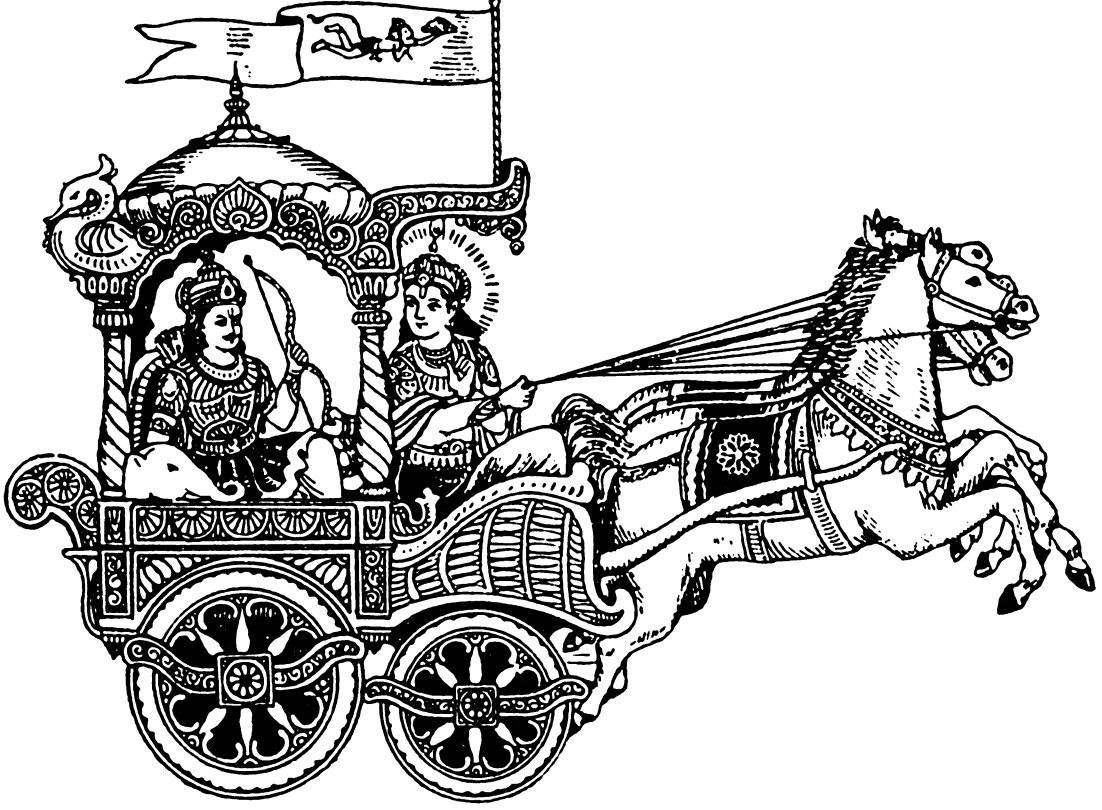


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chapter one

the progress of the dependency of arjuna

Dhritarashtra said:

Assembled there on dharma's field–
Kurukshetra–desiring war,
What did my sons and the Pandus?
Do tell me now, O Sanjaya. 1

Sanjaya said:

There then the King Duryodhana,
Seeing the Pandav forces ranged–
Ready for battle–did approach
His teacher, Drona, and did say: 2

“Behold, O Teacher! here arrayed
This great army of Pandu's sons,
Assembled by Drupada's son¹
Who is thine own gifted pupil. 3

“Here are heroes, mighty archers,
Bhima and Arjuna's equals,
The great warriors Yuyudhana,
Virata and Drupada, too. 4

“Drishtaketu, Chekitana,
And the valiant king of Kashi,
Purujit and Kuntibhoja,
And Shaibya—all the best of men. 5

“And courageous Yudhamanyu,
And valorous Uttamaujas–
Shubhadra's and Draupadi's sons–
All who are mighty car warriors.² 6

¹ Arjuna

² A great-car-warrior (maharatha) was a commander of eleven thousand bowmen as he rode in his chariot.

“Hear, too, O best of the twice-born,
Those distinguished among ourselves.
The leaders of my army here:
These now I recount unto you. 7

“Yourself and Bhishma and Karna
And Kripa, victorious in war;
Ashwattama, Vikarna, and
Somadatta’s son: all are mine. 8

“Also many other heroes,
Who now risk their lives for my sake,
Discharging various weapons,
All very skilled in waging war. 9

“Impossible to count is this
Army defended by Bhishma,
But that army led by Bhima
Is very easy to number. 10

“Stationed in your proper places,
Whatever be your positions,
Do you now all give your support
And protection unto Bhishma.” 11

That powerful, oldest Kuru,
Bhishma, the grandsire, blew his conch
And sounded loud a lion-roar
That he might cheer Duryodhana. 12

Following Bhishma, suddenly
Conches, kettledrums, cymbals, drums
And trumpets were sounded aloud,
So the uproar was tremendous. 13

Then Madhava³ and Pandava,⁴
In the great chariot standing
That was yoked with the white horses,
Sounded forth their divine conches. 14

Sri Krishna blew Panchajanya,
Arjuna blew Devadatta,
And Bhima of ferocious deeds,
Blew upon his great conch, Paundra. 15

King Yudhishthira, Kunti's son,
Blew on Anantavijaya,
Nakula and Sahadeva:
Sughosha, Manipushpaka. 16

The supreme bowman, Kashi's king,
And the great warrior Shikhandi,
Dhristadyumna and Virata,
And invincible Satyaki. 17

O Lord of Earth! then Drupada,
All the sons of Draupadi, and
Subhadra's son, the mighty-armed,
Each one blew upon his own conch. 18

Then throughout heaven and the earth
Resounded the terrific noise
Which rent asunder all the hearts
Of those in Dhritarashtra's ranks. 19

Then seeing Dhritarashtra's ranks
Standing marshalled, about to fight,
The monkey-ensigned⁵ Pandava,
Was impelled to take up his bow 20

³ Krishna

⁴ Arjuna

⁵ Arjuna's standard was a flag with Hanuman, the monkey-devotee of Rama, depicted on it.

And speak unto Hrishikesha,⁶
 O Lord of earth, these fateful words:
Arjuna said:
 Achutya,⁷ place my chariot
 In the midst between the armies 21

So from that place I may observe
 Those who are here prepared for war–
 Desiring to begin battle–
 And know with whom I have to fight. 22

For I desire to observe those
 Who are assembled here for fight,
 Wishing to please Duryodhana
 By taking his side in this war. 23

Sanjaya said:
 Commanded thus by Arjuna,
 O Bharata, then Krishna drove
 That grandest of all chariots
 Between the two hosts, and there stopped. 24

Thus facing Bhishma, Drona, and
 The rulers of the whole vast earth,
 “Behold, O Partha,”⁸ then He said,
 “All the Kurus assembled here!” 25

Then Pritha saw assembled there
 Fathers, grandfathers, teachers, sons,
 Maternal uncles, brothers, and
 Grandsons as well as friends of his. 26

The son of Kunti, seeing there
 In both the armies relatives,
 Fathers-in-law, and companions,
 Stood and contemplated them all. 27

⁶ Bushy-haired One–Krishna

⁷ Imperishable One–Krishna

⁸ The Son of Pritha–Arjuna

Then filled with infinite pity, And filled with despondence, he spoke: <i>Arjuna said:</i> Krishna, I see my own kinfolk Desiring to fight approaching.	28
Through sorrow my limbs now fail me, My mouth is parched with grief and woe. My body now is shivering, My hair is standing up on end.	29
My bow is slipping from my hand, My skin is burning as with fire. Nor can I even stand upright, My mind is reeling and confused.	30
Inauspicious omens I mark, And not good fortune do I see, O Keshava, ⁹ if I destroy My own kinsmen in this battle.	31
Nor do I desire victory– No, not kingship nor yet pleasures– Kingship, enjoyments surely mean Nothing to us, O Govinda. ¹⁰	32
Those for whose sake we should desire Kingship, enjoyments, and pleasures, Array before us in battle, Abandoning life and riches.	33
Teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers, Maternal uncles, and grandsons, Fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law, And many other kinsmen, too.	34

⁹ Beautiful-haired one–Krishna.

¹⁰ Cowherd–Krishna

Even if they wish to kill me,
I never could wish to kill them–
Not even to rule the three worlds,
So how much less for rule of earth? 35

Indeed, what pleasure could be ours,
From killing Dhritarashtra's sons?
Sin only could take hold of us
If we should slay these aggressors. 36

We are not justified to kill
Our kinsmen–Dhritarashtra's sons–
How, having killed our own people,
Could we be happy, Madhava? 37

Their thoughts overpowered by greed,
They see no wrong in destruction
Of family or even in
Wreaking treachery upon friends. 38

Yet why should we, Janardana,¹¹
Who clearly see the evil caused
By such destruction of our kin,
Not turn away from this fell sin? 39

On destruction of families,
Their rites of dharma then die out,
From the destruction of dharma,
Adharma overwhelms them all. 40

Overpowered by adharma
The family's women then are
Corrupted, and from corruption
The confusion of castes arise. 41

From caste confusion families
And their destroyers fall to hell;
Ancestors also fall without
Offerings of rice and water. 42

¹¹ Agitator of Men (an epithet of Vishnu)–Krishna

The family's destroyers' wrongs
Produce the confusion of caste,
Then observance of caste duties
And family laws are destroyed. 43

Have we not heard, repeatedly,
That indefinite time in hell
Accrues to those whose fam'ly laws
Have been wiped out, Janardana? 44

Ah! Alas! we are now resolved
To do great evil with our greed
For royal pleasures for whose sake
We intend to kill our own kin. 45

If the sons of Dhritarashtra
With weapons armed should now slay me
Though unarmed, yet that still would be
A greater happiness for me. 46

Sanjaya said:

In the midst of the battlefield
Thus speaking, Arjun' cast away
His bow and arrows and sank down,
His mind overcome with sorrow. 47

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the first discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Despondency of Arjuna.

chapter two

इन्द्रकिया योग

Sanjaya said:

To him who was thus overcome
By pity, and whose eyes were filled
With tears, downcast and despairing,
Madhusudana¹² spoke these words: 1

The Holy Lord said:

Whence has come this faintheartedness
Of yours in the time of danger
Ignoble, not leading to heav'n,
But to disgrace, O Arjuna? 2

At no time should you entertain
Such cowardice—unsuitable.
Abandon this faintheartedness
And stand up, O Scorcher of Foes! 3

Arjuna said:

But how can I in battle fight
With arrows, Madhusudana,
Against Bhishma and Drona, too,
Who are worthy of reverence? 4

Better that I eat the food of beggary
Instead of my slaying these great-souled gurus.
If I kill them my enjoyments in this world
Of wealth and desires will all be stained with blood. 5

Indeed, I cannot tell which will be better,
That we should conquer them or they conquer us.
The sons of Dhritarashtra stand facing us—
After whose slaying we would not wish to live. 6

¹² Destroyer of the Demon Madhu (properly an epithet of Vishnu)—Krishna

Weakness and pity overcome my being,
With mind in confusion I supplicate You,
O say decidedly what is my duty.
I am Your disciple, do You direct me. 7

I see nothing that can remove this sorrow
That dries up my senses, though I should attain
The unrivalled and prosperous dominion
Over the earth, and mast'ry over the gods. 8

Sanjaya said:

Having said this to Govinda,
Arjuna, scorcher of his foes,
Then further said "I shall not fight,"
And fell into a silence deep. 9

To him who thus was despondent
In the midst of the two armies,
O Bharata, as though smiling
Hrishikesha then spoke these words: 10

The Holy Lord said:

You have been mourning for those who
Should not be mourned for, though you speak
Words of wisdom—for the wise grieve
Not for the living or the dead. 11

Truly there never was a time
When I was not, nor you, nor these
Lords of men—nor in the future
A time when we shall cease to be. 12

As to the embodied childhood,
Youth and old age arise in turn,
So he gets another body—
The wise are not confused by this. 13

Truly material contacts Produce cold, heat, pleasure, and pain. Impermanent, they come and go, Learn to endure them, Bharata.	14
He whom these things do not afflict, The same in pain or in pleasure, That wise one, O Leader of Men, Is fit for immortality.	15
The unreal never comes to be, The real does never cease to be. The certainty of both of these Is known to those who see the truth.	16
That by Which all is pervaded– Know That is indestructible. There is none with the power to Destroy the Imperishable.	17
These bodies inhabited by The eternal embodied Self Are declared to come to an end. Therefore now fight, O Bharata. ¹³	18
He who thinks the Self is slayer And he who thinks the Self is slain– Neither of the two understands; The Self slays not, nor is it slain.	19
Neither is the Self slain, nor yet does it die, Nor having been will it e'er come not to be, Birthless, eternal, perpetu'l, primeval, It is not slain whene'er the body is slain.	20

¹³ Literally: "These bodies inhabited by the eternal, indestructible, immeasurable, embodied Self are said to come to an end. Therefore fight, Bharata!"

In what way can he who knows this—
Indestructible, eternal,
Birthless and imperishable—
Slay or cause another to slay? 21

Even as a man casts off his worn-out clothes
And then clothes himself in others which are new
So the embodied casts off worn-out bodies
And then enters into others which are new. 22

This self by weapons is cut not;
This self by fire is burnt not;
This self by water is wet not;
And this self is by wind dried not. 23

This self cannot be cut, nor burnt,
Nor wetted, nor dried: 'tis changeless,
All-pervading and unmoving,
Immovable, eternal self. 24

Unmanifest, unthinkable,
This Self is called unchangeable.
Therefore, knowing this to be such,
You surely ought never to mourn. 25

And if you think this self to have
Constant birth and death—even then,
O mighty-armed, you should not be
Impelled for this reason to grieve. 26

Of that which is born, death is sure,
Of that which is dead, birth is sure.
Over the unavoidable,
Therefore you never should lament. 27

All beings are unmanifest
In their beginning, Bharata,
Manifest in their middle state,
Unmanifest then in their end.¹⁴ 28

¹⁴To maintain the meter, there was no room for the final phrase: "What lamentation can there be over this?"

Someone perceives this self as being wondrous,
Another speaks of it as being wondrous,
Another hears of it as being wondrous,
And another, hearing, does not understand. 29

This indweller in all bodies
Is ever indestructible.
Therefore you should not, Bharata,
Ever mourn for any creature. 30

And looking at your own dharma,
You surely ought never waver,
For there is nothing better than
A righteous war for Kshatriyas. 31

Fortunate are those Kshatriyas,
Who thus are called, O Arjuna,
To fight in a battle like this,
That comes to them as heaven's gate. 32

But if you refuse to engage
In righteous warfare, Arjuna,
Then forfeiting your own dharma
And honor you shall incur sin. 33

The world will also ever hold
You as a craven reprobate.
To the honored such disrepute
Is surely worse even than death. 34

The great car-warriors will believe
You shrink back from battle through fear.
And you will be lightly esteemed
By those who have thought much of you. 35

Your enemies, then cavilling
At your great prowess, then will say
Of you things not to be uttered.
What could be greater pain than this? 36

By dying you attain heaven;
Conquering, you enjoy the earth.
Therefore, O son of Kunti, rise,
In strength of heart resolved to fight. 37

Make pain and pleasure, gain and loss,
victory and defeat the same,
Then engage now in this battle.
This way you shall incur no sin. 38

This buddhi yoga¹⁵ by Sankhya¹⁶
Is now declared to you—so heed!
Joining this insight to your will,
You shall be rid of karma's bonds. 39

In this no effort is wasted,
Nor are adverse results produced.
E'en a little of this dharma
Protects you from the greatest fear. 40

There is a single, resolute
Understanding here, Arjuna.
The thoughts of the irresolute
Are many-branched, truly endless. 41

They, the ignorant ones, proclaim
Their flow'ry speech, O Pritha's son,
Delighting in the Veda's word,
And saying: "There is nothing else." 42

Filled with desires, intent on heav'n,
Off'ring rebirth as actions' fruit,
Addicted to so many rites,
Whose goal is enjoyment and pow'r. 43

¹⁵ Buddhi Yoga is the Yoga of Intelligence which later came to be called Jnana Yoga, the Yoga of Knowledge.

¹⁶ Sankhya: One of the six orthodox systems of Hindu philosophy whose originator was the sage Kapila, Sankhya is the original Vedic philosophy, endorsed by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. (Gita 2:39; 3:3,5; 18:13,19. Also, the second chapter of the Gita is entitled: Sankhya Yoga.). The *Ramakrishna-Vedanta Wordbook* says: "Sankhya postulates two ultimate realities, Purusha and Prakriti. Declaring that the cause of suffering is man's identification of Purusha with Prakriti and its products, Sankhya teaches that liberation and true knowledge are attained in the supreme consciousness, where such identification ceases and Purusha is realized as existing independently in its transcendental nature." Not surprisingly, then, Yoga is based on the Sankhya philosophy.

Attached to pleasure and power
Their minds are drawn away by this
Speech, and to them is not granted
The insight from meditation. 44

The Vedas deal with the gunas;
Free yourself from them, and be free
From the pairs of opposites, and
Eternally fixed in the self.¹⁷ 45

For the Brahmin who knows the self
The Vedas are of no more use
Than a reservoir of water
When there is a flood ev'rywhere. 46

Your right is to action alone,
Not to its fruits at any time.
Never should they move you to act,
Or be attached to inaction. 47

Then being steadfast in yoga,
Without attachment do actions
Heedless of success and failure—
Evenness of mind is yoga. 48

Action's inferior by far
To Yoga of Intelligence.¹⁸
Seek refuge in enlightenment,
Abhor action done from desire. 49

Joined to enlightenment, cast off
In this world good and evil deeds;
Therefore to yoga yoke yourself!
For skill in action is yoga. 50

¹⁷ "The Vedas deal with the three gunas. Be free, O Arjuna, from the triad of the gunas, free from the pairs of opposites, ever-balanced, free from [the thought of] getting and keeping, and established in the Self."

¹⁸ Buddhi yoga

Those whose minds are joined to wisdom,
Having abandoned action's fruit,
Are freed from bondage to rebirth
And go to the place free from pain. 51

When your intelligence crosses
Beyond delusion's confusion,
Then you shall be indifferent
To the heard and the to-be-heard. 52

When your intellect stands, fixed in
Deep meditation, unmoving,
Disregarding Vedic doctrine,
You'll attain self-realization. 53

Arjuna said:

What, Krishna, is the description
Of the man of steady wisdom,
Steadfast in deep meditation—
How does he speak, or sit, or walk? 54

The Holy Lord said:

When he completely casts away
All the desires of the mind,
His self satisfied by the self,
He is called "of steady wisdom." 55

Unshaken by adversity,
And freed from desire for pleasures,
Free from passion, fear, and anger,
Steady in thought—such is a sage. 56

Without attachment on all sides,
In the pleasant or unpleasant
Not rejoicing or disliking,
His wisdom is seen to stand firm. 57

And when he withdraws completely
The senses from the sense-objects,
As the tortoise draws in its limbs,
His wisdom is established firm. 58

Sense-objects turn away from the
Abstinent, but the taste for them
Remains, but that, too, turns away
From him who has seen the Supreme. 59

Know this indeed, Son of Kunti:
The turbulent senses carry
Away forcibly the mind of
E'en the striving man of wisdom. 60

Restraining all senses, he should
Sit disciplined, intent on Me;
He whose senses are thus controlled—
His wisdom stands steadfast and firm. 61

Dwelling on objects of senses
Engenders attachment to them;
From attachment desire is born;
And from desire¹⁹ anger is born. 62

From anger 'rises delusion;
From delusion, loss of mem'ry;
From loss of mem'ry, destruction
Of intelligence: All is lost. 63

Desire and loathing banishing,
Moving amongst objects of sense,
By self-restraint, the self-controlled
Thus attains to tranquility. 64

In tranquility all sorrows
Cease to arise for him, indeed;
For the tranquil-minded at once
The intellect becomes steady. 65

¹⁹That is, thwarted desire.

For the undisciplined there is
No wisdom, no meditation,
For him who does not meditate
There is no peace or happiness. 66

When the mind is guided by the
Wandering senses, it carries
Away the understanding, as
The wind a ship on the waters. 67

The wisdom of him whose senses
Are withdrawn from objects of sense
On all sides, O mighty-armed one,
Will be found firmly established. 68

The man of restraint is awake
In what is night for all beings;
That in which all beings awake
Is night for the wise one who sees. 69

As the ocean, becoming full,
Yet remains unmoving and still,
He in whom all desires enter
And yet remains, unmoved, has peace.²⁰ 70

He who abandons all desires
Attains peace, acts free from longing,
Indifferent to possessions
And free from all egotism.²¹ 71

This is the divine state—having
Attained this, he’s not deluded.
Fixed in it at the time of death,
He attains Brahmanirvana.²² 72

²⁰ The literal translation is: “Like the ocean, which becomes filled yet remains unmoved and stands still as the waters enter it, he whom all desires enter and who remains unmoved attains peace; not so the man who is full of desire.”

²¹ Pronounce as four syllables: e-go-tis-m.

²² Nirvana is the state of liberation from the bondage of karma and the wheel of birth and death that comes from knowing Brahman. Brahman is the Supreme Reality, the Absolute Consciousness that is God.

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the second discourse entitled: Sankhya Yoga.

chapter three

the yoga of action

Arjuna said:

If you believe that knowledge is
Better than action, Keshava,
Then how is it you urge me to
Engage in terrible action? 1

With speech that seems equivocal
You confuse my intelligence.
Tell me surely this one thing: How
Should I attain the highest good? 2

The Holy Lord said:

In this world there is a two-fold
Basis taught by Me long ago:
Knowledge: the yoga of Sankhyas,
And action: yoga of yogins. 3

Not by abstention from actions
Does a man pass beyond action,
And not by renunciation
Alone approach to perfection. 4

No one for even a moment
Exists without doing action;
Each is forced to perform action—
E'en against his will—by gunas.²³ 5

He who restrains action's organs
While yet revolving in his mind
Thoughts of objects of the senses,
Is deluded, a hypocrite. 6

²³ "By the gunas born of prakriti." Prakriti: Causal matter; the fundamental power (shakti) of God from which the entire cosmos is formed; the root base of all elements; undifferentiated matter; the material cause of the world. Also known as Pradhana.

He who by the mind controls the
Senses, and yet is unattached
While engaging action's organs
In action, is superior. 7

Perform your duty, for action
Is far better than non-action.
Even maintaining your body
Cannot be done without action. 8

The world is bound by the actions
Not done for sake of sacrifice;
Hence for sacrifice, Arjuna,
You should act without attachment. 9

In the beginning with mankind
Prajapati²⁴ made²⁵ sacrifice,
Said: "By this shall you multiply:
This shall be granter of desires. 10

"May you foster the gods by this,
And may the gods then foster you;
Then, each the others fostering,
You shall attain highest welfare. 11

"The gods, fostered by sacrifice,
Will give you desired enjoyments;
But he who enjoys the gods' gifts
Without offering is a thief." 12

Eating sacrificial remains,
The good are freed from all evils;²⁶
The wicked eat their own evil
Who cook food only for themselves. 13

²⁴ Prajapati: Progenitor; the Creator; a title of Brahma the Creator.

²⁵ i.e., created

²⁶ I.e., wrongdoings.

From food all beings are produced:
And from rain all food is produced:
From sacrifice there comes down rain;
From action is born sacrifice. 14

Action arises from Brahma,²⁷
Brahma from th' Imperishable.
Hence the all-pervading Brahma
Is established in sacrifice.²⁸ 15

He who here on the earth does not
Set in motion, O Arjuna,
This wheel, lives full of sense delights,
Maliciously and uselessly. 16

He who is content in the Self,
Who is satisfied in the Self,
Who is pleased only in the Self:
For him there is no need to act. 17

He has nothing to gain by acts;
Nothing to gain by inaction;
And no need of any being
For any purpose soever. 18

Therefore, constantly unattached
Perform that which is your duty.
Indeed by unattached action
Man surely attains the Supreme. 19

Indeed, perfection was attained
Through action by King Janaka.
For the maintenance of the world,
As an example you should act. 20

²⁷ Brahma: The Creator (Prajapati) of the three worlds of men, angels, and archangels (Bhur, Bhuvah, and Swah); the first of the created beings; Hiranyagarbha or cosmic intelligence.

²⁸ Many translators feel that "Brahma" in this verse can legitimately be rendered "Veda"—Veda in the sense of divine wisdom, Vidya. On the other hand, it is positively believed by all Hindus that Brahma attained his position specifically through the performance of sacrifice (yajna). So "Brahma" is quite logical here.

Whatever the best of men does–
This and that–thus other men do;
Whate'er the standard that he sets–
That is what the world shall follow. 21

I have no duty, Pritha's son,
Whatsoever in the three worlds,
Nor anything that must be gained–
Yet still I continue to act. 22

Indeed, if I should not engage–
Tirelessly–at all in action,
Then all mankind would, everywhere,
Follow the path set forth by Me. 23

Yea, these worlds would perish if I
Should fail to engage in action,
I would be confusion's maker,
And I would destroy these people. 24

As the unwise ones act, attached,
O Descendant of Bharata,
So the wise should act, unattached,
For maintaining the world's welfare. 25

One should not unsettle the minds
Of the unwise attached to works;
The wise should cause them to enjoy
All acts–himself showing the way. 26

All actions, in all instances,
Are done by Prakriti's gunas;
Those with ego-deluded mind
Imagine: "I am the doer." 27

And yet, the man who knows the truth
About the gunas' actions thinks:
"The gunas act in the gunas,"²⁹
And thinking thus is not attached. 28

Those deluded by the gunas
Of prakriti become attached
To their actions. Let not the wise
Upset these of partial knowledge. 29

Entrusting all actions to Me,
Intent on the Supreme Spirit,
Free from desire and selfishness,
With your fever³⁰ departed, fight! 30

Those men who constantly practice
This teaching of Mine, full of faith,
Not contemning, they are released
From the bondage of their actions. 31

But those despising My teaching,
Who thus refuse to practice it,
Turn wisdom into confusion.
Know them to be lost and mindless. 32

Even the wise acts according
To his own nature: prakriti.
All follow their own prakriti;
So what will restraint accomplish? 33

Attraction and aversion rule
When senses contact sense-objects.
One should not come under their pow'r,
They are indeed his enemies. 34

²⁹That is, the gunas as the senses move among and act within the gunas manifesting as the sense-objects.

³⁰The "fever" of delusion and grief.

One's own dharma, though imperfect,
Is better than another's done
To perfection. For the dharma
Of another invites danger. 35

Arjuna said:

Then by what is a man impelled
To commit evil, Varshneya,³¹
Seemingly against his own will,
As if urged thereunto by force? 36

The Holy Lord said:

It is desire, it is anger,
That's born of the rajo-guna:
Of great craving, and of great sin;
Know that to be the enemy. 37

As fire is enveloped by smoke,
As mirrors are obscured by dust;
As wombs cover the embryos,
So is it enveloped by that. 38

And knowledge is covered by this,
The constant foe of all the wise,
O son of Kunti, know it as
Desire's unappeasable fire. 39

The senses, mind, and intellect
Are said to here be its abode:
These things delude the embodied
By veiling his innate wisdom. 40

Therefore, controlling the senses
At the outset, O Bharata,
Kill it—the sinful, destroyer
Of knowledge and realization. 41

³¹ Clansman of the Vrishnis–Krishna

Above the body are senses;
Above the senses is the mind;
Above the mind is intellect;
Above the intellect: the self. 42

Thus, knowing Him Who is above
The intellect, and restraining
The self by the Self, then destroy
That enemy, that foe: desire. 43

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the third discourse entitled: The Yoga of Action.

chapter four the yoga of wisdom

The Holy Lord said:

This imperishable yoga

I taught to Vivaswat, then he

In turn taught it to Manu, who

Then taught it unto Ikshwaku. 1

Thus, handed down in succession,

The royal sages knew of it.

This yoga, by long lapse of time,

Was lost here on earth, Arjuna. 2

This ancient yoga is today

Declared by Me to you because

You are my devotee and friend,

This secret is supreme indeed. 3

Arjuna said:

O Krishna, later was Your birth,

And Vivaswat's was earlier.

How then should I understand that

You taught this in the beginning? 4

The Holy Lord said:

Many the births that I have passed—

Many passed by you, Arjuna.

I have full knowledge of them all,

While you do not, Scorcher of Foes. 5

Though birthless, imperishable,

Although the Lord of all beings,

Controlling my own Prakriti,

I manifest by my own pow'r. 6

Whenever dharma decreases,
O Bharata, and then there is
The arising of adharma,
Then do I manifest Myself. 7

For protection of the righteous
And destruction of the wicked,
For establishing of dharma,
I manifest from age to age. 8

He who thus knows in its true light,
My divine birth and My action,
Leaving the body, is not born
Again—but he attains to Me. 9

Freed from attachment, fear, anger—
Absorbed, taking refuge in Me,
Purified by fire of knowledge,
Many have attained My Being. 10

In whatever way they resort
To Me do I thus reward them.
It is My path which ev'rywhere
All men follow, O Arjuna. 11

Longing for success in action,
In this world men worship the gods,
Because success from such action
Is quickly attained in this world. 12

The fourfold caste was made by Me,
Based on guna and on karma.
Though I am the Maker thereof,
Know Me as non-doer, changeless. 13

Never do actions taint Me, nor
Do I thirst for action's result.
And whosoever knows Me thus
Is not fettered by his actions. 14

Knowing thus, the ancient seekers After freedom performed action. Do you, therefore, perform action, As did the ancients in past times.	15
Even sages are bewildered As what is action, inaction. I shall tell you what action is: This knowledge frees you from evil.	16
For you should know the nature of Actions enjoined, prohibited, As well as that of inaction– All this is hard to understand.	17
Seeing inaction in action, Seeing action in inaction– Such a man is wise among men: A yogi–doing all action.	18
Whose undertakings are devoid Of plan and desire for results, Whose actions are burnt in the fire Of knowledge–him the wise call wise.	19
Having abandoned attachment For action’s fruit, always content, Not dependent e’en when acting, He truly does nothing at all.	20
Acting with the body alone, Without wish, thought and self restrained, Abandoning all thoughts of gain, Though acting he incurs no fault.	21
Content with what comes unbidden, Beyond duality, envy, The same in success or failure, E’en though acting, he is not bound.	22

Having gone beyond attachment,
His mind established in knowledge,
Who acts only as sacrifice:
His whole karma dissolves away. 23

Brahman is the off'ring and the
Oblation made by Brahman in
The fire that is Brahman. Who sees
Thus, by him Brahman is attained.³² 24

Some yogis offer sacrifice
To gods alone, while some others
Offer the self as sacrifice
Unto the self in Brahman's fire. 25

Some offer senses like hearing
Into the fires³³ of restraint;
Some, sound and other sense objects
Into the fire of the senses. 26

Some offer the senses' actions
And the functions of life force in
The yoga-fire of self-control,
That is enkindled by knowledge. 27

Some offer wealth, austerity,
And yoga as their sacrifice,
Some, of restraint and stringent vows,
Offer knowledge as sacrifice. 28

Some offer the outgoing breath
Into the incoming breath, and
Then stop the course of both the breaths—
Their breath-control their sacrifice.³⁴ 29

³² "Brahman is the offering, Brahman is the oblation poured out by Brahman into the fire of Brahman. Brahman is to be attained by him who always sees Brahman in action."

³³ Pronounced as two syllables: "fi-yers."

³⁴ "Others offer inhalation into exhalation, and exhalation into inhalation, restraining the path of inhalation and exhalation, intent on control of the vital breath (prana)."

While those of regulated food
Offer it to digestive fires.
All these, knowers of sacrifice,
Destroy their sins by sacrifice. 30

Eating sacrificial remains,
They go to the Primal Brahman.
Neither this world nor the others
Are for the non-sacrificing. 31

Sacrifices of many kinds
Are spread out before Brahman's face.
All of them are born from action;
Thus knowing you shall be released. 32

Better than mere material
Sacrifice is that of knowledge.
All action without exception
Is comprehended³⁵ in knowledge. 33

Know that by prostrating yourself,
By questioning and by serving,
The wise who realized the truth
Will instruct you in that knowledge. 34

Know this, and you shall not again
Become deluded, Arjuna.
By this you shall come to see all
Creation in your self and Me. 35

Even if you should be the most
Sinful among all the sinful,
Yet you would cross over all sin
By the raft of knowledge alone. 36

As fire reduces wood to ash,
In the same way, O Arjuna,
The fire of knowledge does reduce
To ashes all karma—know this. 37

³⁵That is, contained (encompassed) or completed in knowledge (jnana).

Within this world there is nothing
So purifying as knowledge.
In time, the perfect in yoga
Finds that knowledge within his heart. 38

The man of faith, and devoted,
And the master of his senses,
Attains this knowledge, and having
Attained quickly finds Supreme Peace. 39

The ignorant man, without faith,
The doubting, goes to destruction.
The doubter has neither this world,
Nor yet the next, nor happiness. 40

With work renounced by yoga and
Doubts rent asunder by knowledge,
Actions do not, Dhananjaya,³⁶
Bind him who is poised in the self. 41

Cutting with the sword of knowledge
This doubt about the self which is
Born of ignorance in your heart,
Take refuge in yoga: arise! 42

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the fourth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Wisdom.

³⁶ Conqueror of Wealth–Arjuna

chapter five

the yoga of renunciation of action

Arjuna said:

Renunciation of action

And yoga³⁷—You praise both of these.

Which is the better of these two?

Tell this to me decisively. 1

The Holy Lord said:

Renunciation and yoga

Both lead to highest happiness;

Of the two, however, yoga

Excels mere renunciation. 2

He is a constant renouncer

Who neither likes nor dislikes: for

Free from the pairs of opposites,

He easily is freed from bonds. 3

“Sankhya and yoga are different,”

The childish declare—not the wise.

If one is practiced correctly,

That person finds the fruit of both. 4

The place attained by the Sankhyas

Is also attained by yogis.

Sankhya and yoga are one. He

Who perceives this truly perceives. 5

Without yoga, O Mighty-Armed,

Renunciation’s hard to gain.

The sage disciplined in yoga

Quickly attains unto Brahman. 6

³⁷That is: Karma Yoga, the yoga of detached action.

Yoga-yoked, with self purified,
With self subdued, senses conquered,
His self the self of all beings,
He is not tainted when acting. 7

“I do not do anything;” thus
Thinks the steadfast knower of truth,
Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling,
Eating, walking, sleeping, breathing. 8

Speaking, releasing, and holding;
Opening and closing his eyes—
Convinced that it is the senses
That move among the sense-objects. 9

Offering actions to Brahman,
Having abandoned attachment,
He acts untainted by evil
As lotus leaf is not wetted. 10

Yogis act only with body,
Mind, intellect, or the senses,
Forsaking attachment to deeds,
For purifying of their heart. 11

Well-poised, forsaking action’s fruit,
They attain peace of steadfastness;
But those led by desire are bound
By attachment to action’s fruit. 12

Renouncing all acts with the mind,
The embodied sits happily³⁸
Within the city of nine gates,
Not acting or causing actions. 13

Neither agency, nor actions
Does the Lord create for the world,
Nor union with the fruit of deeds—
Inherent nature does the deeds. 14

³⁸ “As the ruler” omitted here to fit the meter.

The Omnipresent takes note of
Neither merit nor demerit.
Ignorance envelops knowledge,
By it people are deluded. 15

But those whose ignorance has been
Destroyed by knowledge of the self–
That knowledge of theirs, like the sun,
Reveals then the Supreme Brahman. 16

With intellect absorbed in That,
Whose self is That, steadfast in That,
And whose consummation is That,
Purified, are freed from rebirth.³⁹ 17

The wise see the same atman in:
A wise Brahmin who's disciplined,
A cow, an elephant, a dog–
Even in an eater of dogs.⁴⁰ 18

Those whose minds rest in evenness,
Conquer existence in this world.
Brahman is even and perfect–
So they indeed rest in Brahman. 19

Resting in Brahman, and steady
In intellect, undeluded,
The pleasant does not rejoice him
Nor does the unpleasant grieve him. 20

Unattached to external things,
Finding happiness in the Self,
And one with Brahman through yoga,
He gains unchanging happiness. 21

³⁹ “They whose minds are absorbed in That, whose selves are fixed on That, whose basis is That, who hold That as the highest object, whose evils have been shaken off by knowledge, go to the end of rebirth.”

⁴⁰ Dogs in India are wild animals related to jackals and hyenas.

Pleasures born of contact, indeed, Are wombs of pain, Son of Kunti. They have beginning and an end; The wise does not delight in them.	22
He who can endure here, before Liberation from the body, Desire and anger's impetus, Is a yogi, a happy man.	23
He whose happiness is within, Whose delectation is within, Whose light is within—that yogi, One with Brahman, gains nirvana.	24
With imperfections exhausted, Doubts dispelled and senses controlled, Engaged in good for all beings— The seer gains Brahma-nirvana.	25
Released from desire and anger, With thoughts restrained, those ascetics Who know the Self, find very near The bliss of Brahma-nirvana.	26
Excluding all outside contacts, Fixing awareness 'tween the brows, Balancing both inhaling and Exhaling within the nostrils.	27
Controlling sense, mind, intellect; With moksha as the supreme goal; Freed from desire, fear, and anger: Such a sage is for ever free.	28
Knowing Me, the Enjoyer of Sacrificial austerities, Mighty Lord of all the world and Friend of all creatures, he gains peace.	29

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fifth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Renunciation of Action.

chapter ६ the yoga of meditation

The Holy Lord said:

He who performs bounden duty
Without desiring action's fruit—
He is a renouncer, yogi,
Not he without fire or action. 1

Know that to be karma yoga
Which also is called renouncement,
None becomes a karma yogi
Without renouncing inner deeds. 2

Desiring to attain yoga,
The wise use action as the means;
For him who has attained yoga,
Tranquility becomes the means. 3

When he is attached neither to
The sense objects nor to actions,
And has renounced all purposing,
He's said to have attained yoga. 4

He should lift himself by the Self;
He should never degrade himself;
The Self is indeed the self's friend,
And the self's only enemy. 5

For him who has conquered himself
By the Self, the Self is a friend;
But for him who has not conquered
Himself, the Self remains a foe. 6

The highest Self of him who has
Conquered himself and is peaceful,
Is steadfast in cold, heat, pleasure,
Pain; and honor and dishonor. 7

The yogi who is content in Knowledge and discrimination, With senses conquered—unto him Earth, stone, and gold are all the same.	8
He attains eminence who looks The same on well-wishers, friends, foes, Neutral to enemies and kin, The righteous and the unrighteous.	9
Constantly concentrating on The Self, the yogi should remain Alone, with thought and self controlled, Without desires or possessions.	10
Establishing for himself in A clean place, not too high or low, Covered with a cloth and with a Antelope skin and kusha grass,	11
With mind one-pointed, thought controlled, Senses subdued, let him sit there On that seat and practice yoga For his self-purification.	12
Holding his body, head, and neck Erect, motionless and steady, Looking t'ward the tip of his nose Steadfastly, not looking around.	13
With mind quieted, fear banished, Firm in the brahmachari's vow, With mind controlled, thoughts fixed on Me, He should sit, devoted to Me.	14
Always disciplining himself, The yogi whose mind is subdued Goes to nirvana, supreme peace, And attains to union with Me.	15

Yoga is not eating too much,
Nor is it not eating at all.
Not the habit of too much sleep,
Nor keeping awake, Arjuna. 16

For the moderate in eating
And in diversion, disciplined,
Moderate in sleep and waking,
Yoga destroys all his sorrow.⁴¹ 17

When he is absorbed in the Self
Alone, and with his mind controlled,
Free from longing, from all desires,
Then he is known to be steadfast. 18

As a lamp in a windless place
Flickers not—to such is compared
The yogi with his mind controlled,
Steadfast in yoga of the Self. 19

When the mind comes to rest, restrained,
By the practicing of yoga,
Beholding the Self by the self,
He is satisfied in the Self. 20

When he feels that infinite bliss—
Through his purified intellect—
Which transcends the senses; then set
In his true state he is steadfast. 21

Having obtained this, he regards
No other gain better than that,
And established therein he is
Not moved by heaviest sorrow. 22

⁴¹ “For him who is moderate in food and diversion, whose actions are disciplined, who is moderate in sleep and waking, yoga destroys all sorrow.”

Let that which is called yoga be Known as the state of severance From pain, and which should be practiced With perseverance, undisturbed.	23
Abandoning wilful desires– All of them without exception– Also completely restraining The many senses by the mind.	24
With intellect set in patience, With the mind fastened on the self, He gains quietude by degrees: Let him not think of any thing.	25
Whenever the unsteady mind, Moving here and there, wanders off, He should subdue and hold it back– Direct it to the Self's control.	26
The yogi whose mind is tranquil With passions calmed, free of evil, Having become one with Brahman, Attains the supreme happiness.	27
Thus constantly disciplining Himself, and freed from all evil, Easily contacting Brahman, He attains boundless happiness.	28
He, disciplined by yoga, sees The Self present in all beings, And all beings within the Self. He sees the same Self at all times.	29
The one who sees Me ev'rywhere, And who sees all things within Me; I am never lost unto him, Nor is he ever lost to Me.	30

He, established in unity,
Worships Me dwelling in all things,
Whatever be his mode of life,
That yogi e'er abides in Me. 31

He who judges pleasure or pain
By the same standard ev'rywhere,
That he applies unto himself,
That yogi is deemed the highest. 32

Arjuna said:

This yoga which is taught by You
Characterized by evenness,
I do not see how it endures,
Owing to the mind's restlessness. 33

The mind is restless, turbulent,
Strong, and unyielding, O Krishna;
I deem it is hard to control—
As hard as to control the wind. 34

The Holy Lord said:

Without doubt the mind is restless
And is difficult to control;
But through practice and dispassion
It may be governed, Kunti's son. 35

Yoga is hard to be attained
By one whose self is uncontrolled;
But that one who is self-controlled,
Striving by right means, attains it. 36

Arjuna said:

Possessed of faith, but uncontrolled,
With mind wandering from yoga,
What is the end of him who fails
To gain perfection in yoga? 37

Does he not, fallen from both,⁴² then
Perish, supportless, a torn cloud,
O mighty-armed, deluded in
The path that leads unto Brahman? 38

This doubt of mine, O Keshava,
You should now completely dispel;
It is not possible for aught
But You to dispel this my doubt. 39

The Holy Lord said:
Verily, O son of Pritha,
There is no destruction for him
Neither here nor hereafter, for
Doers of good ne'er come to grief. 40

He gains the worlds of the righteous,
And dwells there throughout countless years;
Then the fallen yogi takes birth
Among the pure and prosperous. 41

Or else he will be born into
A family of wise yogis;
Verily, a birth such as that
Is hard to obtain in this world. 42

There he regains the knowledge which
He acquired in his former life,
And strives even more than before,
For perfection, O Kuru's son. 43

His previous practice alone
Impels him on the yogic path—
He who just asks about yoga
Rises above the Vedic rites. 44

⁴² Both worlds—the here and the hereafter, earth and heaven.

That yogi, striving earnestly,
Pure from taint, gradually gains
Perfection throughout many births
And thus reaches the highest goal. 45

The yogi is regarded as
Superior to ascetics,
And jnanis, or doers of works—
Then be a yogi, Arjuna! 46

Of all the yogis, he who with
The inner self merged into Me,
With faith devoted unto Me,
I deem him as the most steadfast. 47

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the sixth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Meditation.

chapter इएवढ

the path of जइवेतल and realization

The Holy Lord said:

With your mind intent upon Me,
Taking refuge in Me, now hear
How through the practice of yoga
You shall fully come to know Me. 1

To you I shall explain in full
Knowledge and realization,⁴³
Which, being known, nothing further
Remains to be known in this world. 2

Of thousands of human beings,
Scarcely one strives for perfection;
And of those adept in striving,
Scarcely any knows Me in truth. 3

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind,
Intellect, ego-principle:
These are the eight divisions of
My prakriti, O Arjuna.⁴⁴ 4

Such is my lower prakriti,
Yet know my higher prakriti
Sustains all beings that exist
And the whole cosmos, Mighty Armed. 5

These two Prakritis should be known
As the womb of all these beings.
Of this whole universe am I
The Origin and Dissolver. 6

⁴³ Pronounced as five syllables: "Re-a-li-za-tion."

⁴⁴ I have inserted "Arjuna" in this verse to fill out the meter, just as in the first verse of this chapter I had to omit "Son of Pritha" to maintain it.

Higher than Me, Dhananjaya, There is absolutely nothing. All creation is strung on Me Like strands of jewels on a thread.	7
I am the taste within water, The radiance of moon and sun; I am Om in all the Vedas, Sound in ether, manhood in men.	8
I am the fragrance within earth, And the brilliance within the fire; The life in all beings, and the Austerity of ascetics.	9
Know me as the eternal seed Of all beings; th'intelligence Of the intelligent, and the Splendor of the splendid am I.	10
I am the strength of the strong, free From all desire and from passion. I am the desire in beings That is according to dharma.	11
States of being which are sattwic, Rajasic and tamasic ⁴⁵ -know As proceeding from Me, yet I Am not in them, but they in Me.	12
All this world is deluded by The states composed of the gunas. Thus it perceives Me not, Who am Eternal and higher than these.	13
This divine illusion of Mine Is difficult to go beyond. Only those devoted to Me Shall pass beyond this illusion.	14

⁴⁵ These three states will be discussed in Chapter Fourteen.

But those not devoted to Me—
Evil-doers, deluded, low—
Deprived by Maya of good sense,
Follow the way of the demons. 15

These four kinds of virtuous men
Do worship Me, O Arjuna:
The distressed, seekers of welfare,
Seekers of knowledge, and the wise. 16

Of them, the wise man, e'er steadfast,
Devoted to the One, excels;
Supremely dear am I to him,
And he is dear to Me, as well. 17

All these indeed are exalted,
But I see the man of wisdom
As My Self. He, with mind steadfast,
Abides in Me, the Supreme Goal. 18

At the end of his many births
The wise man takes refuge in Me.
He knows: "All is Vasudeva."⁴⁶
How very rare is that great soul! 19

Others, deprived of their good sense,
By "this or that" desire or rite,
Devote themselves to other gods,
Impelled thus by their own natures. 20

Whatever form a devotee
May seek to worship with full faith—
That faith of his is blessed by Me
To be steadfast, unwavering. 21

Endowed with faith he then receives
His desires from that worshipped form
Because I have decreed that those
Desires should be granted to him. 22

⁴⁶ "He who dwells in all things"—the Universal God.

But temporary is the fruit
 For those of small understanding.
 To the gods go their worshippers;
 My worshippers come unto Me. 23

The unintelligent think Me
 Manifest, though Unmanifest,
 Not knowing My supreme state as
 Unchanging and transcendental. 24

Veiled by illusion born of the
 Combinations of the gunas,
 This deluded world knows Me not—
 The Unborn, the Immutable. 25

I know the departed beings,
 Also the living, Arjuna,
 And those who are yet to be born;
 But none whatsoever knows me. 26

By desire and hatred rising
 Through duality's delusion,
 At birth all beings fall into
 Delusion, O Scorcher of Foes. 27

But those men of virtuous deeds,
 They whose sin has come to an end,
 Freed from the pairs of opposites—
 They worship Me with firm resolve. 28

Those men who take refuge in Me
 Seek freedom from old age and death;
 They know Brahman thoroughly, and
 Know the Self and Karma as well. 29

Those who know Me, the Primal One,
 The Primal God, Chief Sacrifice,
 They truly know Me with steadfast
 Thought even at the time of death. 30

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the seventh discourse entitled: The Yoga of Wisdom and Realization.

chapter eight

the yoga of imperishable brahman

Arjuna said:

What is Brahman and Primal Self,
And what is Karma, O Krishna,
What is the Primal Element,
Also, what is the Primal God? 1

Who, and in what way, is Primal
Sacrifice here in this body?
And how are You known at the time
Of death by the self-controlled ones? 2

The Holy Lord said:

Deathless is the Supreme Brahman
The Primal Self that dwells in all;
The sacrificial offering:
Karma-causing both birth and life. 3

The Primal Element is the
Perishable adjunct of this;
The Primal God is Indweller,
And I the Primal Sacrifice. 4

And he who at the time of death
Meditating on Me alone,
Goes forth, and leaving the body,
Doubtless attains to My Being. 5

Whatever he remembers when
Departing from the body, that
Alone is reached by him because
Of his constant thinking of that. 6

Therefore, at all times, constantly
Remember Me, and then do fight:
With mind and intellect absorbed
In Me, you thus shall come to Me. 7

With mind made steadfast by yoga,
Which turns not to anything else,
To the divine supreme Spirit
He goes, meditating on Him. 8

He who meditates on the Seer, the Ruler,
The ancient, subtler than the atom, support
Of all, Whose form is inconceivable and
Radiant like the sun and beyond darkness. 9

At the hour of death with his mind unmoving,
Endowed with devotion and with yoga pow'r,
With the prana ent'ring between the eyebrows,
He goes unto the divine supreme Spirit. 10

That which Veda-knowers call the Eternal,⁴⁷
Which the ascetics, free from passion, enter;
Desiring which they live as brahmacharins,
That path I shall explain unto you briefly. 11

Controlling all of the senses,
Confining the mind in the heart,
Drawing pranas into the head,
Doing yogic concentration, 12

Uttering OM, the syllable
That is God, and intent on Me,
Departing thus from his body,
He then attains the Goal Supreme. 13

He who thinks of Me constantly,
Whose mind does never go elsewhere,
Yogi of constant devotion—
For him I am easy to reach. 14

⁴⁷ Or: Imperishable.

Reaching the highest perfection,
Having attained Me, those great souls
Are no more subject to rebirth–
The evanescent home of pain. 15

All worlds, including Brahma's realm,
Are subject to rebirth's return,
But for him who attains to Me
There is no rebirth, Kunti's Son. 16

The knowers of true "day" and "night"
Know Brahma's Day and Brahma's Night
Are each a thousand yugas⁴⁸ long–
And each one comes unto an end. 17

At the approach of Brahma's Day,
All manifested things come forth
From the unmanifest, and then
Return to that at Brahma's Night. 18

Helpless, the same host of beings
Being born again and again,
Merge at the approach of the Night
And emerge at the dawn of Day. 19

But beyond this unmanifest
There is the Unmanifested,
Eternal Existence, Which is
Not destroyed when all beings merge. 20

The unmanifest, eternal,
Is declared as the Supreme Goal,
Attaining Which they return not.
This is My supreme dwelling place. 21

Yea, this is the Supreme Being,
Attained by devotion alone,
Within Which all beings do dwell,
By which all this is pervaded. 22

⁴⁸ One thousand yugas—one "day" (or "night") of Brahma—is 4,320,000,000 years long.

Now I shall tell you, Arjuna,
Of the times in which, departing,
The yogis shall once more return
Or, departing, shall not return. 23

Fire, light, daytime, the bright fortnight,
The six months of the sun's North Path–
Knowers of Brahman take this path
And thereby go unto Brahman. 24

Smoke, nighttime, and the dark fortnight,
The six months of the sun's South Path–
Taking this path the yogi gains
The lunar light, and thus returns. 25

Truly these two light and dark paths
The world thinks to be eternal.
By one he goes to non-return;
By the other, returns again. 26

No yogi who knows these two paths,
O Pritha's son, is deluded.
Therefore, be steadfast in yoga
Throughout all times, O Arjuna. 27

Whatever merit is declared
As gained from Vedas, sacrifice,
Austerity and gifts–yogis
Surpass and gain the Great Abode. 28

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the eighth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Imperishable Brahman.

chapter nine

the yoga of the kingdom science and kingdom secret

The Holy Lord said:

To you who argue not shall I
Declare this most secret knowledge
Which, when joined with realization,
Shall free you from impurity. 1

Royal knowledge, royal secret,
This the supreme purifier,
Readily learned by the righteous,
Easy to practice, eternal. 2

Those without faith in this dharma,
Return, without attaining Me,
To the path of birth in this world—
The realm of death, O Arjuna. 3

All this world is pervaded by
Me in My unmanifest form:
All beings do dwell within Me,
But I do not dwell within them. 4

Nor do beings dwell within Me—
Behold this, My Divine Yoga!
Bringing forth and supporting them,
My Self yet does not dwell in them.⁴⁹ 5

As mighty winds move ev'rywhere,
Yet always dwell in the ether,
Know, Arjuna, that even so
Do all beings dwell within Me. 6

⁴⁹ The idea of these two verses is that we draw our being from God; God does not draw His being from us. We are contained in Him, He is not contained in us.

At the end of a kalpa,⁵⁰ all
Beings merge in My Prakriti:
At dawn of another kalpa,
I Myself send them forth again. 7

Animating My Prakriti,
I project again and again
This whole multitude of beings,
Helpless under Prakriti's sway. 8

And yet these acts do not bind Me,
Sitting as one indifferent
And fully unattached to them:
This is the truth, Dhananjaya. 9

Because of My proximity,
Prakriti produces all this,
The moving and the unmoving;
The world revolves because of this. 10

Unaware of My higher state
As the Great Lord of all beings,
The deluded disregard Me
Dwelling within a human form. 11

Of vain hopes, vain deeds, vain knowledge,
Without sense—truly they abide
In the delusive nature of
The rakshasas⁵¹ and asuras.⁵² 12

But those great souls that abide in
Their divine nature, Arjuna,
Worship Me single-mindedly,
As their eternal Origin. 13

⁵⁰ A kalpa is a Day of Brahma—4,320,000,000 years. It alternates with a Night of Brahma of the same length. In the Day of Brahma creation is manifest and in the Night of Brahma it is resolved into its causal state.

⁵¹ Rakshasa: There are two kinds of rakshasas: 1) semidivine, benevolent beings, or 2) cannibal demons or goblins, enemies of the gods. Meat-eating human beings are sometimes classed as rakshasas.

⁵² Asura: Demon; evil being (a-sura: without the light).

Glorifying Me always and Striving ever with firm resolve, Bowing to Me in devotion, Always steadfast, they worship Me.	14
And others, sacrificing by The sacrifice of pure knowledge, Worship Me, the All-Formed, as one, As distinct, and as manifold.	15
I am the rite, the sacrifice, The offering, the offered things, I am the mantra and the ghee, The fire, and act of oblation.	16
Father and Mother of this world, Sustainer, Grandfather, the Known, ⁵³ Purifier, the Pranava, The Rig, Sama, Yajur Vedas.	17
Goal, Supporter, the Lord, Witness, Abode, Refuge, Friend, Origin, Dissolution, and Substratum, Storehouse, Seed Imperishable.	18
As the sun I give heat and I Withhold and send forth rain; I am Both immortality and death; Being and non-being am I!	19
The knowers of the three Vedas worship Me By sacrifice, by drinking Soma, and thus Made pure from sin pray for passage to heaven; ⁵⁴ Gain worlds and enjoy pleasures of the Devas.	20

⁵³The “to be known,” the object of knowledge.

⁵⁴ Surendralokam—the world of Indra, king of the “gods” who control the forces of nature. This is a comparatively lower realm of development in the cosmos.

Having enjoyed the heaven-world, with merit
Exhausted, they re-enter the mortal world.
Thus, keeping the injunctions of the Vedas,
Filled with desires, they constantly come and go. 21

Those who direct their thoughts to Me,
Worshipping Me with steadfast mind,
For them I secure what they lack
And preserve that which they possess. 22

Even those who with faith worship
Other gods, also worship Me,
Though with a mistaken approach⁵⁵–
This is the truth, Son of Kunti. 23

Truly I am the Enjoyer,
And Lord of all sacrifices;
But because they do not know Me
They return, subject to rebirth. 24

To the gods go their devotees;
To fathers go their devotees;
To spirits go their devotees;
And to Me go My devotees.⁵⁶ 25

Whoe'er with devotion offers
A leaf, flower, fruit, or water,
That I accept–the devout gift
Offered by the pure-minded one. 26

⁵⁵ The words “with a mistaken approach” is the best I can do with *avidhipurvakam*. It literally means “not according to the rules” or even “without/outside the rules.” The idea seems to be that these people do not know or understand how to worship God because they do not know or understand the nature of God. Other possible terms–ignorantly, incorrectly, mistakenly, improperly, inappropriately, inappositely, inaptly, ineptly, haphazardly, irregularly–either express a value judgment or add an extra meaning or attitude the Sanskrit does not include.

⁵⁶ “Gods” (devas) are the demigods presiding over various powers of material and psychic nature. “Fathers” (pitris) are ancestors or other departed human beings. “Spirits” (bhutas) are non-human nature spirits, some of them subhuman (“elementals”), but this classification can also include earthbound human spirits. All of these may be either positive or negative.

Whate'er you do, whate'er you eat,
Whate'er you sacrifice or give,
Whate'er austerity you do,
Do that as offering to Me. 27

Thus shall you be freed from the bonds
Of actions—both good and evil;
Steadfast in renunciation
And freed, you shall come unto Me. 28

I am the same to all beings:
To me none is disliked or dear.
But those worshipping Me, devout,
Are in Me, and I am in them. 29

If even an evildoer
Worships me single-heartedly,
He should be considered righteous,
Truly having rightly resolved. 30

Quickly he becomes virtuous
And goes to everlasting peace.
O Son of Kunti, understand:
My devotee is never lost. 31

Women, Vaishyas, also Shudras,
Even those born of evil wombs,
All those who take refuge in Me
Also go to the Supreme Goal.⁵⁷ 32

How much more, then, holy Brahmins
And devoted royal⁵⁸ sages!
Having obtained this transient
And joyless world, then worship Me. 33

⁵⁷ At the time of Krishna, and even today in India, some ignorant people, denying the truth of the Self, claim that only Brahmin and Kshatriya males can attain liberation—and they have to be from “good” backgrounds. Krishna denies this.

⁵⁸ Kshatriya

With mind fixed on Me, devoted,
Worshipping, bowing down to Me,
Thus made steadfast, with Me as your
Supreme aim—you shall come to Me.

34

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the ninth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Kingly Science and Kingly
Secret.

chapter ten

the yoga of divine glories

The Holy Lord said:

Now hear from Me the supreme word
Which I speak to you, Mighty-Armed,
For you are beloved to Me.
I speak desiring your welfare. 1

Neither the multitude of gods
Or great seers know My origin.
In truth I am the source of the
Gods, as well as of the great seers. 2

He who knows Me as birthless and
Beginningless, the world's Great Lord—
He alone among mortals is
Undeluded and freed from sins. 3

Reason, knowledge, non-delusion,
Forbearance, truth, restraint of sense,
Calmness, happiness, misery,
Birth, death, fear, also fearlessness, 4

Non-injury, and contentment,⁵⁹
Austerity, benevolence,
Both good repute and ill repute—
All these arise from Me alone. 5

The ancient Seven Great Rishis⁶⁰
And Four Manus,⁶¹ with pow'rs like Me,
Were born of My mind, and from them
Are all the creatures in this world. 6

⁵⁹ I had to leave out "impartiality" in this line to keep the meter.

⁶⁰ The Seven Rishis are great Beings who exist at the top of creation and supervise it.

⁶¹ The Manus were the progenitors of the human race.

He who knows all these manifold
Manifestations of My pow'r
And glory, becomes established
In yoga—there can be no doubt. 7

I am the origin of all,
And from Me ev'rything evolves—
Thinking thus, the wise worship Me
With consciousness all filled with love. 8

With minds and lives intent on Me,
Enlightening⁶² one another,
And speaking of Me constantly,
They are content and do rejoice. 9

To them, the constantly steadfast,
Worshipping Me with affection,
I bestow the buddhi-yoga
By which they shall come unto Me. 10

Out of compassion for them, I,
Abiding in their hearts, destroy
The darkness born of ignorance
By the shining lamp of knowledge. 11

Arjuna said:
Supreme Brahman, Supreme Abode,
Supreme Purifier, Divine,
Eternal Person, the First God,
The Birthless and All-pervading— 12

Thus all the sages declare You:
Narad',⁶³ Asita Devala,⁶⁴
And Vyasa⁶⁵—and now do You, too,
Yourself declare it unto me. 13

⁶²This can also mean “awakening” spiritually.

⁶³Narada: A primeval sage to whom some of the verses of the Rig Veda are attributed.

⁶⁴Another ancient sage, composer of some of the hymns of the Rig Veda.

⁶⁵Vyasa: One of the greatest sages of India, commentator on the Yoga Sutras, author of the Mahabharata (which includes the Bhagavad Gita), the Brahma Sutras, and the codifier of the Vedas.

I regard all this that You say
To me as true, O Keshava.
In truth, neither gods nor demons
Know of Your manifestation. 14

For You know Yourself by Yourself,
O You, the Supreme Purusha:⁶⁶
Source of beings, Lord of beings,
God of gods, Ruler of the world. 15

You should now describe completely
Your divine manifestations
By which, pervading all these worlds,
You do abide within all things. 16

How may I know You, O Yogi,
Always meditating on You?
In what aspects of Your Being
Are You to be thought of by me? 17

Explain to me in more detail
Your pow'rs and manifestations.
I am never satiated
In hearing Your amrit-like⁶⁷ words. 18

The Holy Lord said:
Listen! I shall tell you of My
Divine Self-manifestations;
But only the chief ones, because
There is no end to My expanse. 19

I am the Self abiding in
The heart of all beings; I am
The beginning, the middle, and
Also the end of all beings. 20

⁶⁶ Purushottama. Purusha means "person" in the sense of a conscious spirit. Both God and the individual spirits are purushas, but God is the Adi (Original, Archetypal) Purusha, Parama (Highest) Purusha, and the Purushottama (Best of the Purushas).

⁶⁷ Amrita: That which makes one immortal.

I am Vishnu⁶⁸ of Adityas;⁶⁹
The Sun among luminaries;
I am Marichi of Maruts;⁷⁰
Among the stars I am the Moon. 21

Of Vedas, the Sama Veda;⁷¹
I am Indra⁷² among the gods;
Of the senses I am the mind;
Intelligence in all beings. 22

Among the Rudras,⁷³ Shankara;⁷⁴
Kuber⁷⁵ of yakshas,⁷⁶ rakshasas;
Of Vasus⁷⁷ I am Pavaka;⁷⁸
And of mountains Meru⁷⁹ am I. 23

And of priests, O son of Pritha,
Know Me the chief, Brihaspati;⁸⁰
Of generals I am Skanda;⁸¹
Among the waters, the ocean. 24

⁶⁸ Vishnu: "The all-pervading;" God as the Preserver.

⁶⁹ Adityas: Solar deities.

⁷⁰ The Maruts are the presiding deities of winds and storms, and Marichi is their chief.

⁷¹ The Sama Veda is a compilation of Rig Veda hymns that have been pointed for singing.

⁷² Vasava: Indra, the king of the lesser "gods" (demigods).

⁷³ The Rudras are Vedic deities of destruction for renewal.

⁷⁴ "The Auspicious One." A title of Shiva.

⁷⁵ Vitesha: Kubera, the god of wealth.

⁷⁶ Yaksha: There are two kinds of yakshas: 1) semidivine beings whose king is Kubera, the lord of wealth, or 2) a kind of ghost, goblin, or demon.

⁷⁷ The Vasus are eight Vedic deities characterized by radiance.

⁷⁸ Agni: The Vedic god of fire.

⁷⁹ Meru: The mountain, of supreme height, on which the gods dwell, or the mountain on which Shiva is ever seated in meditation. Said to be the center of the world, supporting heaven itself. Obviously a yogic symbol.

⁸⁰ Brihaspati: The guru-priest and teacher-of the gods.

⁸¹ Also known as Subramanya or Kartikeya, the god of war and son of Shiva and Parvati.

Of great Rishis ⁸² I am Bhrigu; ⁸³ Of words, the one-syllabled OM; Of Yajñas, ⁸⁴ the Japa ⁸⁵ Yajña; ⁸⁶ Of immovables: Himalayas.	25
Of trees I am the Ashwattha; ⁸⁷ Of Deva-rishis, Narada; Of Gandharvas, ⁸⁸ Chitraratha; ⁸⁹ Among siddhas, ⁹⁰ Sage Kapila. ⁹¹	26
Among horses, Uchchaishravas ⁹² Who was born of the Amrita; Of elephants, Airavata; ⁹³ And among men I am the king.	27
Among weapons, the Thunderbolt; ⁹⁴ Among cows I am Kamadhuk; ⁹⁵ The cause of offspring, Kandarpa; ⁹⁶ Of serpents I am Vasuki. ⁹⁷	28

⁸² Rishi: Sage; seer of the Truth.

⁸³ Bhrigu: An ancient sage, so illustrious that he mediated quarrels among the gods.

⁸⁴ Yajna: Sacrifice; offering; sacrificial ceremony; a ritual sacrifice; usually the fire sacrifice known as agnihotra or havan.

⁸⁵ Japa: Repetition of a mantra.

⁸⁶ In the context of this verse, japa yajna is the offering or sacrifice of continually repeating Om.

⁸⁷ Ashwattha: The pipal (sacred fig) tree, the eternal tree of life whose roots are in heaven. The “world tree” in the sense of the axis of the earth and even of the cosmos.

⁸⁸ Gandharva: A demigod—a celestial musician and singer.

⁸⁹ Chitraratha: The chief of the gandharvas.

⁹⁰ Siddha: A perfected being, an adept, a seer, a perfect yogi.

⁹¹ Kapila: The great sage who formulated the Sankhya philosophy which is endorsed by Krishna several times in the Bhagavad Gita.

⁹² Uchchaishravas: The name of Indra’s horse (or the horse of the Sun god, Surya), that was born of the amrita that was churned from the ocean by the gods. The name means “high-sounding” and refers to the power of mantra.

⁹³ Airavata: The white elephant of Indra that was produced by the churning of the ocean.

⁹⁴ Vajra: the special weapon of Indra, king of the gods.

⁹⁵ Kamadhenu: Wishfulfilling cow produced at the churning of the milk ocean.

⁹⁶ A name of Kamadeva, the god of beauty and love.

⁹⁷ The king of the serpents. He assisted at the churning of the milk ocean.

Of Nagas⁹⁸ I am Ananta;⁹⁹
Of water beings, Varuna;¹⁰⁰
Of pitris¹⁰¹ I am Aryaman;¹⁰²
Of controllers I am Yama.¹⁰³ 29

Of demons¹⁰⁴ I am Prahlada;¹⁰⁵
Among measurers I am Time;
Among beasts I am the lion;
Among birds I am Garuda.¹⁰⁶ 30

Of purifiers I am Wind;
Among warriors I am Rama;¹⁰⁷
Of fishes I am the dolphin;
Of rivers I am the Ganges.¹⁰⁸ 31

Of manifestations I am
Beginning, middle, and the end;
Of knowledge, knowledge of the Self;
Of disputants I am logic. 32

⁹⁸ Nagas: Astral beings that often interact with human beings, usually taking the form of snakes. (In Sanskrit naga is the word for snake.)

⁹⁹ Ananta: The chief of the Nagas, whose coils encircle the earth and who symbolizes eternity (“ananta” means “without end”), and upon whom Vishnu reclines.

¹⁰⁰ Varuna: A Vedic deity considered the sustainer of the universe and also the presiding deity of the oceans and water. Often identified with the conscience.

¹⁰¹ Pitri: A departed ancestor, a forefather.

¹⁰² Aryaman: Chief of the Pitris.

¹⁰³ Yama: The Lord of Death, controller of who dies and what happens to them after death.

¹⁰⁴ Daityas: Demons who constantly war with the gods. Sometimes “races” or nationalities who acted contrary to dharma and fought against the “aryas” were also called demons (daityas or asuras). This was the case with the people among whom Prahlada was born.

¹⁰⁵ Prahlada: A daitya prince who rejected his daitya heritage and became a devotee of Vishnu. His father, the evil Hiranyakashipu, tortured him and attempted his life because of his devotion and his speaking to others of divine matters, yet he remained steadfast.

¹⁰⁶ Garuda: A great being who can assume bird form, and therefore considered the king of birds. Often depicted as an eagle, he is the vehicle of Vishnu.

¹⁰⁷ Rama: An incarnation of God—the king of ancient Ayodhya in north-central India. His life is recorded in the ancient epic *Ramayana*.

¹⁰⁸ Ganges: The sacred river—believed to be of divine origin—that flows from high up in the Himalayas, through the plains of Northern India, and empties into the Bay of Bengal. Hindus consider that bathing in the Ganges profoundly purifies both body and mind.

Among letters, the letter A; Of compounds I am the dual; I am inexhaustible Time; I the Sustainer, the All-formed.	33
I am all-destroying death and Origin of all that shall be. I am fame, prosperity, speech, Mem'ry, wisdom, courage, patience.	34
Of chants I am Brihatsaman; ¹⁰⁹ Of meters I am Gayatri; ¹¹⁰ Of months I am Margashirsha; ¹¹¹ Of seasons, the season of flow'rs. ¹¹²	35
The gambling of the fraudulent, The splendor of the splendorous; I am victory and effort; I am sattwa of the sattwic.	36
Among Vrishnis, ¹¹³ Vasudeva; ¹¹⁴ Of Pandavas, Dhananjaya; Among sages I am Vyasa; Among the rishis, Ushanas. ¹¹⁵	37
The sceptre of authorities, Strategy of the ambitious, Of secret things I am silence; The knowledge of knowers am I.	38

¹⁰⁹ A type of chant to Indra in the Sama Veda.

¹¹⁰ The gayatri meter is found only in the Rig Veda and consists of three lines of eight syllables each. It is considered especially appropriate for mantric invocation of deities before worship.

¹¹¹ A lunar month, roughly the latter half of November and the first half of December. This is the time of ideal weather in India.

¹¹² *Kusumakaras*, "the season of flowers" is a term for Spring.

¹¹³ The ancestral clan of Krishna.

¹¹⁴ Son of Vasudeva-Krishna

¹¹⁵ An ancient seer and poet.

Whate'er the seed of all beings,
That also am I, Arjuna.
No thing, moving or unmoving,
Can e'er exist apart from Me. 39

Arjuna, there is no end of
My divine manifestations.
What I have spoken unto you
Is but an example of them. 40

Whatever is glorious or
Prosperous or yet powerful,
Understand that springs from but a
Fraction of My radiant Pow'r. 41

Of what value is it for you
To know all this, O Arjuna?
I ever support this whole world
By just one portion of Myself. 42

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the tenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Divine Glories.

chapter eleven

the progress of the revelation of the ultimate truth

Arjuna said:

In kindness you spoke unto me
Regarding the Supreme Secret
That is known as the Supreme Self.
By this my delusion is gone. 1

The origin and dissolving
Of beings has been heard by me
In detail from You, O Krishna,
And Your eternal majesty. 2

And so it is, O Supreme Lord!
As You have declared of Yourself.
Yet still I desire to behold
Your Ishwara¹¹⁶-Form, O Krishna. 3

Wherefore, O Lord, if You should think
Me capable of seeing It,
Then do You, O Lord of Yogis,
Show to me Your eternal Self. 4

The Holy Lord said:

Behold now, O Partha, My forms
A hundred fold—a thousandfold—
Various, divine, and also
Of various colors and shapes. 5

Behold the Adityas, Vasus,
The Rudras, Ashwins,¹¹⁷ and Maruts;
Behold, O son of Bharata,
Many wonders ne'er seen before. 6

¹¹⁶ Ishwara: "God" or "Lord" in the sense of the Supreme Power, Ruler, Master, or Controller of the cosmos. "Ishwara" implies the powers of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

¹¹⁷ Ashwins: Two Vedic deities, celestial horsemen of the sun, always together, who herald the dawn and are skilled in healing. They avert misfortune and sickness and bring treasures.

See now in this My body the
Whole universe centered in one—
Both the moving and unmoving—
And all else you desire to see. 7

But you are not able to see
Me with your own eyes, Arjuna.
I give to you the divine eye—
Behold My supreme Yoga Pow'r. 8

Sanjaya said:
Then having thus spoken, O King,
Krishna, the Great Lord of Yoga,
Showed unto the son of Pritha
His own Supreme Ishwara-Form: 9

With many mouths and many eyes,
And with many wondrous aspects,
With many divine ornaments,
With many divine weapons raised; 10

Wearing divine garlands and clothes,
With divine perfumes and ointments;
God embodying all wonders,
The Infinite, Omniscient. 11

If the light of a thousand suns
Arose together in the sky,
Then that would be like the splendor
Of that Resplendent Mighty One. 12

There in the body of the God
Of gods the son of Pandu saw
The universe resting in One
With its manifold divisions. 13

Then Arjuna, filled with wonder
And with his hair standing on end,
Bowing down in adoration
Thus spoke with joined palms unto Him. 14

Arjuna said:

O God, I see all the gods in Your body,
And the hosts of all grades of beings in You;
Brahma, the Lord, seated upon the lotus,
And all the rishis and celestial serpents. 15

I see You of boundless form on ev'ry side
With Your manifold arms, stomachs, mouths, and eyes;
Neither end, middle, nor beginning of You
Do I see, Lord, of Your Universal Form. 16

I see You with diadem, club, and discus;
A mass of radiance shining ev'rywhere,
Very hard to look at, all around blazing
Like burning fire and sun, and beyond measure. 17

You are the Unchanging, the Supreme Being,
You are the ultimate resting-place of all;
You are Guardian of Eternal Dharma,
You are the Primal Purusha, I do ween. 18

You are without beginning, middle, or end,
Infinite in power, of manifold arms;
The sun and moon Your eyes; burning fire Your mouth;
Heating the universe with Your radiance. 19

This firmament fixed between heaven and earth,
And all the quarters are filled by You alone;
Seeing this, Your marvellous and awesome form,
The three worlds tremble with fear, O Great-souled One.20

Truly, into You enter these hosts of gods;
Some of which extol You in fear with joined palms;
“May it be well!” thus saying, the bands of great
Rishis and Siddhas praise You with splendid hymns.21

The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas,¹¹⁸ and
Vishwa-Devas, Ashwins, Maruts, Ushmapas,¹¹⁹
Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras, and Siddhas–
All these are looking at You, quite astounded. 22

Having seen this Your immeasurable form–
With very many mouths, eyes, arms, thighs, and feet,
Many stomachs, and fearful with many tusks–
All the worlds are terrified, and so am I. 23

On seeing You touching the sky, and blazing
With many a color, with mouths wide open,
With large and fiery eyes: I am terrified
At heart, and find no courage nor peace, Vishnu. 24

Having seen Your mouths, fearful with tusks, blazing
Like Pralaya-fires, I know neither the four
Quarters, nor do I find peace; have mercy, then,
O Lord of Gods, Abode of the universe. 25

And all these sons of evil Dhritarashtra,
With the multitudinous hosts of monarchs,
Among whom are numbered Bishma, Drona, and
Sutaputra, with the warrior chiefs of ours, 26

Enter precipitately into Your mouth,
Terrible with tusks and fearful to behold.
Some are found sticking in the gaps 'tween Your teeth,
And some with their heads completely pulverized.²⁷

Verily, as the many torrents and streams
Of all the rivers flow towards the ocean,
So do all these heroes of the world of men
Now enter into Your fiercely flaming mouths. 28

¹¹⁸ Sadhyas: A group of celestial beings with exquisitely refined natures thought to inhabit the ether.

¹¹⁹ Ushmapas: A class of ancestors (pitris) which live off subtle emanations or vapors.

Just as moths precipitately rush into
A blazing fire, although only to perish,
In like manner so do these creatures also
Rush into Your mouths though only to perish. 29

Swallowing all the worlds on every side
With Your flaming mouths, You are licking Your lips.
Your fierce rays, filling the world with radiance,
Are blazing, burning, consuming, O Vishnu! 30

Tell me who You are—You Who are fierce in form.
Salutations, O Supreme God: have mercy!
I desire to know You, O Primeval One.
I know not indeed Your doings or purpose. 31

The Holy Lord said:

I am, indeed, mighty world-destroying Time,
Here made manifest for destroying the world.
Even without you, none of the warriors here
Arrayed within the hostile armies shall live. 32

Therefore do you arise and thus acquire fame.
Conquer, and enjoy unrivalled dominion.
Truly, by Myself are they already slain;
Be merely an apparent cause, Arjuna. 33

Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna, and
Others already killed by Me, do you kill.
Be not distressed with fear; but fight, and surely
You shall conquer your enemies in battle. 34

Sanjaya said:

Having heard this speech of Krishna, Arjuna
With joined palms, and trembling, prostrated himself,
And addressed Krishna in a faltering voice,
Bowing down to Him, and overwhelmed with fear. 35

Arjuna said:

It is fitting, Hrishiksha, that the world
Is delighted and rejoices in Your praise,
That rakshasas fly in fear to all quarters,
And siddhas bow to You in adoration. 36

Why should they not bow to You, O Great-souled One,
The Great and Primal Cause of even Brahma,
Infinite, Lord of gods, Source of the cosmos?
Unchanging–Being, Non-being, beyond both. 37

You the Primal God, the Ancient Purusha;
You are Supreme Refuge of this universe,
Knower, the One Thing to be known; Supreme Goal;
By You is the whole universe pervaded. 38

You are Vayu,¹²⁰ Yama, Agni,¹²¹ Varuna,
Chandra,¹²² Prajapati, and Great-grandfather.¹²³
I bow, yea, I bow to You a thousand times,
Again and again I bow, I bow to You! 39

Salutation to You before and behind,
Salutation on every side, O All!
You, infinite in power and in prowess,
Pervadest all these things; wherefore You are All. 40

Whatever I have presumptuously said
From carelessness or love, addressing You as
“O Krishna, O Yadava, O Friend,” speaking
As a friend, unconscious of this Your greatness– 41

However I may have been disrespectful
To You in jest, walking, reposing, sitting,
Eating, alone, with others, I implore You,
Immeasurable One, to forgive all this. 42

¹²⁰ Vayu: The Vedic god of the wind.

¹²¹ Agni: Vedic god of fire.

¹²² Chandra: Presiding deity of the moon or the astral lunar world (loka).

¹²³ Prajapati and Pitamaha (Grandfather, or Great Father) are titles of Brahma, the Creator.

The world's Father—of the moving, unmoving—
You are the worshipful Guru of gurus.
There is no one Your equal in the three worlds.
Who can excel You, Mighty beyond compare? 43

Prostrating in adoration, do I crave
Forgiveness: as a father forgives his son,
A friend his dear friend, and a lover his love—
Thus even so should You forgive Me, O God. 44

Overjoyed am I, seeing Your form, and yet
My mind is distracted with terror. Show me,
In mercy Lord, only Your previous form—
O Lord of gods, Abode of the universe. 45

Diademed, bearing the mace and the discus,
I wish to see You as before. Assume then
That same beloved four-armed form of Yours, O
You of thousand arms, of universal form. 46

The Holy Lord said:

Graciously have I shown to you, Arjuna,
This Form Supreme, by My own Yoga Power—
Form resplendent, infinite, universal,
Which has not been seen before by aught but you.47

Not by Vedic study or by sacrifice,
By gifts, rites, or by severe austerities
Am I seen in such Form in the world of men,
By any other than you, O Arjuna. 48

Be not afraid or bewildered, having seen
This Form of Mine, so awesome, so terrible
With your fears dispelled and with your heart gladdened,
Now see once again this former Form of Mine. 49

Sanjaya said:

Krishna, having thus spoken to Arjuna,
 Showed once again His usual manlike form;
Thus the Great-souled One, assuming His gentle
 Four-armed form pacified him, the terrified. 50

Arjuna said:

Now having seen this, Your gentle
 Man-like form, O Janardana,
My thoughts are now composed, and I
 Am now restored to my nature. 51

The Holy Lord said:

Verily, hard indeed it is
 To behold this great form of Mine
Which you have seen. Even the gods
 Ever long to behold this form. 52

Not by Vedic study, nor by
 Austerity, nor by gifts, nor
By sacrifice can I be seen
 As on this day you have seen Me. 53

By single-minded devotion
 I may be known in this true form,
Seen in reality, also
 Entered into, Scorcher of Foes. 54

He who does work for Me alone,
 Devoted to Me as his goal,
Freed from desire, without ill will
 To any, enters into Me. 55

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the eleventh discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Vision of the Cosmic
Form.

chapter twelve

the yoga of devotion

Arjuna said:

Those devotees who worship You,
And those also who do worship
The Changeless, the Unmanifest—
Which are better versed in yoga? 1

The Holy Lord said:

Those who, fixing their mind on Me,
Worship steadfast, with supreme faith,
It is My opinion that they
Are thus the best versed in yoga. 2

They worship the Unperishing,
Unspeakable, Unmanifest,
Omnipresent, Unthinkable
Unchangeable, Immovable— 3

Having subdued all the senses,
And even-minded ev'rywhere,
Engaged in the welfare of all—
Verily they reach Me alone. 4

Greater is their trouble whose minds
Are set on the Unmanifest;
For the Unmanifest is hard
For the embodied ones to reach. 5

Those who worship Me, resigning
All action, deeming Me as the
Supreme Goal, meditating on
Me with single-minded yoga— 6

To these whose mind is set on Me,
Verily, I become ere long,
O Pritha's son, their Savior from
The sea of mortal samsara. 7

Fixing your mind on Me alone,
Placing your intellect in Me,
Then doubtless you shall evermore
Live in Me, here and hereafter. 8

If you are unable to fix
Your mind on Me in steadiness,
By constant practice of yoga
Seek to reach Me, Dhananjaya. 9

But if you are unable to
Constantly practice yoga, be
Intent on acting for My sake.
Even that leads to perfection. 10

If you cannot do even this,
Then by taking refuge in Me,
Abandon the fruits of action,
Becoming this way self-controlled. 11

Better is knowledge than practice;
Meditation than mere knowledge;
Renouncement¹²⁴ than meditation;
Instant peace comes from renouncement. 12

He hates no one, and is friendly
And compassionate towards all,
Free from feelings of "I" and "mine,"
Even-minded and forbearing. 13

Always content, balanced in mind,
Self-controlled, firm in conviction,
Mind and intellect fixed on Me,
Devoted to Me, dear to Me. 14

¹²⁴Tyaga: Literally: "abandonment." Renunciation—the relinquishment of the fruit of action.

He who agitates not the world,
And whom the world agitates not,
Who is freed from joy, envy, fear,
And worry—he is dear to Me. 15

He who is free from dependence,
Pure, skilled, unconcerned, untroubled,
Renouncing all undertakings—
That devotee is dear to Me. 16

He neither rejoices nor hates,
Nor grieves, nor desires, renouncing
Both good and evil, and full of
Devotion—he is dear to Me. 17

He is the same to friend and foe,
And in honor and dishonor;
In heat and cold, pleasure and pain;
And ever free from attachment. 18

Who deems blame and praise as equal;
Silent, content with anything,
Homeless, steady-minded, full of
Devotion—he is dear to Me. 19

They who follow this Immortal
Dharma, described, endued with faith,
Deeming Me as the Goal Supreme,
Devoted—are most dear to me. 20

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the twelfth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Devotion.

chapter thirteen

the yoga of the distinction between the field and the knower of the field

Arjuna said:

Prakriti and Purusha and
The Field and Knower of the Field,
Knowledge, and that which should be known—
I wish to know these, Keshava.¹²⁵

The Holy Lord said:

This body is known as the Field,
And he who knows it thus is called
The Knower of the Field by those
Who know of both Field and Knower. 1

Know Me also, O Bharata,
To be the Knower in all Fields.
The knowledge of Field and Knower
I consider as *the* knowledge. 2

What the Field is—its properties,
Modifications, cause-effects,
Who He is and what His powers,
That do you hear from Me in brief. 3

This has been sung by the Rishis
In many ways, in sacred chants,
In passages about Brahman,
Full of convincing reasoning. 4

The great Elements, Egoism,
Intellect, the Unmanifest,
The ten senses¹²⁶ and the one—mind—
The five objects of the senses; 5

¹²⁵ “In some of the books you will not find this verse. If you include this verse also, the number of verses of the Bhagavad Gita will come to 701. Some commentators look upon this verse as an interpolation.” (Swami Sivananda in his Gita commentary.)

¹²⁶ The five jnanindriyas (organs of perception) and the five karmendriyas (organs of action).

Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, The aggregate, intelligence, And steadfastness: thus is the Field Briefly described, and its aspects.	6
Absence of both pride and deceit, Harmlessness, ¹²⁷ patience, rectitude, Approach of teacher, ¹²⁸ purity, Stability and self-restraint.	7
Indifference to sense objects, And absence of egotism; ¹²⁹ Keeping in mind the evils of Birth, death, old age, disease, and pain;	8
Non-attachment and non-clinging To son, wife, home, and all suchlike; Constant evenmindedness in Desired and undesired events.	9
Unswerving devotion to Me With single-minded yoga, and Frequenting secluded places, Distaste for others' company; ¹³⁰	10
Constant in knowledge of the Self, Seeing the goal of truth-knowledge– This is said to be true knowledge. The contrary is ignorance.	11
I shall describe what must be known, Which bestows immortality– Beginningless Supreme Brahman: Neither being nor non-being.	12

¹²⁷ Ahimsa

¹²⁸ *Acharyopasanam*: Approaching a teacher, or sitting near a teacher.

¹²⁹ Pronounce as four syllables: e-go-tis-m.

¹³⁰ *Janasamsadi*: crowds of people, or society.

With hands and feet everywhere, Eyes, heads, and faces ev'rywhere, With ears throughout the universe– THAT stands, pervading ev'rything.	13
Shining by functions of senses, Yet without senses; detached, yet Maintaining all; free from gunas, Yet experiencing gunas.	14
Outside and inside all beings; Both the unmoving and moving; Incomprehensible because It is subtle and far and near.	15
Undivided, yet It exists As if divided in beings: The sustainer of all beings– He absorbs and generates them.	16
The Light even of lights, It is Said to be beyond all darkness; Knowledge, the One Thing to be known, Goal of knowledge, within all hearts.	17
Thus Field, knowledge and that which must Be known has been briefly stated. Knowing all this, My devotee Attains to My state of being.	18
Know Prakriti and Purusha Are both beginningless; and know That all modifications and Gunas are born of Prakriti.	19
In production of the body And senses Prakriti's the cause; Pleasure and pain's experience, Originates from Purusha.	20

Purusha within Prakriti Undergoes Prakriti's gunas; Birth in good and evil wombs comes From his attachment to gunas.	21
The Supreme Purusha is called The Looker-on in this body: The Permitter, the Supporter, Experiencer, Lord, and Self.	22
He who thus knows the Purusha And Prakriti with the gunas, Whatever be his state in life, He shall never be born again.	23
Some perceive the Self in the Self By the Self through meditation; Others by Sankhya yoga, and Still others by karma yoga.	24
Others, again, not knowing thus, Worship as they hear from others. Even these, too, go beyond death, Devoted to what they have heard.	25
Whate'er is born, the moving or The unmoving, O Bharata, Know it to be from the union Of the Field and the Field-Knower.	26
The one who truly sees is he Who ever sees the Supreme Lord Existing equally in all Beings, deathless in the dying.	27
Since seeing the Lord equally Existing ev'rywhere in all, He injures not the Self by Self, Then goes unto the Supreme Goal.	28

The one who truly sees is he
Who sees that all actions are done
Solely by Prakriti alone,
And that the Self is actionless. 29

He sees the sep'rate existence
Of all inherent in the One,
And their expansion from That One—
He then becomes one with Brahman. 30

Being without beginning and
Devoid of gunas, unchanging,
This Supreme Self, though embodied,
Does not act, and is not tainted. 31

As the all-pervading ether,
Through subtlety is not tainted,
The Self seated in the body
Is not tainted in any case. 32

As the sun alone illumines
This entire world, in the same way
The lord of the field illumines
The entire field, O Bharata. 33

They who with the eye of knowledge
Distinguish Field, Field-Knower, and
Freedom from beings' Prakriti,
They indeed go to the Supreme. 34

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the thirteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Distinction Between the
Field and the Knower of the Field.

chapter fourteen

the yoga of the division of the three gunas

The Holy Lord said:

I shall tell you supreme knowledge
Which is the best of all knowledge,
Having known which all the sages
Attained to highest perfection. 1

Resorting to this knowledge they
Attain identity with Me,
At creation they are not born,
Nor tremble at its dissolving.¹³¹ 2

For me great Brahma is the womb,
And in that do I place the egg.
The origin of all beings
Then comes from that, O Bharata. 3

Whatever be the forms produced
Within all wombs, Son of Kunti,
Of them Brahma is the great womb,
And I the seed-casting Father. 4

Sattwa, rajas, and tamas—these
Gunas born of Prakriti bind
Fast in the body him who is
Indestructible, embodied. 5

Sattwa is stainless, luminous,
And free from defect, yet it binds
By attachment to happiness
And by attachment to knowledge. 6

¹³¹ The idea is that the liberated are not impelled into birth at the beginning of the creation cycle nor are they unsettled at its dissolution. That is, creation and dissolution do not affect them in any way since they have severed all bonds with it.

Know rajās' nature is passion, Producing thirst and attachment; It binds fast the embodied one By the attachment to action.	7
Tamas is born of ignorance, Stupefying the embodied; It binds by miscomprehension, Indolence, and sleep, Bharata.	8
Sattwa 'ttaches to happiness, Rajas to action, Bharata; And Tamas, obscuring knowledge, Attaches unto delusion.	9
Sattwa prevails over rajās And tamas; and rajās prevails Over sattwa and tamas; and Tamas over sattwa, rajās.	10
When through each sense of the body The light of knowledge clearly shines, Then it should be known that sattwa Is there fully predominant.	11
Activity, undertaking Of actions, greed, unrest, longing— When rajās is predominant All these arise, O Bharata.	12
Darkness, inertness, heedlessness, And delusion—all these arise When tamas is predominant, O descendant of the Kurus.	13
If the embodied one meets death When sattwa is predominant, Then he attains the stainless realms Of the knowers of the Highest.	14

Meeting death in rajas, he's born
Amid those attached to action;
Dying in tamas, he is born
From the wombs of the deluded. 15

The fruit of good action, they say,
Is sattwic and pure; verily,
The fruit of rajas is pain, and
Ignorance the fruit of tamas. 16

From sattwa arises wisdom;
From rajas, greed; while from tamas
Arises miscomprehension,
And delusion and ignorance. 17

The sattwa 'biding go upwards;
Rajasics dwell in the middle;
Tamasics, abiding in the
Lowest guna, do go downward. 18

When the seer beholds no agent
Other than the gunas and knows
That which is higher than gunas,
He attains unto My being. 19

He who goes beyond these gunas
Which are the source of the body,
Is freed from birth, death, disease, pain,
And attains immortality. 20

Arjuna said:

By what marks, O Lord, is he known
Who has gone beyond the gunas?
What is his conduct, and how does
He pass beyond these three gunas? 21

The Holy Lord said:

He who hates not the appearance
Of light and of activity
And delusion, O Pandava,
Nor yet longs for them when absent; 22

He, sitting like one unconcerned,
Who is not moved by the gunas,
Knowing: "The gunas operate,"
Stands firm and is unwavering. 23

The same in pleasure or in pain,
He sees earth, stone, and gold alike;
Alike to pleasing, displeasing,
Firm, the same in censure and praise; 24

The same in honor and disgrace,
The same to friend and enemy,
Renouncing all undertakings—
He has gone beyond the gunas. 25

He who renders service to Me
With unswerving devotion, he,
Going beyond the three gunas,
Is fit for union with Brahman. 26

"I am the abode of Brahman,
The Immortal, Immutable,
Abode of Eternal Dharma,
Abode of the Absolute Bliss."¹³² 27

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fourteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Division of the Three Gunas.

¹³²This is the realization of the liberated person.

chapter fifteen

the yoga of the supreme spirit

The Holy Lord said:

There is th' eternal Ashwattha
With roots above, branches below,
The sacred hymns, the leaves; he who
Knows it, is a Veda-knower. 1

Below, above, spread its branches,
Nourished by the gunas; its buds
Are sense-objects; and in the world
Below its roots give rise to acts. 2

This its form is not here perceived—
Its end, origin, existence.
Having cut this firm-rooted tree
With the axe of non-attachment— 3

Then that goal is to be sought for,
Which, attained, they never return:
“In that Primeval Purusha,
Fount of actions, I seek refuge.” 4

Without pride, delusion—attachment conquered—
Dwelling in the Supreme Self, without desires,
Freed from the dualities—pleasure and pain—
The undeluded reach that eternal Goal. 5

That the sun illuminates not,
There shines neither the moon nor fire;
For that is My Supreme Abode,
Going whither they return not. 6

An eternal part of Myself,
Becoming a soul in this world,
Takes on the senses and the mind
And abides within Prakriti. 7

When the Lord obtains a body
And when He leaves it, He takes these
And goes, as the wind takes the scents
From their seats: the flowers and herbs. 8

Thus presiding over the ear,
The eye, the touch, the taste, the smell–
As also the “sense” of the mind–
He experiences objects. 9

When He departs, remains, enjoys,
Accompanied by the gunas,
The deluded do not see Him–
Those with the eye of knowledge see. 10

The yogis, striving, behold Him
Dwelling within themselves; but the
Unrefined, unintelligent,
Even though striving, see Him not. 11

The light which resides in the sun,
That light illumines the whole world;
That which is in the moon and fire–
Know that light to be Mine as well. 12

Entering the earth, I support
All beings with My energy.
Having become the wat'ry moon,
I Myself cause all plants to thrive. 13

Dwelling within living beings
In the form of digestive fire,
Joined with prana and apana,
Do I digest the fourfold food. 14

I am seated within all hearts;
Memory, knowledge, and their loss
Proceed from Me: for I am the
Veda's Goal, Author, and Knower. 15

Two Purushas are in this world–
The Changing and the Unchanging.
All beings comprise the Changing,
Kutastha is the Unchanging. 16

But there is also the Supreme
Purusha, called the Highest Self,
Immutable Lord, Who pervades
All the three worlds and sustains them. 17

I transcend the Changing and am
Above even the Unchanging,
So in this world and the Veda
I am called the Supreme Spirit.¹³³ 18

He who, free from delusion, thus
Knows Me as the Supreme Spirit,
He, knowing all, thus worships Me
With all his heart, O Bharata. 19

Knowing this most secret teaching
Imparted by Me, one awakes
To the highest enlightenment–
All his duties thus accomplished. 20

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the fifteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Supreme Spirit.

¹³³ Purushottama

chapter sixteen

the yoga of the division between the divine and the demonic

The Holy Lord said:

Courage, purity, firmness in
 Knowledge and yoga, almsgiving,
 Sense-control, sacrifice, study,
 Austerity, and uprightness, 1

Harmlessness, absence of anger,
 Truthfulness, renunciation,
 Tranquillity, truth, compassion,
 Uncovetousness, gentleness,¹³⁴ 2

Boldness, forgiveness, fortitude,
 Purity, absence of hatred,
 Absence of pride—all these belong
 To one born for a divine¹³⁵ state. 3

Flamboyance, arrogance, anger,
 Self-conceit, harshness, ignorance—
 All these qualities belong to
 One born for a demonic¹³⁶ state. 4

The divine state is deemed to make
 For liberation—for bondage,
 The demonic; but do not grieve:
 You are born for a divine state. 5

¹³⁴ To maintain the meter, the complete list could not be given. It is: “Non-injury, veracity, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, non-calumny, compassion for beings, freedom from desire, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness.”

¹³⁵ *Daivim*: The state of a deva or “shining one.” In this instance it means those positive souls who are progressing toward divinity.

¹³⁶ *Asurim*: The state of an asura, one who dwells in darkness (a-sura—without the light). Here it means those negative souls who are turned away from divinity and moving further into degradation of consciousness and mode of life.

There are two types of beings in
This world: divine and demonic.
The divine type has been described;
Now hear of the demonic type. 6

Those of demonic nature know
Not what to do or refrain from;
Purity is not found in them,
Nor is good conduct, nor is truth. 7

“The universe is without truth,
Without a basis, without God,
Produced by mutual union,
With lust for cause—what else?” say they. 8

Holding this view, these ruined souls
Small-minded and of cruel deeds
Arise as the enemies of
The world, bent on its destruction. 9

Filled with insatiable desires,
Full of hypocrisy, pride, and
Arrogance, holding evil thoughts
Through delusion, they foully work. 10

Beset with immense cares ending
Only with death, and regarding
Gratification of lust as
The highest—feeling it is all; 11

Bound by a hundred ties of hope,
Given over to lust and wrath,
They strive to gain by unjust means
Wealth for sensual enjoyment. 12

“This today has been gained by me;
And this desire I shall obtain;
All this is mine, and now this wealth
Also shall be mine in future. 13

“I slew that enemy, and more
I shall slay. For I am the Lord,
I enjoy, I am successful,
Perfect, powerful, and happy. 14

“I am rich and well-born,” they say,
“Who else is equal unto me?
I will sacrifice, give, rejoice.”
Thus deluded by ignorance, 15

Led astray by many fancies,
Covered by delusion’s meshes,
Addicted to gratifying
Lust, they fall into a foul hell. 16

Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with
The pride and foolishness of wealth,
They sacrifice in name, for show,
Contrary to the prescribed forms. 17

Given over to egoism,
Power, insolence, lust and wrath,
These malignant people hate Me
In both themselves and in others. 18

These malicious evildoers,
Cruel, most degraded of men,
I hurl perpetu’lly into
Only the wombs of demons here. 19

Entering the demonic wombs,
And deluded birth after birth,
Not attaining to Me, they fall
Into still lower conditions. 20

Yea, triple is this gate of hell,
That is destructive of the self–
Lust, anger, and greed; therefore one
Should forsake ev’ry one of these. 21

The man who has got beyond these
Three gates of darkness, Arjuna,
Practices what is good for him,
And thus goes to the Goal Supreme. 22

He who sets aside the counsels
Of scriptures from desire's impulse,
Attains not unto perfection,
Nor happiness, nor Goal Supreme. 23

The scriptures should be your guide in
What should be done and what should not.
Knowing what the scriptures prescribe,
You should act here within the world. 24

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the sixteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Division between the
Divine and the Demoniactal.

chapter इवन्तेन

the yoga of the division of threefold faith

Arjuna said:

Those who set aside prescriptions
Of scriptures, doing sacrifice
With faith, what is their condition:
Sattwa, or rajas, or tamas? 1

The Holy Lord said:

Threefold is the embodieds' faith
Inherent within their nature—
The sattwic, rajasic, and the
Tamasic. Do you hear of it. 2

Each one's faith is according to
His natural disposition.
Yea, the man consists of his faith;
In truth, he is what his faith is. 3

The sattwic men worship the gods;
Rajasic: Yakshas, rakshasas;
The others—the tamasic men—
The pretas¹³⁷ and hosts of bhutas.¹³⁸ 4

Those of extreme austerities—
Unscriptural—given to show
And egoity, impelled by
The force of lust and attachment, 5

Do torture, senseless as they are,
All the organs in the body,
And Me, the body's indweller.
Know them as of demonic will. 6

¹³⁷ Pretas are ghosts, spirits of the dead.

¹³⁸ Bhutas are ghosts and also various kinds of low-evolved spirits.

The food also liked by each one Is threefold, as is sacrifice, Austerity, and almsgiving. Hear from Me now their distinction.	7
Food building life, purity, strength, Health, joy, cheerfulness, appetite, Savory, agreeable, and Substantial—such the sattwic like.	8
Foods that are bitter, sour, salty, Excessively hot, pungent, dry, And burning, the rajasic like— Producing pain, grief, and disease.	9
That which is stale, tasteless, stinking, Cooked overnight, refuse, impure, Is the food the tamasic like. This is the truth, O Arjuna.	10
That sacrifice which is offered Without desire for reward and According to scriptures' command, Intent, as duty, is sattwic.	11
That which is performed, Arjuna, Seeking for fruit, and for vain show, Know that to be a sacrifice Rajasic in its character.	12
Sacrifice unscriptural and Without the offering of food, Without mantras, or gifts, ¹³⁹ or faith, Is tamasic in character.	13
Worship of gods, twice-born, teachers, The wise; purity, continence, Straightforwardness, non-injury— Are austerities of body.	14

¹³⁹ That is, without offering to the priests.

Unvexing speech, agreeable, True, beneficial, practice of Self-study—these are said to form What is austerity of speech.	15
Steady serenity of mind, Kindliness, silence, self-control, Honesty of motive—all this Is called mental austerity.	16
This threefold austerity done With highest faith by those without Desire for fruit, also steadfast Is considered to be sattwic.	17
Austerity practiced to gain Welcome, ¹⁴⁰ honor, worship, and with Ostentation, is rajasic, Unstable, and transitory.	18
Austerity with self-torture, Done out of a foolish notion, Or for the purpose of harming Another, is called tamasic.	19
That gift which is given to one Who does no service in return, In a fit place, to one worthy— That gift is held to be sattwic.	20
And what is given with a view To receiving in return, or Looking for the fruit, or again Reluctantly, is rajasic.	21
The gift given at the wrong place Or time, to unworthy persons, Without respect or with disdain, That is declared as tamasic.	22

¹⁴⁰ Satkara—hospitality with honor.

“Om, Tat, Sat;” this has been declared The triple title of Brahman. By That were created of old Brahmins, Vedas, and Sacrifice.	23
Sacrifice, gifts, austerities According to the scriptures, are Begun with utterance of “Om,” By the expounders of Brahman.	24
Uttering “Tat,” without desire For fruits—thus are sacrifice, gift, And austerity then performed By seekers of liberation.	25
“Sat” is used with the meaning of Reality and of goodness; So also the word “Sat” is used In the sense of auspicious acts.	26
Steadfastness in sacrifice, gift, And austerity is called “Sat.” ¹⁴¹ Also action in connection With these is designated “Sat.”	27
Whate’er is sacrificed, given, Or done, whate’er austerity Is practiced without faith, is known Here or hereafter as “Asat.” ¹⁴²	28

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the seventeenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Division of Threefold Faith.

¹⁴¹ Real or true.

¹⁴² Unreal or false.

chapter eighteen

the yoga of liberation by renunciation

Arjuna said:

I desire to know sev'rally,
O mighty-armed one, the truth of
Sannyasa,¹⁴³ O Hrishikesha,
As also of tyaga,¹⁴⁴ Krishna. 1

The Holy Lord said:

Renouncing desire-based actions
Sages consider sannyasa:
Abandonment of all works' fruits
The wise declare to be tyaga. 2

Some say action should be renounced
As an evil, while others say
That sacrifice, austerity,
And gift should not be relinquished. 3

Hear the conclusion regarding
Tyaga, O best of Bharatas.
Tyaga has been declared to be
Of three kinds, O Tiger of Men. 4

Sacrifice, gift, austerity—
Should not be relinquished, but done;
Sacrifice, gift, austerity
Are purifying to the wise. 5

But even these works, Arjuna,
Should still be performed, though leaving
Attachment and the fruits; such is
My best and certain conviction. 6

¹⁴³ Renunciation, "casting aside."

¹⁴⁴ Abandonment, "turning from."

But the renunciation of Required action is not proper. Abandonment from delusion Is declared to be tamasic.	7
The relinquishment of action From fear of trouble or of pain, Is rajasic relinquishment, Producing not the fruit thereof.	8
When work is done only because It should be done, leaving aside Attachment and the fruit as well, That relinquishment is sattwic.	9
Relinquishers of sattwic kind, Steadfast, with doubts dispelled, hate not Uncongenial work, nor are they Attached to the congenial work.	10
Actions cannot be entirely Relinquished by the embodied, But the relinquishing of fruits Of action is relinquishment.	11
The threefold fruit of all action– Uncongenial, congenial, mixed– Accrues to non-relinquishers, But not to the relinquishers.	12
Learn from Me these five causes for The accomplishment of all works As are declared in the Sankhya Which is the end of all action:	13
The body, agent, the senses, The functions of manifold kind, The presiding divinity, And that which is also the fifth.	14

Whate'er action a man performs By his body, speech, and the mind- Whether right or just the reverse- These five alone are its causes.	15
He who through a non-purified Understanding looks on his Self, The Absolute, as the agent- He of distorted mind sees not.	16
He who is free from egoism, With intelligence untainted, Although he kills all these people, He kills not, neither is he bound.	17
Knowledge, the known, and the knower Form the threefold cause of action. The instrument, purpose, agent Are the threefold base of action.	18
Knowledge, action, and agent are Declared by Sankhya to be of Three kinds, from the distinction of Gunas: hear them also duly.	19
That by which in all is seen the One Indestructible Substance Inseparate in the sep'rate- Know that knowledge to be sattwic.	20
But that by which in all are seen Many beings of many kinds As diff'rent from one another, Know that knowledge as rajasic.	21
Confined to a single effect As the whole, and without reason Or basis in truth, trivial- Know that knowledge as tamasic.	22

Action without love or hatred And without desire for the fruit, And free from any attachment Know that action is called sattwic.	23
Action done desiring desires, With self-conceit and much effort, O Dhananjaya, know as truth: That action is called rajasic.	24
Action that's done through delusion, Without heed to the consequence, Loss, damage, or ability: Know that action as tamasic.	25
An agent free from attachment, Humble, endued with courage and Ardor, and unaffected in Success or failure, is sattwic.	26
One passionate, desirous of Action's fruits, greedy, malignant, Impure, easily elated Or dejected, is rajasic.	27
Unsteady, vulgar, obstinate, Wicked, dishonest, indolent, Despondent, procrastinating– Such an agent is tamasic.	28
Now hear the triple distinction Of intellect and fortitude, According to the three gunas Exhaustively and severally.	29
That intellect which knows the paths Of work and renunciation, Right and wrong acts, fear, fearlessness, Bondage and freedom, is sattwic.	30

That intellect of mistaken Apprehension of dharma and Adharma, of right and wrong acts, That intellect is rajasic.	31
That intellect enveloped in Darkness, regarding adharma As dharma, and seeing all things Distortedly, is tamasic.	32
Fortitude by which the functions Of the mind, prana, and senses Are regulated, unswerving By means of yoga is sattwic.	33
That by which one regulates the Mind to dharma, desire, and wealth, From attachment to all their fruits, That fortitude is rajasic.	34
That by which the stupid does not Give up sleep, fear, despondency, Grief, and overweening conceit, That fortitude is tamasic.	35
Now hear from Me of the threefold Happiness whose enjoyment is Learned by practice, and by which one Attains unto the end of pain.	36
That which is like poison at first, But like amrita at the end; Born of self-realization's light– That happiness is called sattwic.	37
That arising from the contact Of object with sense—at first like Amrit' but like poison at last– That happiness is rajasic.	38

That which begins and results in Self-delusion arising from Sleep, sloth, and miscomprehension, That is declared as tamasic.	39
There is no entity on earth, Or in heaven among the gods, Found devoid of these three gunas, Born of Prakriti, Arjuna.	40
Of Brahmins and Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, as also of Shudras, The duties are distributed According to guna-nature.	41
Calmness, restraint, austerity Purity, patience, uprightness, Knowledge, discernment, piety– These are the duties of Brahmins.	42
Valor, splendor, courage, and skill, Also not fleeing from battle, Generosity, sovereignty– These are duties of Kshatriyas.	43
Agriculture, husbandry, trade, Are the duties of the Vaishyas, And Shudras' duty is service– Arising from innate nature.	44
Devoted to his own duty, Man attains highest perfection. How by his duty he attains Perfection, that now hear from Me.	45
From Whom all beings do come forth, By Whom all this is pervaded, Worshipping Him with his duty, A man attains to perfection.	46

One's own dharma, though imperfect,
Is better than another's though
Done to perfection. The duty
Of one's own nature brings no ill. 47

The duty to which one is born
Should not be relinquished, although
Faulty, for as the fire by smoke
So defect envelops all deeds. 48

He whose mind is ever detached,
With subdued heart, without desires,
Attains by renunciation
To perfect freedom from action. 49

Arjuna, learn from Me in brief
How, having reached such perfection,
He attains Brahman, that supreme
Consummation of all knowledge. 50

Endued with a pure intellect;
Subduing body and senses,
Relinquishing the sense-objects;
Leaving attraction and hatred. 51

Dwelling in a secluded place;
With body, speech, and mind controlled;
Abstemious, e'er engaged in
Meditation; dispassionate; 52

Forsaking ego, power, pride,
Lust, wrath, possessiveness; freed from
The notion of "mine;" and tranquil-
He's fit for union with Brahman. 53

One with Brahman, tranquil-minded,
Neither grieving nor desiring;
The same to all, he thus attains
Supreme devotion unto Me. 54

Devoted, he knows Me in truth,
What and Who I am; then having
Known Me in My reality,
He forthwith enters into Me. 55

Though doing all actions always,
Always taking refuge in Me,
By My grace he attains to the
Eternal, immutable State. 56

Resigning mentally all deeds
To Me, as to the highest goal,
Resorting to buddhi-yoga,
Thus ever fix your mind on Me. 57

With mind fixed on Me, you shall by
My grace surmount all obstacles;
But if from self-conceit you will
Not hear Me, then you shall perish. 58

If, filled with pride and self-conceit,
You wrongly think: "I will not fight,"
In vain shall be this your resolve,
For your nature will compel you. 59

Fettered by your karma born of
Your nature, what you, deluded,
Desire not to do, you shall have
To do—though in spite of yourself. 60

O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in
The hearts of all beings, causing
Them by His Maya to revolve
As if mounted on a machine. 61

O Bharata, with all your heart
Take refuge in Him; and you shall
Surely attain unto supreme
Peace and the eternal abode. 62

Thus has wisdom, more secret than
All other secrets, been declared
To you by Me; now reflect on
It fully, then do as you please. 63

Now hear again My supreme word,
Most secret of all, because you
Are dearly beloved of Me;
Therefore I shall speak for your good. 64

Fill your mind with Me, devoted,
Sacrifice and bow down to Me.
You shall reach Me, for truly I
Promise you—you are dear to Me. 65

Relinquishing all dharmas, you
Should take refuge in Me alone;
Then I shall fully liberate
You from all sins; wherefore grieve not. 66

Never speak this to one without
Austerities or devotion,
Or one who renders not service,
Or to one who cavils at Me.¹⁴⁵ 67

He who with supreme devotion
To Me teaches this most supreme
Secret unto My devotees
Shall doubtless come to Me alone. 68

Nor among men is there any
Who does dearer service to Me,
Nor shall there be another on
The earth dearer to Me than he. 69

¹⁴⁵ “This shall not be spoken of by you to one who is without austerity, nor to one who is without devotion, nor to one who does not render service, nor to one who does not desire to listen, nor to one who speaks evil of Me.”

And he who studies this sacred
Dialogue of ours, shall worship
Me by knowledge's sacrifice;
This is My certain conviction. 70

And even that man who hears this,
Full of faith and free from scoffing,
He, liberated, shall attain
The happy worlds of the righteous. 71

Has this been heard, O Pritha's son,
By you with a one-pointed mind?
Moreover, has the delusion
Of your ignorance been destroyed? 72

Arjuna said:

Yea, destroyed is my delusion,
And I have gained my memory
Through Your grace, and my doubts are gone.
I am firm; I will do Your word. 73

Sanjaya said:

Thus have I heard this wonderful
Dialogue of Vasudeva
And the high-souled son of Pritha,
Causing my hair to stand on end. 74

By grace of Vyasa have I heard
This supreme, most secret yoga,
Direct from Krishna, Yoga's Lord,
Himself the one declaring it. 75

I recall again and again
This wondrous, holy dialogue
Between Krishna and Arjuna
And rejoice again and again. 76

As I recall and recall that

Most wonderful form of Hari,
Great is my wonder, O King, and
I rejoice again and again.

77

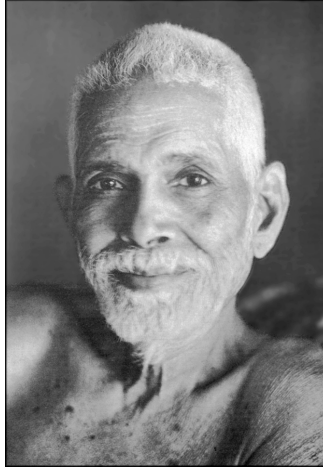
Where'er is Krishna, Yoga's Lord,
Where'er is Arjuna, there are
Splendor, victory, wealth, and right
Order: such is my conviction.

78

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the eighteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Liberation by Renunciation.





इगो लमहरइहो ग्गोव

1)

Sanjaya said:

To him who was thus overcome

By pity, and whose eyes were filled

With tears, downcast and despairing,

Madhusudana spoke these words:

2:1

2)

The Holy Lord said:

This body is known as the Field,

And he who knows it thus is called

The Knower of the Field by those

Who know of both Field and Knower.

13:1

3)

Know Me also, O Bharata,

To be the Knower in all Fields.

The knowledge of Field and Knower

I consider as *the* knowledge.

13:2

4)

I am the Self abiding in

The heart of all beings; I am

The beginning, the middle, and

Also the end of all beings.

10:20¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Sri Ramana Maharshi said that this verse is the quintessence of the Gita—the Gita in a single verse.

5)
Of that which is born, death is sure,
Of that which is dead, birth is sure.
Over the unavoidable,
Therefore you never should lament. 2:27

6)
Neither is the Self slain, nor yet does it die,
Nor having been will it e'er come not to be,
Birthless, eternal, perpetu'l, primeval,
It is not slain whene'er the body is slain. 2:20

7)
This self cannot be cut, nor burnt,
Nor wetted, nor dried: 'tis changeless,
All-pervading and unmoving,
Immovable, eternal self. 2:24

8)
That by Which all is pervaded—
Know That is indestructible.
There is none with the power to
Destroy the Imperishable. 2:17

9)
The unreal never comes to be,
The real does never cease to be.
The certainty of both of these
Is known to those who see the truth. 2:16

10)
As the all-pervading ether,
Through subtlety is not tainted,
The Self seated in the body
Is not tainted in any case. 13:32

11)
That the sun illuminates not,
 There shines neither the moon nor fire;
For that is My Supreme Abode,
 Going whither they return not. 15:6

12)
The unmanifest, eternal,
 Is declared as the Supreme Goal,
Attaining Which they return not.
 This is My supreme dwelling place. 8:21

13)
Without pride, delusion-attachment conquered-
 Dwelling in the Supreme Self, without desires,
Freed from the dualities-pleasure and pain-
 The undeluded reach that eternal Goal. 15:5

14)
He who sets aside the counsels
 Of scriptures from desire's impulse,
Attains not unto perfection,
 Nor happiness, nor Goal Supreme. 16:23

15)
The one who truly sees is he
 Who ever sees the Supreme Lord
Existing equally in all
 Beings, deathless in the dying. 13:27

16)
By single-minded devotion
 I may be known in this true form,
Seen in reality, also
 Entered into, Scorcher of Foes. 11:54

17)
Each one's faith is according to
 His natural disposition.
Yea, the man consists of his faith;
 In truth, he is what his faith is. 17:3

18)
The man of faith, and devoted,
 And the master of his senses,
Attains this knowledge, and having
 Attained quickly finds Supreme Peace. 4:39

19)
To them, the constantly steadfast,
 Worshipping Me with affection,
I bestow the buddhi-yoga
 By which they shall come unto Me. 10:10

20)
Out of compassion for them, I,
 Abiding in their hearts, destroy
The darkness born of ignorance
 By the shining lamp of knowledge. 10:11

21)
But those whose ignorance has been
 Destroyed by knowledge of the self-
That knowledge of theirs, like the sun,
 Reveals then the Supreme Brahman. 5:16

22)
Above the body are senses;
 Above the senses is the mind;
Above the mind is intellect;
 Above the intellect: the self. 3:42

23)
Thus, knowing Him Who is above
The intellect, and restraining
The self by the Self, then destroy
That enemy, that foe: desire. 3:43

24)
As fire reduces wood to ash,
In the same way, O Arjuna,
The fire of knowledge does reduce
To ashes all karma—know this. 4:37

25)
Whose undertakings are devoid
Of plan and desire for results,
Whose actions are burnt in the fire
Of knowledge—him the wise call wise. 4:19

26)
Released from desire and anger,
With thoughts restrained, those ascetics
Who know the Self, find very near
The bliss of Brahma-nirvana. 5:26

27)
With intellect set in patience,
With the mind fastened on the self,
He gains quietude by degrees:
Let him not think of any thing. 6:25

28)
Whenever the unsteady mind,
Moving here and there, wanders off,
He should subdue and hold it back—
Direct it to the Self's control. 6:26

29)
Controlling sense, mind, intellect;
With moksha as the supreme goal;
Freed from desire, fear, and anger:
Such a sage is for ever free. 5:28

30)
He, disciplined by yoga, sees
The Self present in all beings,
And all beings within the Self.
He sees the same Self at all times. 6:29

31)
Those who direct their thoughts to Me,
Worshipping Me with steadfast mind,
For them I secure what they lack
And preserve that which they possess. 9:22

32)
Of them, the wise man, e'er steadfast,
Devoted to the One, excels;
Supremely dear am I to him,
And he is dear to Me, as well. 7:17

33)
At the end of his many births
The wise man takes refuge in Me.
He knows: "All is Vasudeva."
How very rare is that great soul! 7:19

34)
When he completely casts away
All the desires of the mind,
His self satisfied by the self,
He is called "of steady wisdom." 2:55

35)
He who abandons all desires
Attains peace, acts free from longing,
Indifferent to possessions
And free from all egotism.¹⁴⁷ 2:71

36)
He who agitates not the world,
And whom the world agitates not,
Who is freed from joy, envy, fear,
And worry—he is dear to Me. 12:15

37)
The same in honor and disgrace,
The same to friend and enemy,
Renouncing all undertakings—
He has gone beyond the Gunas. 14:25

38)
He who is content in the Self,
Who is satisfied in the Self,
Who is pleased only in the self:
For him there is no need to act. 3:17

39)
He has nothing to gain by acts;
Nothing to gain by inaction;
And no need of any being
For any purpose soever. 3:18

40)
Content with what comes unbidden,
Beyond duality, envy,
The same in success or failure,
E'en though acting, he is not bound. 4:22

41)
O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in
The hearts of all beings, causing

¹⁴⁷ Pronounced as four syllables.

Them by His Maya to revolve
As if mounted on a machine. 18:61

42)
O Bharata, with all your heart
Take refuge in Him; and you shall
Surely attain unto supreme
Peace and the eternal abode. 18:62

Om.
He, Who seated in Arjun's car,
Spoke the Gospel to Arjuna
And removed his distress, may that
Embodiment of Grace save us!¹⁴⁸
Om Tat sat.



¹⁴⁸ These four lines were written by Sri Ramana to be included in the recitation of the forty-two verses he selected as the essence of the Gita's teachings.