains satisfied in the self alone, and in spiritual enlightenment tastes eternal bliss.

Once established in such a position the yogi never deviates from the truth. On gaining this, they consider there is no greater gain. They are never disturbed, even in the greatest tribulation. The yogi achieves actual freedom from all suffering.

You should be persistent in practicing yoga. You must reject any thoughts that give rise to desire and use your mind to withdraw the senses from all material objects.

By steadying the intelligence, gradually calm the mind and focus it on the self only. When the wavering and unsteady mind strays, you should bring it back to the control of the self.

The yogi who is free of agitating passions, has a peaceful mind, is free from attachment, fear and anger and is always situated in the spiritual nature achieves the joy of realising the divine nature of the soul.

Absorbed in self-realisation and free from all corruption, the yogi attains the bliss of contacting the Supreme. The yogi sees consciousness within all beings.

They perceive the Supreme within every living being and every living being within the Supreme. For those who perceive me in everything and everything in me, I am never hidden from them nor are they hidden from me.

The yogi who realises I am not different from the Supreme Soul worships me and abides in me eternally. The best of all yogis sees the true equality of all living beings.

Arjuna said, Krishna, the mind is so fickle and unsteady that the yoga practice you have described seems impractical. The mind is agitated, disruptive, stubborn and strong, and restraining it is like trying to hold the wind.

Lord Krishna said, It is certainly difficult to control the mind but it can be achieved with perseverance and restraint from sensual enjoyment. Yoga is difficult to achieve with an unrestrained mind, but anyone who strives to control the mind by the appropriate practices can be sure of success.

Arjuna said, Krishna, what happens to those people who engage in yoga but do not persevere because of mundane inclinations and fail to achieve perfection? Because they stray from the path of self-realisation, are they utterly lost, like a cloud dispersed?

Lord Krishna said, The spiritual progress made by a yogi is never lost. Those who perform virtuous acts are never defeated by misfortune.

After residing for many years on the celestial planets reserved for the virtuous living beings, the unsuccessful yogi is born into a pious and prosperous family, or a family endowed with spiritual wisdom. Achieving such a birth is rare in this world.

Within one of these situations, they revive the wisdom they gained in their previous life and again strive for success. Because of the spiritual consciousness they achieved in their previous life, they inevitably become attracted to the principles of yoga. In their search, they surpass the Vedic rituals.

With serious effort, they try to make further progress and this purifies them of all material contamination. Achieving the result of many lifetimes of yoga practice, they achieve the supreme objective.

A yogi is superior to those engaged in severe austerities and vows, superior to the person of knowledge who worships the divine, and superior to those engaged in action. Therefore, Arjuna, regardless of your material circumstances, strive to be a yogi.

I consider the best and most exalted of all yogis to be those who have complete faith in devotion to me and who worship me by hearing and singing about my glories.

Chapter 7 – The Relative and the Absolute

Lord Krishna said, Arjuna, by absorbing your consciousness in me and taking refuge in me, you can be free of doubt and know me completely.

Now I will describe knowledge of the spiritual and the material to you. If you know this, there will be nothing more for you to know.

Among thousands of human beings, there are not many who try for perfection. Of those who achieve perfection, very few truly know me.

The eight components of my material energy are earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intelligence and contaminated ego.

Superior to this inert material energy is my marginal energy, which consists of the individual, conscious living beings. The living beings have chosen to dwell in the material world in an attempt to use and exploit the inert material energy for their own sensual enjoyment.

All living species are created from these two energies. But I am the cause of the creation and also the dissolution of the entire universe. There is nothing superior to me. Like jewels strung along a thread, everything depends on me.

I am the taste in water, the effulgence of the sun and the moon, the fundamental vibration Om in the Vedic mantras, the sound in space and the masculinity in men.

I am the pure fragrance of the earth and the radiance in fire. I am the life of all living beings and the power of endurance of all ascetics.

I am the original cause of all life forms, the intelligence of the intelligent and the courage of the brave. I am the strength of the powerful and I am sexual desire that does not violate ethical principles.

Everything comes from me, but I am also independent and above the modes of material nature.

The illusory material energy is leading the entire world astray and therefore no one knows me; because I am transcendental to this material nature and unlimited. My illusory material energy is practically insurmountable, but anyone who surrenders to me can transcend it.

Four types of people do not surrender to me: The foolish and ignorant, those who are the lowest among humanity and comparable to animals, those who have their knowledge covered by illusion, and those with an impious mentality.

Four kinds of people have the good fortune to worship me: those who are afflicted, those who desire worldly enjoyment, those who seek knowledge, and those who are self-realised.

Of these four types of people, the self-realised soul whose consciousness is fully absorbed in me is the best. Because I am dear to them and they are also very dear to me.

Certainly all of these people are noble souls, but the self-realised soul is as beloved to me as my own self, because they have taken shelter of me as the ultimate goal of life.

Engaging in My divine service, they attain me. After many births, the enlightened soul realises that I am the cause of everything that exists and they surrender to me. It is rare to find such an exalted soul.

People who are misled by material desires worship the gods and follow the particular rituals required to attain their material objectives. When someone desires to worship the gods, I strengthen their faith for their chosen god.

With strong faith, they continue worshipping a particular god to obtain all they desire. This all happens by my sanction.

But these worshippers are unwise because the rewards obtained from the gods are temporary. Those who worship the gods reach the gods, but those who are devoted to me, will come to me.

The foolish think I have acquired a material form because they are unaware of my transcendental nature which is eternal and supreme.

Concealed by my illusory power, I am not visible to everyone. This deluded world cannot know me in my unborn and eternal divine form.

I am the Supreme Person and I know all living beings in the past, present, and future, but no one knows me in truth.

At the creation of the universe, the dualities of desire and hate delude all living beings. By performing virtuous deeds, the living beings are purified.

Those who are free from the illusion of duality worship me with determination. Those who are trying to achieve freedom from disease and death place their trust and devotion in me. They understand spirit, the soul and karma.

Anyone who knows me as the Supreme Lord, the basis of the material and spiritual manifestations and the goal of all sacrifices, will not forget me even when they are facing fearful death.

Chapter 8 – The Path of Attaining the Absolute

Arjuna said, Krishna, would you please explain what spirit is. What is the soul? What is karma and what is the material world? How does the Lord of sacrifice live in the body and how can the self-controlled know you at the time of death?

Lord Krishna said, Spirit is the imperishable, eternal and absolute. The soul is the living being's eternal spiritual nature. Karma is action in connection with these material bodies, which repeatedly binds the soul to this material world of suffering.

The material world consists of the perishable and the endlessly changeable. I am the Lord of sacrifice present in the heart of every living being, witnessing, sanctioning and rewarding all actions.

Those who remember me at the time of death attain to my divine nature. There is no doubt about this. Whatever you remember when you leave your body, you will certainly attain.

Therefore, always remember me and fight as your natural duty. Fix you mind and intelligence on me and you will certainly come to me.

Anyone who practices meditation with an undiverted mind, constantly remembering the Supreme Person, will certainly come to me.

The Supreme Person knows everything and has no beginning. Although he is more subtle than the atom, he supports and maintains everything.

He illuminates like the sun and he transcends illusion and the material world. Those who remember and meditate on the Supreme Lord at the time of death will surely reach him.

Those who abandon sensual desires and are conversant with the Vedas attain the spiritual realm. The devout seekers aspiring to reach such perfection take a vow of celibacy.

Those who shut the gateways of the senses, hold the mind steady, vibrate the divine syllable Om and leave their body absorbed in consciousness of me, will undoubtedly attain the spiritual realm.

Anyone who remembers me in all circumstances and constantly aspires for my divine association easily reaches me. The great souls who reach me have attained the highest perfection.

They never return to this transitory material world, which is full of suffering. From the highest sphere in the material world down to the lowest, all living beings are subject to repeated birth and death. But there is no rebirth for anyone who reaches my abode.

The duration of one day of the creator god Lord Brahma is 4,320,000 years. And his night is the same duration. With the coming of Brahma's day, the living beings are born of Lord Brahma and at the arrival of his night, they are all absorbed into Lord Brahma. All the living beings are repeatedly born at the dawn of Lord Brahma's day and withdrawn when Brahma's night falls.

Superior to this temporary material world is my supreme abode, which is eternal and never destroyed. When this entire material world is obliterated, my abode remains unchanged.

That supreme abode is concealed and perfect and it transcends the perceptions of the living beings. It is the supreme destination. Whoever goes there never returns to this material world.

The Supreme Person pervades the entire universe and all beings are situated within him. You can only reach him by exclusive devotion.

A person who knows my glories and the glories of devotion to me surpasses the results obtained by studying the Vedas, performing sacrifice and austerity and giving charity.

By performing devoted service to me, they achieve the results of all these and reach my supreme home.

Chapter 9 – The Hidden Treasure

Lord Krishna said, Because you are not jealous, I will now reveal the hidden treasure of pure devotion. This knowledge is supreme, pure and eternal, and it will free you from the suffering of material existence.

This is the most secret knowledge and the perfection of religion. It is known by direct realisation and is easy to practise. Those who do not have faith in this path of devotion are unable to reach me. They remain wandering on the path of birth and death in this material world.

I pervade the entire universe in my undetectable form. Everything in existence is contained within me, but I am not in them. This is my inconceivable power.

I am the origin and sustainer of all living beings and I am everywhere, but I am not in them. Like the air that moves within limitless space but is separate from space, so all living beings are situated within me.

At the time of the annihilation of the universe, all beings merge into my material nature. At the beginning of a new millennium, by my external material energy I manifest them again. Through the agency of my illusory material energy, I repeatedly create all life forms.

Yet these activities do not implicate me. I remain detached and neutral in the manifestation and withdrawal of the material nature.

As directed by me, this material nature produces the universe of moving and stationary beings. This material world is created and annihilated over and over again.

The ignorant insult me when I appear in human form because they do not comprehend the spiritual nature of my form and my supremacy over

all. Such deluded people have an ignorant and atheistic nature so their activities, their hopes and their knowledge are all in vain.

The great souls who take shelter of my spiritual nature, wholeheartedly worship me, knowing me as the eternal origin of all. Constantly singing my glories, they worship me with devotion and dedication.

Others worship me in oneness, or as the one diverse in many, or as the universal form. I am the ritual, the sacrificial offering and the mantra. I am the sacrificial ingredients and I am the act of offering. I am the father and mother of this universe and the object of all knowledge.

I am the purifier and the transcendental syllable Om. I am the goal, the maintainer, the master, the witness, the refuge, the guardian and the dearest friend.

I am the universal creation and the annihilation, the foundation of everything and the immortal seed. I am the imperishable Supreme Lord. I control the heat and the rain. I am immortality, death, truth and untruth.

Those who perform the rituals prescribed in the Vedas worship the gods. In fact, they worship me indirectly. They reach the planets of the gods where they enjoy celestial pleasures.

After enjoying celestial pleasures, they return to the human sphere. They achieve only temporary enjoyment and must still undergo repeated birth and death in this material world.

For those who are always absorbed in thought of me and worship me with devotion, I supply what they need and I preserve what they have.

Those who worship the gods are actually worshipping me, but without proper awareness. I am the enjoyer and rewarder of all sacrifices, but those who are ignorant of my position fall from the path of self-realisation and take birth again.

The worshippers will reach the gods, those who worship the ancestors will go to their ancestors and those who worship ghosts and spirits will go to them. But anyone who worships me will come to me.

If anyone offers me a leaf, a flower, fruit or water with love and devotion, I will affectionately accept their offering.

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever vow you may keep and whatever austerities you may perform, do it as an offering to me.

This will liberate you from the reactions to karma that bind you to this material world. Linking your mind selflessly to me will free you and you will come to me.

I am equally disposed towards all living beings, no one is my enemy or my friend. But a tie of affection binds me to anyone who serves me with love, and affection binds them to me.

Even if an impious person serves me, you should consider them saintly because their ideal is perfect. They quickly attain virtuous practices and achieve constant peace.

O Arjuna, please declare to the world that anyone who is devoted to me is never vanquished.

Even those of lower birth and qualifications who take shelter of me can reach the highest goal. So how can there be any doubt the saintly kings and priests who engage in loving service to me will achieve the supreme goal?

Always think of me, become devoted to me and worship me. If you offer yourself to me and take shelter in me, you will surely come to me.

Chapter 10 – The Divine Glories of the Lord

Lord Krishna said, Arjuna, listen once again to my advice that I speak for your welfare.

The gods and the great sages do not know my source, because I am their origin. Only those who are wise and undeluded can know me as the Supreme Lord of all beings, unborn and without beginning.

Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from illusion, forgiveness, honesty, peacefulness, sense control, pleasure and pain, birth, death, fear, bravery, non-violence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy — all these qualities of the living beings arise from me.

The god creators of humanity are born from my mind and all living beings in the universe descend from them. I am the origin of everything.

Knowing this, the wise embrace the path of divine love and worship me with all their heart. They are always thinking of me and their lives are devoted to me. Always content and joyful, they enlighten one another with their realisations of me.

To those who are constantly devoted and lovingly engaged in serving me, I bestow the divine knowledge by which they can approach me. I reside within their hearts, and due to compassion for them, I illuminate the darkness of ignorance with knowledge.

Arjuna said, You are the Supreme Self; the ultimate shelter, purifier and saviour. All the great sages have described you as the original, eternal, Supreme Lord, the source of all opulence and the foundation of all existence. Now you are personally saying this is true.

O Krishna, I accept as true everything you have told me. Neither the celestial being nor the demons know your personality. Only you can know yourself by your own power. You are the source of everything, the Lord of all beings, controller of the gods, the Supreme Person and Lord of the universe.

Please describe in full the divine opulence by which you pervade the entire universe. O Lord of divine power, how can I be constantly absorbed in thought of you? How can I know you?

In which forms should I meditate upon you? Please describe again your mighty powers and glories, for I am never tired of listening to your heavenly words.

Lord Krishna said, My glories are infinite Arjuna, so I will only tell you of those that are most prominent. I am the Supreme Self residing in the hearts of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all creatures.

Of luminaries, I am the sun and the moon. Of gods, I am Indra, of the senses I am the mind and I am the consciousness of all living beings.

Among bodies of water, I am the ocean and of sound vibrations, I am the syllable Om. Of sacrifices, I am the chanting of the divine names and of that which is immovable, I am the Himalayas.

Among trees, I am the banyan tree. Of the heavenly sages, I am Narada and among men, I am the monarch. Of weapons, I am the thunderbolt. Among cows, I am the surabhi, the givers of abundant milk and of procreators, I am the god of love.

Of serpents I am Vasuki, the king of snakes and among law enforcers, I am Yamaraja the lord of death. Of subjugators, I am time.

Among the animals, I am the lion, and of birds, I am Garuda, the feathered carrier of Vishnu. Of purifiers, I am the wind. Among fish, I am the shark and of rivers, I am the Ganges.

Of all that is manifest, I am the beginning, the middle and the end. Of wisdom, I am knowledge of the soul and among philosophers, I am the unbiased truth.

Of letters, I am the letter A and I am also the endless flow of time. I am death, the destroyer of all and I am the source of all things yet to be.

Among the feminine qualities, I am grace, beauty, perfect speech, memory, intelligence, tolerance and forgiveness. Of months I am November and December and among seasons I am blossoming spring.

I am the gambling of cheats, the glory of the glorious and the strength of the strong. I am victory, adventure and perseverance. I am the punishment of law enforcers, the silence of secrets and the wisdom of the wise.

Arjuna, I am the origin of all existences. There is nothing animate or inanimate that can exist without me. There is no end to my divine glories.

I have given you only a hint of them. Whatever is beautiful, glorious and magnificent comes from only a fraction of my power.

But what is the need of any more detail than this Arjuna? With a single portion of myself I sustain this entire universe.

Chapter 11 – The Vision of the Universal Form

Arjuna said, My dear Krishna, you have kindly told me the most secret knowledge about your supreme nature and my illusion is now gone. I have heard your elaborate description of the creation and dissolution of the living beings and your unlimited glories.

Krishna, although I see you standing before me I would like to see the form of your unlimited opulence. If you think it is possible for me to see it, would you kindly reveal that universal form to me.

Lord Krishna said, Behold my opulence Arjuna, innumerable divine forms of many kinds, many colours and shapes. Observe all the gods and the wondrous things no one has seen before.

Whatever you desire to see, you can see all at once in this universal form. My universal form can reveal the entire universe and anything else you want to see. But you cannot see me with your own eyes, so I will give you divine vision.

Lord Krishna then revealed his magnificent universal form to Arjuna and Arjuna saw in that universal form infinite faces and eyes. Effulgent clothing and ornaments decorated his body. He wore glorious garlands and was anointed with celestial fragrances. It was all astonishing and splendorous.

His majestic and effulgent presence pervaded all-around. The radiance of that universal form of the Lord resembled the brilliance of thousands of suns rising simultaneously in the sky.

There on the battlefield, Arjuna saw the entire unlimited expansions of the universe in one, all within the body of Lord Krishna, the Supreme Person. Completely amazed and with the hairs on his body standing on

end, Arjuna bowed his head, placed the palms of his hands together and began to pray.

Arjuna said, My dear Lord Krishna, I see within Your body all the gods and all other species of life. I see the creator Lord Brahma as well as many celestial sages and serpents.

O Lord of the universe, in all directions I see your infinite form of many arms, bellies, mouths and eyes. I can see that you are without beginning, middle and end.

I see you in all directions wearing crowns, clubs and discs and it is a mass effulgence like the sun. It is difficult to behold and incomprehensible.

You are the oldest, the imperishable and the ultimate shelter of all. You are the preserver of eternal religion. I now understand you are the eternal Supreme Person.

You are without beginning, middle or end. You have countless arms and your eyes are the sun and the moon. Blazing fire is coming out of your mouth and you are heating the entire universe with your brilliance.

You pervade all directions and all the space between heaven and earth. O great one, this wondrous and fearsome form terrifies all the inhabitants of the universe.

All the gods are entering into you, fearfully offering prayers with folded hands. Seeing your vast form, all beings, including myself are afflicted with fear.

Looking at this dazzling form makes my heart tremble with fear and I cannot maintain my composure. Seeing your multitude of brilliant colours fill the skies and your gaping mouth and huge fiery eyes makes me afraid.

O Lord of lords, shelter of the universe, please have mercy on me. Seeing your blazing deathlike faces and awful teeth, I am distraught and losing my equilibrium.

All the soldiers on this battlefield are rushing into your dreadful mouths and some are being crushed by your terrible teeth. Like many rivers flowing into the ocean, all these warriors are entering your flaming mouths.

Like moths impelled to their death in a blazing fire, I can see all these people helplessly rushing to certain death into your mouths. I see you devouring all the worlds in your flaming mouths and scorching the universe with your glaring effulgence.

O fearsome one, please tell me who you are. O Lord of all, I bow before you, please be merciful to me. I cannot understand the purpose of your actions and I would like to know of it.

The Supreme Lord said, I am time, who vanquishes all, and I have come to destroy these worlds. Even if you do not kill them, all the enemy soldiers here will die. So arise Arjuna and prepare to fight.

After defeating your opponents, you will enjoy a prosperous kingdom. All these soldiers have already been killed by me, and you are only an instrument taking the credit. You only need to fight and you will be victorious over the enemy.

After hearing these words from Lord Krishna, the trembling Arjuna bowed his head and fearfully offered prayers with folded hands. In a faltering voice, Arjuna said,

It is appropriate that the world becomes joyful by singing your glories. The perfected beings worship you and the wicked fear you and scatter in all directions.

Why shouldn't they bow before you, who are the original master? O infinite one, you are the only shelter of the universe, supreme and imperishable.

You are the original primeval Person, you are the knower and that which is known. You transcend being and non-being. O Lord of infinite form, you pervade the entire universe.

You are the father and grandfather of everyone. You are air, fire, water, the ocean and the moon. I offer my homage to you over and over again.

I offer obeisances to you from the front, from behind and from all directions! O Lord of unlimited power, you are the master of infinite strength! You pervade all and therefore you are everything!

I was unaware of your greatness and called you 'Krishna' or 'my friend'. Please forgive whatever I may have done with the familiarity of affection. Whatever disrespect I have shown you while relaxing, eating or sitting, either alone or in front of friends, please forgive me.

You are the father of all beings, the venerable Lord and glorious teacher. You are the object of worship and superior to all. You have no equal, how can anyone be greater than you?

I bow down before you to offer my respects. I beg you to forgive me and excuse me for any offences I have committed, as a father excuses his son, a friend his friend or a lover his beloved.

Although I am joyful at seeing this universal form which I have never seen before, I am also afraid. Therefore, please be gracious and appear in your four-armed Vishnu form, wearing a crown and holding a club and disc. O universal Lord, kindly reveal that form to me.

Lord Krishna said, My dear Arjuna, I have shown you this universal form by my divine power. This universal form has never been seen by anyone

before. You cannot see this form by studying the Vedas, performing sacrifices, or by charity, rituals or severe austerity.

Do not be disturbed by seeing this terrible feature of mine. Do not be afraid. Now, with a contented heart you can see my four-armed form.

The Supreme Lord then displayed his four-armed form. Then once again, he revealed his charming personality of Krishna, in two-armed human form, which reassured the fearful Arjuna.

Arjuna said, Seeing this beautiful form of human features, so very beautiful, I am peaceful and composed again.

Lord Krishna said, My dear Arjuna, it is very rare for anyone to see this form, which you are now seeing. Even the gods constantly aspire for the opportunity to glimpse this divine form.

You cannot understand this eternal human-like form by studying the Vedas, or by austerity, or by charity or sacrifice.

Only by exclusive and sincere devotion is it possible to understand and know me as I am. My dear Arjuna, those who are free from all attachments, without hostility for other living beings, and serve me wholeheartedly with devotion, certainly reach me.

Chapter 12 – The Path of Devotion

Arjuna said, Of those who are exclusively devoted to worshipping you and those who meditate on the impersonal spirit, who is superior?

Lord Krishna said, In My opinion, those who faithfully worship me with exclusive devotion are superior.

But those who control their senses, view everything with an equal mind, are dedicated to the welfare of all living beings and worship my indefinable, all-pervading, impersonal aspect of spirit will eventually reach me.

Those who are attached to the impersonal conception of the Absolute must struggle to make progress. The path of attaining the impersonal spirit is difficult for the embodied soul.

But those who offer all their actions to me and worship me with devotion, I liberate them from the ocean of suffering and death.

Always focus your mind on me and absorb your intelligence in me. Then you will always abide in me. There is no doubt about this.

If you are unable to firmly focus your mind on me, then try to reach me by engaging continuously in devotional activities and practices.

If you are unable to do this, then try to offer all your actions to me, because you will attain perfection by working for me.

If that is not possible, then try to offer the results of your work to me. If you cannot do that, then try to develop knowledge of me.

However, meditation is superior to knowledge and better than meditation is the peacefulness which comes from abandoning the desire for material enjoyment.

Anyone who is without hatred and envy; is friendly and compassionate to all living beings; free from possessiveness and ego; equal in joy and sorrow; always forgiving and content; self controlled and with firm resolve; who has given their mind and intelligence to me, such a person is very dear to me.

Those who cause no anxiety to anyone and are free from elation, anger, fear and anxiety are very dear to me. Those who are detached, pure-hearted, fearless, and content with whatever comes to them are very dear to me.

Those who are neither elated nor resentful, who neither grieve nor desire, and who renounce both auspicious and inauspicious things, are very dear to me.

Those who view friends and enemies equally, are equal in honour and dishonour, heat and cold, joy and sorrow, satisfied in all circumstances, have no attachment for any residence, have a peaceful mind and are endowed with devotion, are very dear to me.

Those who wholeheartedly and faithfully follow this path of devotion to me, making me the supreme goal, are very, very dear to me.

Chapter 13 – Distinguishing Between Matter and Spirit

Arjuna said, Krishna, would you please tell me about material nature; the enjoyer; the field and the knower of the field; knowledge and the object of knowledge.

Lord Krishna said, This body is the field, and one who knows this body is the knower of the field. I am also the knower in all bodies. In my opinion to understand this body and its knower is true knowledge.

Now please hear briefly from me about the field of activity and its composition, its transformations and its causes and effects; who the knower of the field of activities is, and what his powers are. This knowledge has been taught in various Vedic literatures along with its conclusive logic.

In summary, the field of activity and its transformations consists of:

– The five gross elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether)

– The mind, intelligence and contaminated ego

– The primordial unmanifest material nature

– The five senses for gathering knowledge (nose, tongue, eyes, touch, ears)

– The five working senses (voice, legs, hands, anus and the genitals)

– The five objects of the senses (smell, taste, vision, touch and sound)

– Desire, hatred, happiness and unhappiness

– The aggregate, consciousness and convictions

All the following qualities are called knowledge and whatever is contrary to this is ignorance:

– Humility and lack of desire for honour

– Non-violence and tolerance

– Honesty and simplicity

– Cleanliness

– Steadiness and self-control

– Service to the spiritual teacher

– Detachment from the objects of the senses

– Absence of egoism

– Perception of the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease

– Non-attachment to children, spouse and household life

– Even-mindedness in desirable and undesirable circumstances

– Undeviating pure devotion to me

– Residing in a solitary place

– Indifference to association with the general mass of people

– Accepting the importance of self-realisation and the philosophical search for the Absolute Truth.

I shall now describe the object of knowledge, knowing which you will attain immortality. It is known as spirit. It has no beginning and is eternal. It is subordinate to me and transcends the cause and effect of this material world.

He pervades the entire universe. His hands, feet, eyes, faces and ears are everywhere. He illuminates all the senses, yet he is without material senses.

He is completely aloof from everything although he is the maintainer of all living beings. He transcends the modes of material nature, yet he is the master of them.

He exists within and without both the moving and the stationary. He is subtle and very difficult to comprehend. Although he is distant, he is also near. Although he is indivisible, he appears divided in all beings.

He manifests, maintains and devours all living beings. He is the light of all lights, and the unmanifest, even beyond darkness. He is knowledge, the object of knowledge, and he can be reached by knowledge. He dwells in the heart of all living beings.

I have briefly described the field of activities, knowledge and the object of knowledge. Those who are devoted to me can realise these truths and attain love for me.

The material energy and the living beings have no beginning. The changes they undergo are produced by the material energy. The material energy is the cause of all the material activities and effects, but the living being is the cause of their feelings of happiness and distress.

The living being within the material world enjoys the different forms arising from the material energy. Attachment to these material forms causes the living being to undergo repeated births, sometimes in higher species and sometimes in the lower species of life.

Within these bodies, there is also the Supreme Person. He is the witness, the sanctioner, the maintainer and protector.

Anyone who understands material nature, the living being and the Supreme Person is liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Regardless of their present circumstances, they will not take birth again.

Some perceive the Supreme through meditation, some through analysis of spirit and matter, and others through selfless action. Some, who do not know about these methods hear about this from others and so begin to worship me with faith. They also transcend death.

Everything animate and inanimate in existence is a combination of the field of activities and the knower of the field. Those who see the Supreme Soul situated with the individual soul in all bodies as the imperishable within the perishing, see with perfect vision.

Those who see the Supreme Soul in every living being, do not deceive themselves and so reach the supreme destination. Anyone who sees that the material energy performs all activities, and the soul does nothing and has no material qualities at all, sees the truth.

Those who can perceive the truth see that the different bodies of the different species of life arise from the material nature and that all living beings are situated within and originate from the one spiritual nature.

Thus they see with spiritual vision and know that the soul and the Supreme Soul are eternal and beyond the modes of nature. Although present within the body, the soul does not act, nor does any action affect the soul.

The most subtle of the material elements is space, which pervades everything although it does not combine with anything. Similarly, the soul pervading the body does not combine with the body. As the sun pervades and illuminates the entire universe, the living being pervades and illuminates the entire body with consciousness.

Those who can distinguish between the body and the knower of the body can understand the process of liberation from material nature and they reach the spiritual realm.

Chapter 14 – The Three Modes of Nature

Lord Krishna said, Now I will describe the highest of all knowledge. The sages who know this achieve the ultimate perfection.

By taking shelter of this knowledge, the soul attains the spiritual nature. Having achieved this, one is not born at the material creation nor destroyed in the material dissolution.

All forms of life are born from the womb of material nature and I am the seed-giving father. The qualities born of material nature – the mode of goodness, passion and ignorance – bind the eternal soul within the temporary body.

The mode of goodness, due to its purity is enlightening. Living within the mode of goodness binds the soul through attachment to happiness and knowledge. The mode of passion breeds desires and hungers, and binds the soul by the tie of attachment to their activities.

The mode of ignorance, which arises from darkness, causes the illusion of all living beings. The influence of ignorance binds the soul to stupor, laziness and sleep.

The mode of goodness binds the soul to material happiness, passion binds the soul to the fruits of action, and ignorance covers the knowledge of the soul and binds them to illusion.

Sometimes the mode of passion overcomes goodness and ignorance. Sometimes goodness defeats passion and sometimes ignorance defeats goodness and passion. The modes continually conquer the others in an endless battle for dominance.

When knowledge illuminates all the gates of the body, this is a symptom of the mode of goodness being dominant. When the mode of passion is

prominent, the symptoms of greed, unrest, desire and the impulse for exertion and profit develop. When the mode of ignorance predominates, the symptoms of stupor, inertia, illusion and darkness are present.

Those who die when the influence of the mode of goodness is prominent, attain to the pure celestial planets where living beings with higher knowledge reside. Those who dies with the prevalence of the mode of passion, they are born among those attached to profitable material activities. When one dies in the mode of ignorance, they take birth in an animal species.

Good actions result in purity. Passionate actions produce pain and sorrow, and ignorant actions produce darkness. Knowledge develops from the mode of goodness; greed develops from the mode of passion; and from ignorance comes confusion, foolishness and illusion.

Those situated in the mode of goodness ascend upward; those in the mode of passion stay in the middle; and those in the mode of ignorance descend to the lower planes of suffering.

When you see that these three modes of material nature are the only impetus for action in this world, and the Supreme Lord is beyond these modes, then you can attain my divine nature. Transcending these three modes, the soul becomes free from birth, old age and death and tastes the nectar of immortality.

Arjuna said, Krishna, what are the symptoms of someone who is beyond these modes? How do they act and how do they transcend the modes of nature?

Lord Krishna said, Those who have transcended the modes of material nature do not hate illumination, attachment and delusion when they appear, nor desire them when they disappear.

They are not distracted or concerned by the modes of nature, knowing it is only the modes that act.

They look upon dirt, rocks or gold with the vision of equality; they see joy and sorrow as alike; they are wise; remain the same in honour and dishonour and they consider blame and praise to be equal.

They behave fairly with both friends and enemies and they have abandoned all mundane endeavours. Such people are said to have transcended the modes of nature.

Those who do not deviate in any circumstance from serving me with devotion transcend the modes of material nature and come to know their internal spiritual identity.

I am the foundation of that spiritual nature, which is eternal, imperishable, immortal and supreme bliss.

Chapter 15 – The Supreme Person

Lord Krishna said, The Vedic scriptures say this material world is like a banyan tree with its roots above and its branches down below. Those who know this tree know the Vedas.

The leaves of the tree represent the verses of the Vedic scriptures. The branches represent the living beings, and the twigs represent the objects of the senses.

Nourished by the three modes of material nature, some of the branches extend downward to human and lower species and some branches extend upward to the planes of celestial gods.

The tree has some roots going down which take root in the world of karma and these nourish the tree. These roots represent the human endeavour to enjoy the profits of action.

Within this world, the form of this tree cannot be realised. You cannot perceive its beginning, middle or end. With the sharp axe of detachment from the mundane, you should cut down this illusory tree of material existence. Then, having reached the plane from which you do not return, you should take refuge in the Supreme Lord.

Those who are free from illusion, vanity, and unholy association; dedicated to self-realisation; without material desire and free from the duality of joy and sorrow reach the eternal realm.

The sun, the moon or fire do not illuminate my supreme eternal home. Those who reach that abode never return to this material world.

The individual living beings are an eternal fragment of me. Although they are eternal, due to material life they have accepted the five senses and the mind.

The living beings, masters of their bodies, transfer their perceptions of life from one body to another. Leaving or accepting a physical body, the soul transports the perceptions of the senses and the mind to another body, as the wind gathers fragrances and carries them on the air.

On accepting another physical body, the soul presides over the five senses gathered around the mind and enjoy the objects of their senses.

The deluded cannot see the soul coming and going or enjoying within the body. Those enlightened with knowledge can see this. The sincere seekers of truth can see all this, but the ignorant and impure cannot see the soul despite their attempts to do so.

Know that the brilliance of the sun, which illuminates this entire world comes from me. The light of the moon and the radiance of fire also arises from me. I enter into the earth and maintain all beings with my energy. In the form of the moon, I nourish all the crops.

I am the power of digestion in the body of every living being and the outward and inward vital air of life. I am within the hearts of all and from me, memory, knowledge and forgetfulness arise. I am the author and knower of the Vedas.

There are two types of beings, the mortal and the immortal. In the material world, every living being is mortal because they have fallen from their true spiritual nature. But those situated in their eternal spiritual nature are known as immortal.

Distinct from both these types is the Supreme Person. He has entered these material worlds and is maintaining the entire universe.

Because I am transcendental to the mortal beings, and superior to my immortal eternal associates, my glories are sung both in the world and in the scriptures as the Supreme Person. Whoever knows me as the Supreme

Person of eternal, all-conscious and blissful form, knows the quintessential truth and therefore worships me in all respects.

Arjuna, I have now explained the most sacred and secret knowledge of the Vedic scriptures. Anyone who comprehends this has wisdom and will achieve the ultimate success.

Chapter 16 – The Pious and Impious Natures

Lord Krishna said, The qualities of people with a pious nature are fearlessness; purity of heart; development of spiritual knowledge; charity and generosity; self-control; sacrifice; study of the Vedas; austerity and simplicity; non-violence; honesty; freedom from anger; detachment from the mundane; tranquillity; disinclination to find fault with others; compassion; freedom from greed, envy, malice and the passion for honour; gentleness and modesty; steadfastness; forgiveness and patience and cleanliness.

The impious qualities are pride, vanity, anger, arrogance, cruelty and ignorance.

The pious qualities are the cause of liberation, whereas the impious qualities are the cause of bondage. You need not worry Arjuna, because you possess the pious qualities.

In this world the living beings are of two natures – the pious and the impious. I have elaborately described the pious qualities, now hear from me about the impious.

The impious cannot distinguish between right and wrong action. Purity, truth or correct behaviour cannot be found in them. They say this world has no law and order, no basis and no God in control. They say male and female union creates this world and that life has no cause other than lust.

Holding such a perspective, the impious, who are decadent and have no intelligence, engage in cruel and harmful actions that will destroy the world. The impious surrender to insatiable desires, pride and arrogance, and so they adopt false ideas and engage in misconduct and wrongdoing.

They think the goal of human life is the enjoyment of sensual pleasure and so they remain burdened with endless anxieties until death. Bound by a web of hundreds of desires and overcome by lust and anger, they try to amass wealth by any means, in order to satisfy their desires.

The impious person says, 'Today I have so much wealth, and tomorrow I will gain more. This wealth is all mine, and I will get even more in the future. I have destroyed one of my enemies, and I will destroy others. I am successful, powerful and happy. I am rich and aristocratic. Who can compare with me? I shall perform sacrifices, give some charity, and enjoy myself.'

These people are deceived by ignorance. Confounded by anxiety, strongly attached to sensual enjoyment and caught in a web of illusion they descend into a hellish existence.

They are conceited, impudent and intoxicated by their wealth and false prestige. Ignoring the scriptural rules and regulations, they hypocritically perform sacrifices in name only.

Bewildered by egotism, pride, power, lust, and anger, they abuse me: the Supreme Self present in their own body and in the bodies of others.

I cast those who are envious, resentful, cruel and decadent into the ocean of material existence in various impious species of life. Repeatedly being born into the impious species, these people cannot approach me and they descend to the most degraded planes of existence.

Lust, anger and greed are the three gates which lead to hell. You must abandon them because they destroy self-realisation. Those who avoid these three gates endeavour for the welfare of the soul and thus reach the supreme destination.

Those who act according to their own desires without regard for the scriptural regulations cannot achieve perfection, happiness, or the ultimate goal.

The scriptures are the authority for determining right and wrong action. Knowing the scriptural rules and regulations regarding your duty in this world, you should act accordingly.

Chapter 17 – The Three Types of Faith

Arjuna said, Krishna, what is the position of those people who perform worship with faith but disregard the scriptural rules and regulations? Is their worship in the mode of goodness, passion or ignorance?

Lord Krishna said, Faith arises from the modes of material nature developed by the embodied living beings. Faith can have the quality of goodness, passion or ignorance.

Faith is an element of the living beings true nature. Thus, the faith of each living being corresponds to their individual consciousness. The living beings have a particular type of faith according to the qualities of material nature that predominate.

Those with faith in the mode of goodness worship the gods, those with faith of a passionate nature worship the demoniac, and those with faith in the mode of ignorance worship ghosts and evil spirits.

Those motivated by pride, lust and egotism perform severe austerities not sanctioned by the scriptures. They torment their bodies and the Supreme Self within. Such people have a demoniac faith.

According to their dispositions under the modes of nature, people also prefer three kinds of food, as well as three types of sacrifice, austerity and charity. Now hear about these.

Food that increases longevity and gives strength, vitality, health, happiness and satisfaction are preferred by people in the mode of goodness. Such food is nourishing, succulent, sustaining and palatable.

Food that is too bitter, sour, salty, pungent, dry and hot appeal to those in the mode of passion. Such food causes pain, sorrow and disease.

Those in the mode of ignorance like food that is tasteless, stale, putrid and unsuitable for offering in sacrifice.

Sacrifice performed in accordance with scriptural regulations by those who have no desire to enjoy personal reward, is sacrifice in the mode of goodness.

Sacrifice performed with expectation of some material profit, or performed as a display of pride and grandeur, is sacrifice in the mode of passion.

Sacrifice performed that disregard the scriptural injunctions, where no offered food is given in charity, no chanting of the appropriate mantras, no gifts to the priests and without faith, is sacrifice in the mode of ignorance

Worship of the Supreme Lord, the priests and the spiritual teacher done with cleanliness, simplicity, celibacy and non-violence are austerities of the body.

Speech that does not disturb others; speech that is truthful, pleasing and beneficial to others; and regular recitation of the Vedic scriptures are verbal austerities.

Austerity of the mind consists of gentleness, serenity, stability, self-control and purity of thought.

When those who desire only to please the Supreme Lord practice this threefold austerity of thought, word and deed, it is austerity in the mode of goodness.

Austerities performed for the sake of material gain, praise or honour, are austerities in the mode of passion. Such austerities are unstable and transient.

Austerities performed foolishly, causing pain to oneself or others, are austerities in the mode of ignorance.

Charity given as a matter of duty; without expecting anything in return; at the appropriate time and place; to a worthy recipient, is charity in the mode of goodness.

Charity given reluctantly, expecting something in return or desiring the results, is charity in the mode of passion.

Charity given scornfully, at the wrong time and place, to an unworthy recipient, is charity in the mode of ignorance.

Any sacrifices, charity and austerities that are performed without faith in the ultimate goal are temporary. Such activities can never bestow a favourable result, so they are futile in this world and the next.

Chapter 18 – The Path to Freedom

Arjuna said, Krishna, I would like to understand the difference between renunciation and detachment.

Lord Krishna said, Renunciation means giving up actions motivated by personal reward and detachment means giving up the results of actions. Some say you should give up all actions, but others say you should never abandon acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity.

Now listen to my conclusion about the three kinds of renunciation. You should not abandon acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity because they purify the heart. But you should perform even these activities without attachment or expectation of a reward. That is my supreme conclusion.

You should never renounce the duties prescribed by the scriptures. To abandon routine duties out of illusion is false renunciation, or renunciation in the mode of ignorance.

Those who abandon prescribed duties considering them a cause of inconvenience or due to fear of bodily discomfort, perform renunciation in the mode of passion. Thus, they do not achieve the results of genuine detachment.

Performing routine work as a matter of duty and renouncing all attachment and material desire is renunciation in the mode of goodness. Those in the mode of goodness are free from all doubts. They do not resent unpleasant duties nor are they attached to pleasant duties.

It is impossible for the embodied soul to renounce all action. However, renouncing the fruits of action is true renunciation. Those who aspire for the fruits of their actions receive three types of rewards: good, bad and mixed. But the true renunciant there are no such results.

O Arjuna, now hear from me of the five factors by which are action is accomplished. These are the body, the performer, the senses, the endeavour, and destiny or the Supreme Self.

These five factors are the cause of whatever action you perform with your body, mind or speech. Those who believe they are the only performer, not considering the five factors, do not understand the actual situation.

Knowledge, the knowable, and the knower are the three factors that stimulate action. The attempt, the action and the performer are the constituents of action.

Knowledge, action and the performer of action are classified according to the three modes of material nature. Now hear about these.

Knowledge in the mode of goodness sees one undivided and imperishable nature in all the different species of living beings.

Knowledge in the mode of passion considers a different type of living being to be residing in the different types of bodies.

Knowledge in the mode of ignorance considers insignificant matters to be ultimate and is irrational, bigoted and devoid of the spiritual conception.

Action prescribed by the scriptures, performed with detachment and without desire or aversion, is action in the mode of goodness.

Action performed by a person desiring the results, with great trouble and effort, is action in the mode of passion.

Action in the mode of ignorance is undertaken out of delusion and without considering the consequences, ones' capacity to perform it or the harm it inflicts to others.

A worker in the mode of goodness is unattached, enthusiastic, patient and unaffected by success or failure.

A worker in the mode of passion is attached to the results of action, envious, cruel, greedy and affected by joy and sorrow.

A worker in the mode of ignorance engages in actions not sanctioned in the scriptures, procrastinates and is uncontrolled, arrogant, deceitful, offensive, sullen and lazy.

Now hear my description of the three different types of intelligence and determination according to the three modes of material nature.

Intelligence in the mode of goodness can distinguish between danger and safety, bondage and liberation and right and wrong action.

Intelligence in the mode of passion cannot distinguish between what should be done from what should not be done, or between right and wrong action.

Intelligence in the mode of ignorance is the deluded perception that accepts wrong as right and takes everything as the opposite of reality.

Determination in the mode of goodness is indestructible and continually controls the mind, the senses and all their actions.

Determination in the mode of passion pursues profitable rewards in an attempt to fulfil worldly desires.

Determination in the mode of ignorance does not go beyond dreaming, fear, sorrow and dejection.

Now hear from me about the three kinds of happiness. Happiness in the mode of goodness arises from the serenity of self-realisation. In the beginning, it seems like poison but ultimately it is like nectar.

Happiness in the mode of passion arises from the contact of the senses with their objects. In the beginning, it seems like nectar but it is ultimately like poison.

Happiness in the mode of ignorance is delusion from beginning to end. It is blind to self-realisation, and arises from sleep, laziness and negligence.

There is no living being in existence, either on the earth or among the celestial gods, who is free from these three modes arising from the material nature.

According to these qualities of nature, the duties of the four classes of society are classified.

Tranquillity, self-control, simplicity, honesty, purity, tolerance, wisdom, knowledge and faith in God are the natural duties of the priestly section of society.

Bravery, energy, endurance, expertise, courage in battle, generosity and leadership are the natural qualities of work for the governing class.

Agriculture, tending of cattle and trade are the natural duties for the merchants. Service to others is natural for the workers.

By performing the duties prescribed for your natural qualification and inclination, you can attain perfection. By executing your duties, you worship the Supreme Lord from whom all beings originate and who pervades the entire universe.

It is better to perform your natural duties imperfectly than to perform another's duties perfectly. Karmic reactions do not affect those who perform the duties prescribed according to their nature.

Even if you execute your prescribed duties imperfectly, you should not abandon them. All action is covered by some imperfection, as smoke covers a fire.

Those who are self-controlled and detached from material enjoyments attain the higher stage of transcending all duties by renouncing the fruits of their activities.

Arjuna, now hear from me how one who has transcended all duties can reach the spiritual reality, the supreme end of knowledge.

One who has intelligence with the quality of goodness; controls the mind with determination; renounces the objects of the senses; abandons attachment and aversion; is free from the association of materialistic people; is a moderate eater; restrains the body, speech and mind; is always absorbed in thought of the Supreme Lord; is detached from the material world; has given up ego, power, pride, lust, anger, and possessiveness – such a person is qualified for self-realisation.

The enlightened souls who have realised their spiritual nature never grieve or desire anything. They see all living beings equally. In that state, they achieve loving devotion to me.

Only through loving devotion can you understand me as I truly am. Knowing me in truth, you can enter into my eternal home. Although performing all kinds of actions, if you take refuge in me, by my grace you can achieve the eternal and imperishable abode.

Offering every action to me, keep me as the supreme objective. Being devoted to me, always think of me and you will overcome all obstacles. If due to pride, you do not listen to me, you will be lost.

Because of pride, you are thinking you will not fight. Your resolution is futile because your nature will compel you to fight. Due to illusion, you

are now refusing to fight. But impelled by the duty born of your own nature you will inevitably act.

The Supreme Lord resides in the hearts of everyone. He directs the movements of all living beings, who are seated on a machine made of material energy. Surrender to him with your whole heart. By his grace, you will attain the supreme peace and your eternal home.

I have revealed the most secret knowledge to you. Please consider this completely and then do whatever you wish.

Listen once more to my supreme teaching, the most confidential knowledge. I speak this for your benefit, because you are very dear to me.

Think of me always and devote yourself to me. Worship me and bow down to me and then you will certainly reach me. I promise you this because you are very dear to me. Give up all religion and surrender to me alone. Don't be afraid, I will free you from all reactions.

You should not disclose this confidential knowledge to those who are not self-controlled, who are faithless, adverse to my service, or envious of me.

Anyone who reveals this supreme secret to those who are devoted to me will achieve divine love for me and undoubtedly reach me. There is no one who pleases me more than one who explains this supreme secret to the devoted, and there will never be anyone who is dearer to me.

Anyone who studies this holy conversation of ours, is worshipping me with their intelligence. Simply hearing this conversation with faith will liberate you from suffering and you will reach the abode of the virtuous souls.

Arjuna, have you listened to this attentively? Are you now free from ignorance and illusion?

Arjuna said, My dear Krishna, by your grace my illusion is gone. I have regained my composure and removed my doubts. I am firm in my resolve and ready to follow your advice.

Thus ends the conversation of Lord Krishna and Arjuna. The message is so wonderful it inspires joy in the hearts of all.

You have heard these most confidential talks directly from the Supreme Lord of yoga, Lord Krishna himself.

Wherever there is the Lord of yoga, Krishna, and wherever there is the great archer Arjuna, there will be fortune, victory, prosperity and virtue.