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THE DOCTRINE
OF THE
BHAGAVAD GITA



BHAVANI SHANKAR

THE DOCTRINE OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA

The Doctrine of the Bhagavad Gita is an instructive and inspiring exposition of the Hindu classic, orally delivered by Pandit Bhavani Shankar, a *sannyasi* who made the *Gita* his daily text. Since Pandit Bhavani Shankar's talks were delivered periodically from 1914 until 1933, and published in two editions, they have served as a source of strength to myriad aspirants in different countries. He transmits the profound metaphysics behind the *Gita* through a penetrating discussion of *Jnana Yoga*, the science of contemplation, and the sublime concept of the Avatar or Divine Incarnation. He sets forth the characteristics of the Illumined Sage, the doctrine of sacrifice, the critical distinction between the knower and the known, the nature of true devotion (*bhakti*) and worship (*puja*), and the time-honoured path to spiritual emancipation. The volume includes an extensive glossary of Sanskrit terms employed in the text.

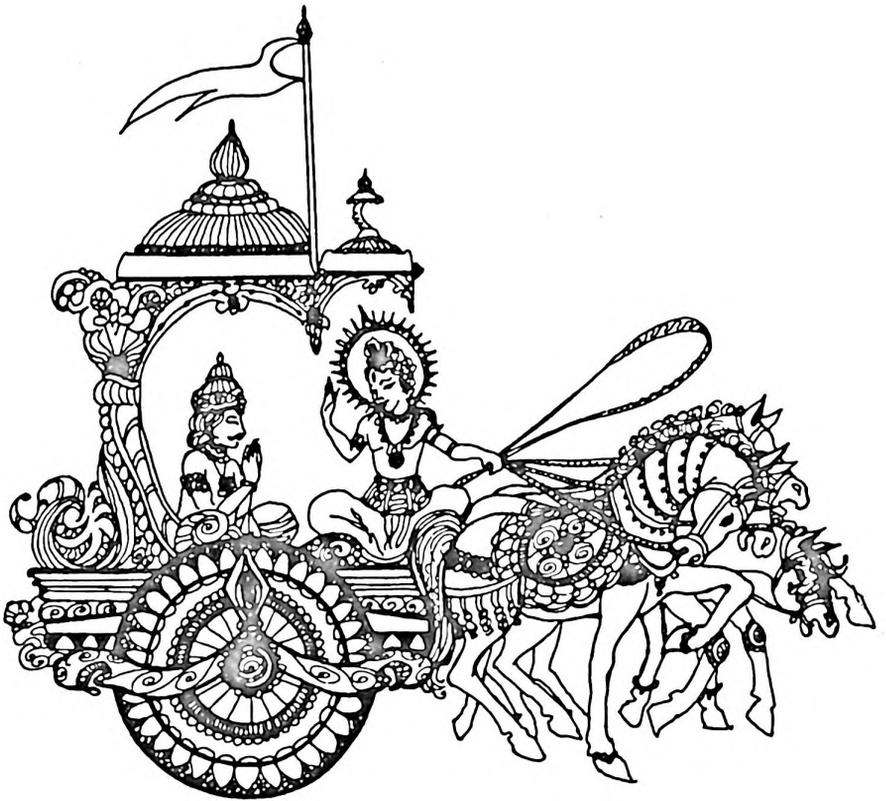


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BUDDHA



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THE DOCTRINE OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA

BHAVANI SHANKAR

**In whatever way men approach me, in that way do
I assist them.**

SHRI KRISHNA



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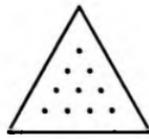
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In the first place revere the Immortal Gods, as they are established and ordained by the Law.

Reverence the Oath. In the next place revere the Heroes who are full of goodness and light.

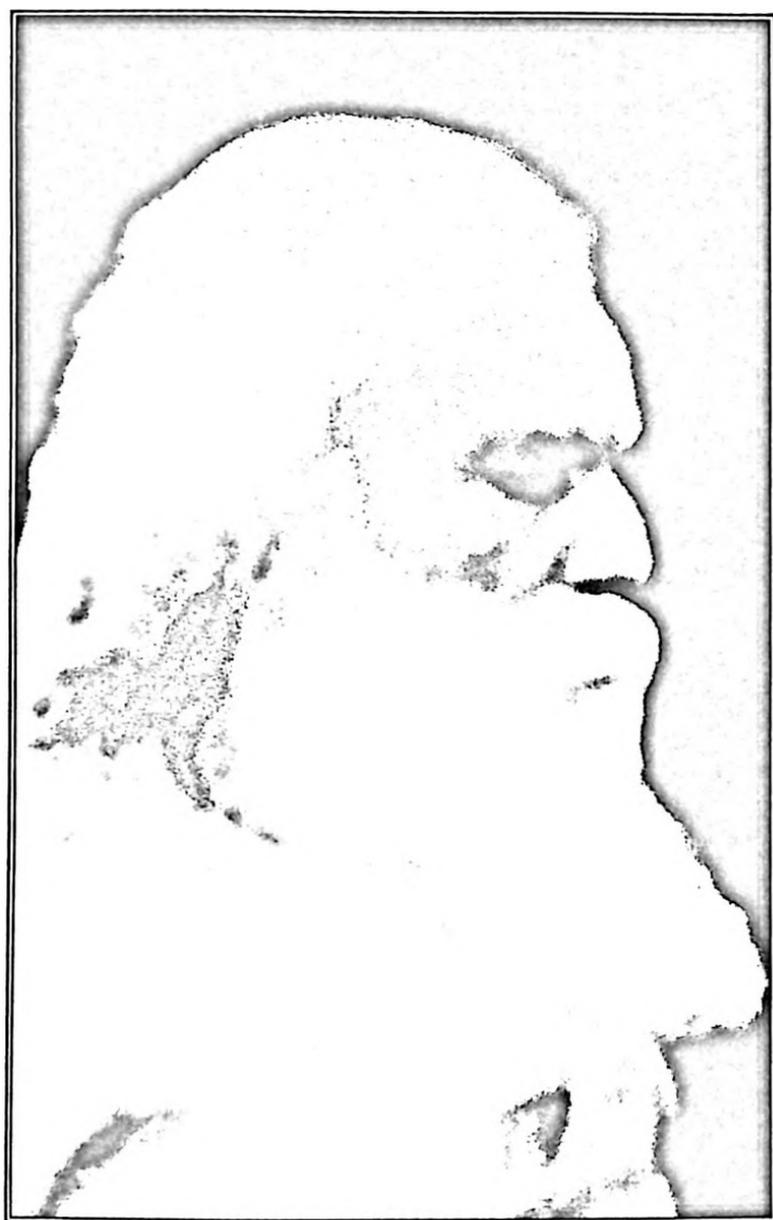
Honour likewise the Terrestrial Daimons by rendering them the worship lawfully due to them.

PYTHAGORAS



Devotion to Bhagavan begins when a man acquires the control of his senses and mind by following the *Pravritti Marga* according to the injunctions of Shastras, and fired by the desire of knowing the truth, he studies deeply the scriptures. Where there is this soul-hunger comes devotion. The *first* stage is called *shravana*, because the soul is now eager to hear of Bhagavan, and in listening to his glories, it rejoices; the *second* stage, *kirtana*, is reached when, filled with the joy, it begins to participate in it with kindred souls, for out of the fullness of the devotee's heart his mouth speaketh. The *third* stage is called *smaranam*, brooding, when the mind always loves to dwell upon Bhagavan; and then comes the *fourth* stage, *padasevana*, when his love grows deeper, and, not satisfied with merely brooding on the Lord, he seeks to feel His solidarity with him and clings to His blessed feet from which flow peace and bliss. Here the *bhakta* feels the first thrills of the divine life, and with it grows his thirst for losing himself in that life; and the *fifth* stage of *archana* is reached when, in the deep meditation of Bhagavan, he forgets himself. And as he continues in this stage, and when Bhagavan is enthroned in his heart more and more fully, he passes into the *sixth* stage of *vandanam*, where he feels the presence of the Lord everywhere and in everything. Like Arjuna, he begins to prostrate before all things both animate and inanimate; and when Divine Life is felt everywhere and in everything, the *seventh* stage of *dasya* naturally follows, in which whatever the *bhakta* does, he does it as the servant of Bhagavan, keeping Him always as the supreme goal of his life. The distance and the dual sense implied in this stage of servant and master in course of time wears off and the *eighth* stage of *sakhyata*, or friendship, is reached, where the oneness of the devotee with Bhagavan predominates . . . There is not still the complete unity, the thorough oneness, which is reached at the *ninth* stage of *Atmanivedana*, when the *bhakta* disappears and Bhagavan becomes all in all.

PANDIT BHAVANI SHANKAR



PANDIT BHAVANI SHANKAR
(August 1859 — July 4, 1936)



I

THE PLACE OF JNANA YOGA IN THE GITA

This is an introductory discourse which dwells not only on the sequential and organic connection between the discourses of the *Bhagavad Gita* but also on the intimate connection of the *Gita* itself with the *Mahabharata*, in which Vyasa has set it in the most appropriate place. So, to understand the full teaching of the *Gita*, it should not be studied as detached from the *Mahabharata*. Now the *Mahabharata* is an *itihasa*, that is, a record of events that actually happened, deriving all their spiritual significance from the great *Avatara* who is the centre and life of the *itihasa*. It is an allegory as well, describing the stages of the path which the soul has to pass through on its way to emancipation. It is also called the fifth Veda, and it marks an epoch in the history of our *Dharma*. For it was in the *Mahabharata* that the great Vyasa presented the doctrine contained in the four Vedas, giving this doctrine a turn with special reference to the great Avatar, round whom the chief interest of the *Mahabharata* centres. So, to appreciate fully the Doctrine of the *Gita*, all these considerations should be borne in mind and it should be studied as part of, and as having intimate relation with, the *Mahabharata*, in the midst of which Vyasa has purposely placed it.

Looking to the Fourth Discourse of the *Gita*, which deals with *Jnana Yoga*, we see how appropriately it comes after the first three discourses. The First Discourse treats of *Vishada*, which is also called *Yoga*, because it is not the passing despondency of the disappointed man but the deeper deadness felt in the heart, which leaves a permanent sense of unreality of the things seen and felt by the separative self, and which precedes the thirst of the soul for the Real. And one of the names by which Arjuna is called is Nara. The First Discourse vividly describes the position of the *Jivatma* as it enters the threshold of manhood after passing its stages of

irresponsible childhood and of disciplined youth (the discipline imposed from outside by the Shastras and *Acharyas*).

Arjuna has controlled the senses and the mind and has built up a strong centre of individual consciousness. But the utter unreality of the external he has still to learn. He has not as yet killed what in *The Voice of the Silence* is called the Rajah of the senses, the "Slayer of the Real", and deep despondency possesses his mind when at last he has to pass through the experience. He is now called upon not only to kill the eleven *akshauhinis* of kinsmen formed of his five senses and six passions (*kama*, *krodha*, etc.), but to slay even the *Dharmacharyas* to whom he was looking up hitherto for guidance. When the necessity arises for such action, his whole existence seems to Arjuna to have dissolved into nothingness, and in one line the Lord conveys to him the teaching at this critical juncture: "*A Pandita, O Arjuna, neither grieves for the dead nor for the living.*" That is how the teaching commences in the Second Discourse, which is called *Sankhya Yoga*. A *Pandita* is he who knows the *Atman*, the real as distinguished from the false, the permanent from the fleeting.

The Second Discourse begins with the analysis of man. It shows that man is not his body because, though the body undergoes changes, the sense of self is untouched by them. Similarly are pleasure and pain, which are neither in the senses themselves nor in the external objects, but are at the points of contact of senses and their objects and are therefore impermanent and changing. Amidst this flux and change the Self alone is changeless and permanent and, because it is so, it is the only reality. "*For, the unreal existeth not, nor can the real ever cease to be.*" Thus should the aspirant dissociate himself from his body, and the sensations and feelings, and, with reason so purified, realize the Self within himself, the Self "*whom weapons cleave not, nor fire burns, nor water wets, nor wind dries, the unperceivable, the unthinkable and the unchangeable Self*".

If the aspirant is not capable of thus realizing the Self, let him follow *Buddhi Yoga*. Let him do his work, casting off attachment, balanced in mind, whether success or failure falls to his lot. By thus giving up the desire for *phalam* (fruit) and balancing himself under all the ups and downs of life, he will attain to that disciplined and one-pointed reason by which he will realize the

Self. He will realize that he is distinct from his sensations and perceptions and from feelings and emotions, and that pleasures and pains and joys and sorrows, by which he was measuring his life till now, touch not the inner serenity, the harmony of the Self. Shri Shankaracharya's definition of *phalam* is specially noteworthy: *phalgutaya layam adarshanam gachhatiti phalam*. *Phalam* (fruit) implies something that vanishes, something insubstantial.

For such a *Sankhya Yogi* — he who has realized the harmony of the Inner Self — *karma* apparently seems to have no application. Yet it is not so. His very knowledge makes him a more responsible person. Though he has no object to gain by *karma*, still to set a good example to the ignorant, he must engage himself in it. *Karma* includes not only bodily but mental action as well, and, as there is no escape from *karma* for the ignorant, it should be well directed for the benefit of the world. Nor can it be said that after realizing his Inner Self the aspirant's goal is reached. The harmony that he has attained is still of the separative self, depending on the background of the not-self for its existence. He must now learn that the not-self, which he had so long discarded and flung away from himself, is not an alien to, but a manifestation, as his own self is, of the Transcendent Self, the fount of all reality (the Light of *Ishvara*).

The harmony which he had gained within must now be realized outside as well. So, in *The Voice of the Silence* it is taught: "In order to become the Knower of ALL SELF, thou hast first of SELF to be the knower. To reach the knowledge of that SELF, thou hast to give up Self to Non-Self, Being to Non-Being." (p. 5) Further, the only *mukti* worth striving for is the mergence of the individual self into *Ishvara* through the Light of *Ishvara*. And when Bhagavan Himself, the *Ishvara*, comes down and engages Himself in action, turns the wheel of life for the good of the world, how can the aspirant follow a different course? When the aspirant has realized the inner harmony of the *Jivatman* in himself, which is the object of *Sankhya Yoga*, and carried it into the outer world in action also, for which *Karma Yoga* is enjoined in the Third Discourse, he becomes fit for receiving the illumination through the Light of *Ishvara* which unifies the self and not-self. Hence *Jnana Yoga* follows the *Sankhya* and *Karma Yogas* in the *Gita*.



II

THE PEDIGREE OF JNANA YOGA

We have this pedigree given in the first shloka of the Fourth Discourse of the *Gita*. Bhagavan says: "*I imparted this Yoga to Vivasvat; Vivasvat imparted it to Manu; and from Manu Ikshvaku derived it.*" Vivasvat is the sun, the *Hiranyagarbha Brahmā*, the creator of our system. What Bhagavan means is that *Hiranyagarbha Brahmā* created the world through the illumination derived from this *Yoga*. So did Manu create the human race with its help, and it was imparted to the *Rajarishis* like Ikshvaku that they may rule their subjects, having the spiritual welfare of the race in view, enforcing conformity to the *Pravritti Dharma* of *Varna* and *Ashrama* and keeping the way open to the *Nivritti Dharma* of Renunciation.

The continuity of the tradition of this supreme *Yoga* suffered a break for want of proper disciples. For, when this *Yoga* falls into the hands of the weak who cannot control their minds and senses, or of persons of *ahankara* in whom the subtle desire for glory and power predominates, it decays. The shloka does not, however, imply that the Kshatriyas were the special teachers and preservers of the *Yoga*, for far higher than the *Rajarishis* are the *Devarishis* and *Brahmarishis*; and there is the historical instance of Vishvamitra, a *Rajarishi*, who had to perform long and arduous *tapas* for becoming a *Brahmarishi*. One important point needs to be emphasized in connection with this shloka, and it is this: The brotherhood of Adepts or *Jivanmuktas* is as strictly a product of Nature as a tree.

It has a definite and indispensable purpose and function in the development of the human race, and this function is to keep open the upward path through which descend light and leading. If, on account of an increase of materialism and *adharma*, this spiritual connection stops, then Bhagavan Himself takes up the work of the Brotherhood and provides for the spiritual welfare of humanity.

"This ancient Yoga has today been imparted to thee by me for thou art my devotee and friend; and this is the supreme secret." So runs the next shloka. The qualifications of Arjuna to be the recipient of this supreme secret were that he was both a devotee and a friend of Bhagavan.

And here let us dwell on the *Nava Vidha Bhakti*. This *Nava Vidha Bhakti* is not the nine ways of devotion — each sufficient in itself — but the nine stages of the devotee. Reference to the different shlokas in the *Gita* on this point will itself show how one stage comes after the other as a natural sequence; and the Lord's reference specially to the eighth stage, *sakhyata* or friendship, is very significant. Devotion to Bhagavan begins when a man acquires the control of his senses and mind by following the *Pravritti Marga* according to the injunctions of Shastras, and fired by the desire of knowing the truth, he studies deeply the scriptures. Where there is this soul-hunger comes devotion. The *first* stage is called *shravana*, because the soul is now eager to hear of Bhagavan, and in listening to his glories, it rejoices; the *second* stage, *kirtana*, is reached when, filled with the joy, it begins to participate in it with kindred souls, for out of the fullness of the devotee's heart his mouth speaketh. The *third* stage is called *smaranam*, brooding, when the mind always loves to dwell upon Bhagavan; and then comes the *fourth* stage, *padasevana*, when his love grows deeper and, not satisfied with merely brooding on the Lord, he seeks to feel His solidarity with him and clings to His blessed feet from which flow peace and bliss.

Here the *bhakta* feels the first thrills of the divine life, and with it grows his thirst for losing himself in that life; and the *fifth* stage of *archana* is reached when, in the deep meditation of Bhagavan, he forgets himself. And as he continues in this stage, and when Bhagavan is enthroned in his heart more and more fully, he passes into the *sixth* stage of *vandanam*, where he feels the presence of the Lord everywhere and in everything. Like Arjuna, he begins to prostrate before all things both animate and inanimate; and when Divine Life is felt everywhere and in everything, the *seventh* stage of *dasya* naturally follows, in which whatever the *bhakta* does, he does it as the servant of Bhagavan, keeping Him always as the supreme goal of his life. The distance and the dual sense implied in this stage of servant and master in

course of time wears off and the *eighth* stage of *sakhya*, or friendship, is reached, where the oneness of the devotee with Bhagavan predominates. The tradition that Shri Krishna and Arjuna were of equal stature seems to have some allegorical significance.

At this stage the devotee grows like unto the object of his devotion, "*just as the form to which the clay is modelled is first united with the potter's mind*" (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 3), and the devotee becomes fit to receive the supreme *Yoga*, as Arjuna as *sakha* and *bhakta* of Bhagavan was, as stated in the shloka. There is not still the complete unity, the thorough oneness, which is reached at the *ninth* stage of *Atmanivedana*, when the *bhakta* disappears and Bhagavan becomes all in all. Arjuna said: "*Destroyed is delusion, and I have gained recognition through Thy Grace. O Achyuta, I am firm, with doubts gone. I will do Thy word.*" (XVIII, 73) It is the final surrender of the devotee's self to Bhagavan, absolutely and unconditionally. Thus is devotion the potent power that leads to and makes possible the utter self-renunciation and self-surrender which are the only means for receiving spiritual illumination.





III

THE DOCTRINE OF AVATARAS

The *Avatara* is one of the most abstruse truths of Hinduism as it is of *Brahma Vidya*. To have even a very faint idea of the great truth, it is necessary to know what real spirituality is, to have some notion of the spiritual ideal of Adeptship, of *Jivanmukti*. It is truly said that even in this proud age of intellect, very few can form a correct conception of a *Jivanmukta*.

I may here lightly touch upon the preparatory qualifications which the aspirant for spiritual life should acquire. By *Karma Marga*, the disinterested performance of religious and secular duties, he should control his body, subdue his senses and purify his mind. He should strive for the control and concentration of mind by *abhyasa*, that is, by practice; for this purpose he should have some fixed time in the morning and evening when he should withdraw his mind from all external objects and learn to retire within himself. By following this practice regularly he gains habitual control of his mind, which enables him to discharge his duties more effectually and also acquire the power of concentration which is so essential for deep study and devotion as well. The third qualification he should acquire is by study and deep thinking. He should regularly study the scriptures, and by deep thinking and cogitation on the profound truths dealt with therein, he should develop the penetrative intellect which can intuit the spiritual truths which lie embedded under the apparent tangle of scriptural contradictions. By following this *Jnana Marga* his intellect perceives the nature of his own self, its connection with *Ishvara* and the important place of the Guru in the pilgrimage of the *Jivatma*. And as this intellectual conviction grows deeper and gains strength, he begins to offer himself to his *Gurudeva* and *Ishtadeva*, and as he surrenders himself, he begins to feel the inner peace and joy which gradually transform his conviction into faith and his intellectual perceptions into self-feeling wherewith true devotion begins.

By following this fourfold discipline inculcated in the four *margas* of *Karma*, *Abhyasa*, *Jnana* and *Bhakti*, he in course of time acquires the qualifications necessary for a disciple. He has developed the physical, astral and causal centres and has learnt to surrender them to his *Gurudeva*, and at the proper time receives his first initiation. It takes place, as H.P. Blavatsky says in *The Voice of the Silence*, neither in the physical body, which she calls the Hall of Ignorance, nor in the astral body, which is called by her the Hall of Learning, but it is in the *karana sharira*, the Hall of Wisdom, in his own *hridaya* (heart), that the disciple sees Him for the first time, whose life and peace he was so long feeling in his heart. Therefore does *The Voice of the Silence* teach the aspirant: "Seek for him who is to give thee birth, in the Hall of Wisdom." (p. 8) What happens is that both the physical and astral bodies fall into trance, and the disciple is in his *karana sharira*; that is, in his heart he sees his *Gurudeva*, and in the heart of his *Gurudeva* he sees his *Ishtadeva*, the *Ishvara*. The *Gurudeva* transmits to him the life of *Ishvara*, the only true life — the Self — of which the *Mandukya Upanishad* in the seventh shloka speaks as being "*shantam, shivam, advaitam . . . sa Atma*", peace, bliss and unity — the Mystic Consciousness wherein "*he sees the Self abiding in all beings and all beings abiding in the Self, and sees the same everywhere*". (*Gita*, IV, 29)

The unreal life of the false separative self with its triple consciousness — the seer, the seeing and the seen — falls loosened from him and he is awakened in the region of the Real. The *Gita*, referring to this state, truly says, "*When it is night to all beings the Sage is awake and where all beings are awake the Sage is asleep*." (II, 69) And Shri Shankaracharya, commenting on this shloka, says,

To all beings, the Supreme Reality, that is, the Divine Life, is night, and there, the Initiate is now fully awake. When all beings are said to be awake, i.e., when all beings who in reality sleep in the night of ignorance, imbued with the distinct notions of perceiver and things perceived — that state is night in the eye of the Sage who knows the Supreme Reality.

He has realized the unity of life in his *karana sharira*, and the effect of this first initiation on his physical ego is that it becomes a mere reflection of the Divine Life; in other words, his personality has been killed. Not only has his physical centre (ego) become a reflection of the life of *Ishvara*, but as a result of the *Yoga*-fire, the gross particles of his physical body have been purified and etherealized, making that body a vehicle refined enough for the functioning of the higher consciousness (see *Svetashvetara Upanishad*, II, 12-13). He realizes that both his physical centre and the physical centre of the cosmos are essentially one, that they are expressions of the same Divine Life which, expressing itself in them, transcends both, and he begins to harmonize them. He therefore feels compassion for all beings (*Gita*, VI, 32): "*Whoso, by comparison with himself, sees the same everywhere, O Arjuna, be it pleasure or pain, he is deemed the highest Yogin.*" This cosmic physical centre is called in the Upanishads *vaishvanara* and in the *Gita*, *Adhibhuta*, and is the basis of all beings. He feels that both himself and the world outside him are but the expressions of the selfsame life. He is therefore called a *parivrajaka*, a wanderer, because he has now realized for the first time that his true home is *Ishvara*, from whom he has been wandering away and on reaching whom his heart is set.

Of such an Initiate does the *Gita* speak: "*He is one to whom censure and praise are equal, who is silent, content with anything, homeless, steady-minded and full of devotion.*" (XII, 19) "*Such a one*", Bhagavan says, "*is dear to Me.*" He is silent because his heart is flowing with the peace and bliss of Bhagavan's life, the only life he cares for. To hold forth astral peregrinations and astral lectures as objects of spiritual endeavour and as credentials of initiation is a perversion of the teachings of *Brahma Vidya*. It is projecting into the higher regions the separative self of the lower, whereas the true goal of a student of *Brahma Vidya* should be the killing of the false and separative self with the help of the life from on high, the life of *Ishvara*, the one centripetal force in the cosmos, not to speak of the astral world and *svarga*. Even residence in *Brahmaloka* is not desirable for a man who cares for *svasvarupa jnanam*, the knowledge of the Self. (*Gita*, VIII, 16) The only object of the Initiate is the religious

enlightenment of the human race and a perfectly unselfish, self-forgetting, self-annihilating devotion to that object — a self-abnegation which is not temporal and must have no end forever, but is his only talisman of safety, as it ought to be the only object of his life. For this purpose he need not scour the *lokas*, for from his own heart always flows a current of living moral and spiritual energy for the good of the three worlds, more potent and dynamic in its purifying and elevating effect than any number of lectures and orations, whether on the physical or astral or some higher planes.

This current of spiritual energy flowing from the heart of every spiritual man increases in volume and force as he grows in devotion and self-renunciation. We are not left in doubt as to the marks of a real Initiate. For, in the reply given by Bhagavan to Arjuna's query about the marks of a *Sthitaprajna*, we have a definite and comprehensive reply. *Sthitaprajna* is one who has perceived the Supreme Reality (*Brahman*) as his self, according to Shri Shankaracharya's commentary. This description is found in shlokas 55 to 57 of chapter II of the *Gita*. In the 55th shloka we are taught the state of the Initiate when he is in *karana sharira*: "*When the man is satisfied in the Self alone by himself, casts off all the desires of the mind, then he is said to be Sthitaprajna.*" In the next shloka is described his condition when he is in the *sukshma* centre: "*He whose mind is not distressed in calamities, in whom all longings for pleasures are lost, from whom attachment, fear and wrath have passed away, is called Sthitaprajna.*" And how he departs when in physical consciousness is told in the shloka following the above: "*He is Sthitaprajna who, without attachment anywhere, on meeting with anything good or bad, neither exults nor hates.*"

In course of time, as the Initiate develops in an ever-increasing measure devotion and self-surrender to this *Gurudeva* and *Ishtadeva*, he receives his second initiation; and just as, after the first initiation, his physical ego becomes merely the reflection of the Divine Life and his physical body, purified and refined by the *Yoga*-fire, becomes a vehicle fit for higher consciousness, similarly, as a result of the second initiation his astral body becomes a perfect mirror, reflecting merely the One Life. H.P. Blavatsky well describes his state:

The power of passions is dead altogether and they have been crushed and annihilated in the retort of an unflinching will. [In him] not only all the lust and longings of the flesh are dead but also the recognition of the personal self is killed out and the astral has been reduced in consequence to a cipher.

His astral ego is now but a reflection of the Divine Life, and he realizes that his astral centre or ego and the corresponding cosmic centre are in essence one, both reflections of the One Life, and his sense of separateness between the two falls off. This astral cosmic centre is called in the *Mandukya Upanishad taijasa*, resplendent centre, and in the *Gita, Adhidaiva*, the substratum of all the *devatas*.

The Light of *Ishvara*, which his *Gurudeva* had transmitted to him at the time of the first initiation, has now by his profound devotion and renunciation been transmuted into electro-spiritual force, which is called the higher *kundalini*, and rises upwards. It now rises from the heart into the head and there brings into full functioning all the spiritual centres in the brain which up to now it was vivifying, and it passes on to what Shri Shankaracharya calls the *dhi-guha*, the cave of the intellect, the space between the brows, and electrifies *Buddhi* into a dynamic power resulting in spiritual clairvoyance. It then merges in the great Goddess seated in the centre of the full-blown *sahasra* (thousand-petalled lotus). And through these higher spiritual centres the Initiate subdues and controls the lower *chakras*. According to Hindu books of *Yoga*, there is in the brain the *sahasra chakram*.

It is an unopened bud in the ordinary mortal, and just as the lotus opens its petals and expands in all its bloom and beauty when the sun rises above the horizon and sheds his rays on the flower, so does the *sahasram* of the neophyte open and expand when *Ishvara* begins to pour His life into its centre. When fully expanded, it becomes the glorious seat of the Devi (*Daiviprakriti*), and sitting on this flower the great Goddess pours out the waters of life and grace for the gratification and regeneration of the human soul.

H.P. Blavatsky refers to this spiritual process in the following

passage in *The Voice of The Silence* and in her notes thereon:

Let not thy 'Heaven-Born', merged in the sea of Maya, break from the Universal Parent (SOUL), but let the fiery power retire into the inmost chamber, the chamber of the Heart, and the abode of the World's Mother. Then from the heart that Power shall rise into the sixth, the middle region, the place between thine eyes, when it becomes the breath of the ONE-SOUL, the voice which filleth all, thy Master's voice. (p. 10)

In her note on the words 'power' and the 'World Mother' in the above passage, she says these "are names given to *Kundalini*— one of the mystic 'Yogi powers'. It is *Buddhi* considered as an active instead of a passive principle." Thus the electro-spiritual force called *kundalini* is the result of the spiritual development of man and has nothing to do with physical and mechanical processes.

But there is the lower *kundalini* also, seated in the *muladhara chakra* at the base of the spine, which *Hatha Yogis* try to awaken by *pranayama* (restraint of breath). It is a dangerous process and has nothing to do with spirituality. There is another set of teachers who, by external stimuli such as crystal-gazing and focussing the attention and gaze on the *chakra* between the eyebrows, advocate the development of clairvoyance — psychic vision — which is quite distinct from spiritual clairvoyance. The tiny serpent seen in this *chakra* by the psychic is not the real spiritual power called *kundalini*. The psychic sees different objects in a finer world, just as we see here the physical objects, but there is in him the sense of separateness as deep, if not deeper, as in the ordinary man, and he accentuates this separateness by setting his false and petty self against the surroundings, and striving for domination over them.

This is a process the reverse of spiritual, a projection of the lower and false into the higher and the real. Saints and sages have time and oft taught, distinguishing real spirituality from these artificial methods, which are prompted by the thirst for power and *siddhis*. Thus the great sage Jnaneshvara, in his *Dvadashakshari* (the well-known twelve-syllabled *mantra*) *Abhagna*, says:

Awakening the serpent by the control of the nine gates and passing it through *sushumna*, which is one

of the three *nadis*, such is not, say the *Munis*, the path. The fount of liberation is in ceaseless contemplation of *Nara-Hari*.

Similarly does Machendra teach his disciple Gorakh while telling him the real qualifications of a *chela*:

Arousing the *kundalini* and forcing it up to the *brahmarandhra* (the crown of the head), and thus acquiring the power of walking on water and of prophecy, do not constitute a spiritual man — such is not fit to be a *chela*.

Real spiritual clairvoyance develops in the Initiate as naturally as a bud at its proper time blooms into a flower. It is vision and feeling blended into one, wherein the separateness of the seer, the seeing and the seen is altogether absent. It is this spiritual clairvoyance that Shri Shankaracharya refers to in the following shloka in the *Aparokshanubhuti*:

Vision is to be concentrated there where the triad — the seer, the seeing and the seen — vanishes, and not on the base of the nose (*agneya chakra*).

As a result of harmonizing his astral centre with the *Adhidaiva* centre, the basis of all *devatas*, through the higher *kundalini*, he sees the hierarchies of cosmic intelligences, the *devas*, and realizes that they and himself are essentially one being — expressions of the one Divine Life which, expressing Itself in all these and in himself, transcends all and remains Itself. He has now all the great higher *siddhis*, which are not so much control acquired over something outside, but knowledge realized of the inwardness of cosmic processes — the expansion of his *Buddhi* into the cosmic *Buddhi*. With the possession of all these *siddhis*, the outstanding characteristic of the Initiate now is his utter humility. His *abhimana*, thirst for individual power and glory, has vanished. He is therefore called a *kutichaka*, one who resides in a humble hut of leaves. He has now that power which enables him to appear as nothing in the eyes of men. “Be humble, if thou would’st attain to Wisdom. Be humbler still, when Wisdom thou hast mastered.” (*The Voice of the Silence*, p. 41)

Then comes his third initiation, and to understand the significance of it, even faintly, it is necessary to know something about the unfolding of the *Jivatma*. The *Jivatma* is called in our scriptures *Hamsa*. *Hamsa* is a bird which is known to possess the peculiar power of separating off pure milk from a mixture of milk and water, and *Jivatma* is called a *Hamsa* because it, like the bird of the name, has the power of discriminating the real from the unreal in *samsara*, which is a combination of both. Up till now this *Hamsa*, that is, *Jivatma*, had fed itself on the very cream of the best and noblest experience gained in innumerable lives. Even at the time of the first initiation, the Initiate has realized that the real Self is the Divine Life, which transcends the self of the *Jivatma*. But now, as a result of further spiritual progress, he realizes more deeply than before the utter unreality of this individuality, that it is a thing which "*he has created with pain for his own use and by means of which he purposes to reach to the Life beyond individuality*".

He now retires deeper within and approaches the sanctuary of the Self, nearer than ever before, and is realizing in a greater and fuller measure the peace and bliss of the One Life. This further spiritual progress that he has made and which enables him to go through the third initiation involves the spiritual transformation of his *karana sharira*, which now becomes an *upadhi* of pure (sattvic) *Akasha*. His spiritual ego, the centre of *karana sharira*, which at this stage is called *prajna* in *Mandukya Upanishad*, is seen by him to be a mere reflection of Divine Light, and, now no more being limited by his *karana sharira*, is realized as the cosmic centre of that plane, called *Ishvara* in the *Mandukya Upanishad* and *Adhiyajna* in the *Gita*. All the rich treasure of knowledge and experience gathered by him with pain and patience through innumerable lives, and of which his *karana sharira* was built, is now gladly sacrificed by him to *Adhiyajna*, and thus is increased the fund of cosmic intelligence working for the uplifting of the race. He now sees that the end and consummation of all knowledge, austerities and sacrifices is the great Goddess, the Divine Light of *Ishvara*, at whose feet he now offers his individuality, purified and ennobled by the virtuous *karma* of a series of incarnations. At this stage he is called a *Hamsa*, one who has realized that he and the cosmic centre of *Adhiyajna* are one.

Now he finds that all the six great *shaktis*, which are developed in him, are but the manifestations of the One Self, the Divine Life. These six *shaktis* are: (1) *Jnanashakti*, ability to see the past and future; (2) *Itchashakti*, the power of the will; (3) *Kriyashakti*, the mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce external perceptible and phenomenal results by its own inherent energy; (4) *Mantrikashakti*, the power of letters and *mantras*; (5) *Parashakti*, which includes the powers of light and heat; (6) *Kundalinishakti*, already mentioned. He has now to fight the final struggle against the flesh that will liberate him once and forever from the bonds of matter, and pass the fourth initiation. He has now risen above the limitations of the three bodies, but he has still to cross the neutral barrier. He has to fasten the energies of his soul on this supreme struggle. When the human monad is completely isolated from the three bodies — physical, astral and causal — it is, as it were, at a neutral point of consciousness and no consciousness is experienced by it. It is the *Mahasushupti*, and before the monad can be finally liberated, it should cross this neutral barrier. Bhagavan refers to this struggle when he says, “*Hard is my divine Maya to surmount. Those who seek Me alone pass over this Maya.*” (VII, 14)

The result of this last struggle, that is, success or defeat in it, entirely depends upon the latent energy of the *Jivatma* resulting from devotion to *Ishvara*, its previous training and past *karma*. It is the real *Kurukshetra* for the *Jivatma*, where it hears in full the Song of Life — *Mahasmashana*, the great burning-ground — where it hears the voice of the cosmic deep and where *ahankara* is reduced to ashes. It is *Mahasmashana* because it is the death of the individual man, from whose ashes the regenerated man springs into existence, electrified by the Song of Life. If he has emerged from this final struggle triumphant, then he is a full-blown Adept, a *Jivanmukta*, who has entirely merged himself in the One Life. He is now called a *Paramahansa*, one who has realized THAT, i.e., that He, the One Life and himself are one. He has become *Om* because *sa* and *ha* of *Soham* being eliminated in him, he remains only the *Om*.

Thus far we have the guidance of the *Mandukya Upanishad*, from stage to stage, in the spiritual progress of the *Jivatma*, till the liberated man has triumphed over all the bonds of matter. He is

now a *Jivanmukta*, for whom *samsara* can weave no illusion and Nature holds no secret. He has crossed the ocean of *maya* and has fully entered the Divine Light. Even for him there stretch forth further vistas of progress. Saith *Light on the Path*:

For within you is the light of the world — the only light that can be shed on the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere. It is beyond you; because when you reach it you have lost yourself. It is unattainable, because it forever recedes. You will enter the light, but you will never touch the flame. (pp. 3-4)

The further stages of progress hinted at in this passage are also referred to in the Hindu scriptures which darkly hint at five further stages of spiritual height. They involve the most arduous *tapas* out of all human experience and utterly beyond human perception or imagination.

In enumerating the four classes of His devotees in verse 16 of chapter VII of the *Gita*, Bhagavan includes the *Jnani* as one of those four classes of *bhaktas*, and in the following verses 17 and 18 Bhagavan says, "*Among these four classes of bhaktas, who are all noble, the Jnani surpasseth all, for he is My very Self; as steadfast in mind, he resorts to Me alone as the unsurpassed goal.*" And in the following verse Bhagavan says, "*At the end of many births the Jnani comes to Me, realizing that Vasudeva is the all. He is the Mahatma, very hard to find.*" Again, in the third verse of the same chapter Bhagavan says, "*Among thousands of men one perchance strives for perfection; even among those who strive and are perfect, only one perchance knows Me in truth.*"

Thus the teaching of the *Gita* is clear. It points out that even after man has fully entered the light and become a *Jivanmukta*, it is possible for him to attain further spiritual heights. He has entered the light, but he has not merged himself in the divine centre, the Spiritual Sun from whom this light emanates. Bhagavan says that even among Mahatmas, one who has attained this condition is very hard to find. Now turn to verse 50 of chapter XVIII of the *Gita*. The Lord says, "*How he who has attained perfection reaches Brahman, that in brief, do thou learn from*

me, O son of Kunti — that supreme consummation of knowledge”; and in the following five verses is treated the *Parabhakti*, possible only to the *Jnani*, by means of which he enters Bhagavan and becomes *Brahman*.

Thus run these verses:

Imbued with pure reason, controlling the self with firmness, abandoning sound and other objects, laying aside love and hatred, resorting to a sequestered spot, eating but little, speech and body and mind subdued, always engaged in meditation and concentration, imbued with dispassion, having abandoned egotism, violence, arrogance, desire, enmity, property, and free from the notion of ‘mine’, and being peaceful, he is fit for becoming *Brahman*. Becoming *Brahman* of serene self, he neither grieves nor desires; treating all beings alike, he attains supreme devotion to Me. By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; then knowing Me in truth he forthwith enters into Me.

Add to this verse 4 in chapter XII referring to this same state:

Having restrained all senses, always equanimous, devoted to the welfare of all beings, they reach Myself (the central Spiritual Sun, the highest goal).

At the fourth initiation he had become a *Jivanmukta* who has triumphed over all matter, one who liberated himself from all bonds of *samsara*. He had then fully entered the Divine Light, the veil of *Ishvara*, the veil of light through which *Ishvara* manifests Himself to the highest spiritual perception of a human being. Shri Shankaracharya, in his *Soundaryalahari*, addressing this light, says, “*Thou art the body of Shambhu.*” The light is, as it were, a cloak or a mask with which *Ishvara* is enabled to make His appearance. But *Ishvara*, the real centre of light, is not visible even to the highest spiritual perception of man. Hence in the above-quoted passage in *Light on the Path* it is said, “*You will enter the light but you will never touch the flame.*” The goal of *Parabhakti*, which is only possible for a *Jnani*, is the merging into this centre of light, *Ishvara*, the highest goal of spiritual endeavour.

This mergence of the *Jivanmukta* into *Ishvara* may be likened to what may happen in the case of the sun when a comet falls upon it; there is in the case of the sun an accession of heat and light. So also, whenever any particular individual reaches the highest state of spiritual culture, develops in himself all the virtues that alone entitle him to a union with *Ishvara*, and finally unites his soul with *Ishvara*, there is, as it were, a sort of reaction emanating from *Ishvara* for the good of humanity; and in particular cases an impulse is generated in *Ishvara* to incarnate for the good of humanity. This is the highest consummation of human aspiration and endeavour.

Even in the earlier stages of his spiritual life, an aspirant for the higher life becomes a participator in the grand silent work of the spiritual enlightenment of his race — the current of the living moral and spiritual energy flowing from his heart being his humble contribution. As he progresses on the path his contribution increases, till by inconceivably arduous *tapas* and renunciation he succeeds in bringing down the great *Ishvara* Himself to do this work. This is one aspect of the doctrine about the *Avatara*. The subject is a profound one and touches one of the most jealously guarded secrets of *Brahma Vidya*. If the latter-day Theosophical teachers had even the faintest idea of the sanctity and solemnity of the subject, we would have been spared so much blasphemous talk of preparations for an *Avatara* and such flippant prattle about sacred things. We see the wisdom of the ancients in drawing the veil of secrecy on these high subjects, for, when sacred things are bandied about light-heartedly, spiritual degradation is the result.

The very word *Avatara* implies a coming down. Viewed from the point of view of the *Jivanmukta*, it is a gradual ascent and the final absorption of the human soul into *Ishvara*, but from the standpoint of *Ishvara* it is a coming down of Bhagavan to the plane of *Jivatma*. *Ishvara* therefore is not a result of evolution, but One who makes evolution possible. Hence Bhagavan says,

Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature, and though I am the Lord of all beings, yet controlling my own nature, I take birth through the instrumentality of my *Maya*. (IV, 6)

Bhagavan controls his *prakriti* having three qualities, and through the instrumentality of His light, His *Yogamaya*, He incarnates Himself. Further, we are given not only the time of his coming down but also the reason for it.

Whenever there is decay of *dharma*, and ascendancy of *adharma*, then I manifest myself. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, and for the firm establishment of *dharma* I am born in every *yuga*. (IV, 7-8)

If Bhagavan appears as an *Avatar* at such long intervals as is implied by this verse, His *Avataras* will not be many, at least so far as our humanity is concerned. In fact, we know only of two previous human *Avataras*, Parashurama and Shri Ramachandra. Even supposing that Bhagavan manifested Himself in lands other than our own, His *Avataras* cannot be many. How are we to explain, then, the statement in verse 5: "*Many births of Mine have passed as well as thine, O Arjuna, all these I know, but thou knowest them not, O harasser of foes.*" The many births referred to in the verse include not only His human *Avataras* but also the many births of the great *Jivanmukta* who had absorbed himself in Bhagavan and who, owing to the infinite love and compassion he had developed in himself for humanity, had generated an impulse in *Ishvara* to incarnate Himself for the good of the human race.





IV

JNANA YOGA

This *Yoga* is the only means to *moksha* and has a bearing on verses 9 and 10 of chapter IV of the *Gita*. If *moksha* means immortality, immortality is not possible of attainment even if you reach *Brahmaloka*, because even *Brahmaloka* dissolves at *pralaya*. For Bhagavan definitely says, "All worlds including the world of *Brahmā* are subject to returning again, O Arjuna, but on reaching Me, O Son of Kunti, there is no birth." (VIII, 16) Unless we reach Bhagavan, there can be no immortality for us, and in verses 9 and 10 Bhagavan indicates the necessary conditions for reaching Him, and of thus attaining *moksha*. The words *raga* (passion), *bhaya* (fear) and *krodha* (anger) in verse 10 have very deep significance; they imply the limitations to all human endeavours at attainment of liberation when such endeavours take no cognizance of Bhagavan.

There are schools of philosophy which ignore altogether *Ishvara* and His Light in their speculations and expositions of the universe and man, and which inculcate their special methods for attaining liberation. Now this verse points out that the highest and the most serious of such philosophies can help man at the best to realize only his individuality, his *karana sharira* self. By strict and rigid practice of the teaching of such a philosophy, he can rise above the loves and hates, the ambitions and desires, the passions and appetites, of the average man; for the *karana sharira* self, the higher man, cannot be moved by the motives and considerations which are the springs of action of the lower self, the personality. Hence the petty desires and passions moving the personality are conquered. But that does not mean that these passions, fears, likes and dislikes have been thoroughly rooted out, and they cannot be eradicated unless the sense of separateness is entirely got over.

The *karana sharira* self, great as it is compared to the personality, is still separative, and has therefore the higher equivalents of passion, fear and hate. What is, then, the *raga* (passion) of such a philosopher? By hard struggle and exertions he

has built up his individuality, and he is attached to the serenity and calm which he enjoys therein. With much patience and pain he has wrought for himself a bed for repose which he does not like to quit. What, then, can be his *bhaya* (fear)? The fears of ordinary man have no sting for him. Even death has lost its power to terrorize him. Still he has fear, and it overpowers him when he attempts to rise above his *karana sharira*. By his thinking and reasoning he sees the necessity for transcending his *karana sharira*, but when he makes an attempt to leave it, he finds himself lost as he loses his centre; and, as in the case of the ordinary man when death overtakes him and he is seized with terror, so the philosopher feels perhaps a deeper terror when he leaves his *karana sharira*. The reason is that, when isolated from its three bodies, the *Jivatma* passes into *Mahasushupti*, the neutral barrier, the Great *Sunyam*, which can only be passed through devotion to Bhagavan. Not unless his *karana sharira* ego is surrendered to Bhagavan with deep devotion, and the Real Self, the One Life, is realized thereby, is it possible to cross this neutral barrier. Further, we have the word *krodha* (hatred). Now to a philosopher it is his not-self that becomes his enemy. He has built up his individuality as against this not-self, and he feels himself secure only so long as he can keep this not-self in subjection. Hence there is a perpetual warfare between his self and not-self.

The only way of getting over these three impediments to liberation is through devotion and self-surrender to Bhagavan. When a philosopher, having realized his individuality, surrenders that individuality to Bhagavan and thus develops devotion to Him, then he in course of time attains the life beyond individuality, realizing that the Light of *Ishvara* is the One Life, the One Transcendent Self. He thus attains Wisdom, *Jnana*, which Shri Shankaracharya, in his commentary on this verse, says is in itself *tapas*. Now this wisdom-*tapas*, the entering of the Light of *Ishvara*, the realization of the One Life, is the only purifier, because it alone can root out the attachment, fear and hatred referred to above. His attachment goes, because when he realizes the One Life, he realizes its peace and bliss whether he is embodied or not and amidst all sorts of surroundings which are to him mere expressions of that Life. His fear goes, because once he has attained to the Light of *Ishvara*, the Life above individuality,

he can cross the neutral barrier, for now he hears the Song of Life and wakes up through the grace of Bhagavan, on the other side of the cosmos, a regenerated man, a *Jivanmukta*. How, then, can the struggle between the self and not-self remain where the very sense of separation between himself and his outside is rooted out and where self and not-self are realized as expressions of the One Life, the only Reality, and in the place of his former aversion he feels divine love for all?





PRAVRITTI MARGA

The next five verses, from the 11th to 15th of chapter IV, deal with action and inaction. If *moksha* can be attained by seeking Bhagavan alone, the highest goal, how is it all men do not follow this course? How is it that we see such differences in men that, whilst a very few are devoted to Him, a very large majority feel no attraction to this path? Is the Lord, then, partial, and on a very few only He bestows his very Self that is *moksha*, and on a few others only devotion to Him, while a very large majority do not receive even that? Such a question arises, and verse 11 gives a satisfactory reply and removes the doubt about Bhagavan's strict impartiality.

Saith the Lord: "*Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I reward them; My path do men follow in all things, O Son of Pritha.*" He says that whatever paths men choose, He meets them there, because all forms being filled with His life, all paths are His. But men differ in their choice according to their *guna* (nature). For as verse 12 says, "*They who long after success in actions sacrifice here to the gods; for soon in this world of men success accrues from action.*" The path leading to *moksha* referred to in verse 10 has no attraction for the large majority because it is an arduous path where tangible results are not secured immediately. Very few are the men who have the necessary patience and perseverance to undertake and carry on through innumerable lives the long and tedious process of self-purification and of surrendering the purified self to Bhagavan, and to cling to Him alone forevermore.

Our own observation confirms what Bhagavan says in verse 3 of chapter VII that scarcely one in a thousand strives for perfection. The reason is that the large majority of human beings are impelled by desires and seek the immediate fruition of their desires. Hence, instead of turning their minds and hearts towards Bhagavan, they worship the minor gods and reap according to their sowing. But

Bhagavan's divine dispensation seeks to provide even for these people, and for this purpose He says, "*The fourfold caste has been created by Me according to the distribution of guna and karma energies and actions; though I am the Author thereof, know Me as Non-Agent and Immutable.*" (XVIII, 13) The Sanskrit word for caste is *varna*, not the outer colour of the physical body, but the colour of the subtler bodies, and the very word *varna* implies that the fourfold caste is no artificial imposition on man by some external authority. It finds its sanction in the very constitution of human nature.

The One Life is the Light of *Ishvara*, and when it appears through the modifications of *prakriti* and its *gunas*, it appears as different colours, *varnas*, with different *gunas* and *karma*, energies and consequent actions. As Bhagavan says, "*There is no being on earth or among gods in heaven who is free from these three qualities of matter*", and further it is explained, "*Of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, O Parantapa, the duties have been distributed according to qualities born of their own natures.*" (XVIII, 40-41) Evolution itself implies different stages of growth. The duties of Brahmanas, such as serenity, self-restraint, austerity, knowledge, etc.; of Kshatriyas, such as prowess, firmness, splendour, not flying from battle; of Vaishyas, such as ploughing, protection of kine and trade; of Shudras, the duty of service — fit in with the tendencies developed in them through several previous births. The scriptures, in pointing out these several duties as proper for respective castes, simply reveal the workings of Nature's law and, thus giving man an insight into the workings of Nature, help on human evolution.

This fourfold caste, with its specific duties attaching to each, has been devised with the double view of ensuring prosperity on earth and of gradually leading man on to the path of renunciation. It is made attractive to the average man by the graduated scheme of rewards (*vide Apastamba Dharma Sutra, 22-23*), whilst the various restraints it imposes make for the control of body and senses and the starving out of the desire-nature. Moreover, as against the modern secular conception of society as being a body politic, the basic idea on which the system is founded is a spiritual one in which the four castes are considered as forming so many limbs of the *Purusha*, the spiritual Being, *Prajapati* (*vide*

Purusha-Sukta). The Brahmanas are His mouth, the Kshatriyas are His arms, the Vaishyas His thighs, and His feet are the Shudras. Here there is no question of great and small; all are parts of an organic whole, and all have to perform their proper functions to preserve the welfare of the whole. It made the mind familiar with the idea of all work being a sacrifice. The Brahmana does his work; so also the other castes do their works. It gave a spiritual direction to all work by holding prominently before men this idea of human solidarity and sacrifice. Strange as it may seem, this institution of caste, founded on the idea of a common spiritual origin, pointed to an organic solidarity and spiritual unity of the race. Though the colours (*varnas*) are different from each other, the separative element was accidental and in reality they are one in their origin, the Light.

So viewed, the system induced in each a sense of duty irrespective of results and gradually paved the way for worshipping Bhagavan through the devotion to one's duty referred to in verse 46 of chapter XVIII: "*Him from whom is the evolution of all beings, by whom all this is pervaded — by worshipping Him with proper duty, man attains perfection.*" Whilst the fostering of a sense of duty attenuates the personality and lifts motive out of personal inclination onto the impersonal idea of righteousness, the recognition of Bhagavan as the source of all life and *dharma* curbs the *ahankara* involved in the separative sense of duty. Thus are laid the sure foundations for the life of renunciation, and a hankering for liberation, *mumukshutva*, is aroused. For action in which attachment and *ahankara* are absent does not bind.

Thus, though Bhagavan in verse 13 of chapter IV says that the fourfold caste was created by Him, yet in verse 14 it is said, "*Actions pollute Me not, nor have I a desire for the fruit of actions. He who knows Me thus is not bound by actions.*" The Lord says, "*Because I have no attachment, action does not bind Me.*" Similarly, if men perform action dispassionately and without *ahankara*, such action will not bind them. Therefore proceeds the Lord in verse 15: "*Thus knowing, men of old performed action in the hope of liberation; therefore, do thou also perform action as did the ancients in the olden time.*"

ACTION AND INACTION

Why is a reference to the ancients made in verse 15 of chapter IV? Because, as the following verse says, "*What is action? What is inaction? As to this even the wise are deluded. I shall teach thee such action, by knowing which thou shalt be liberated from evil.*" Action and inaction are not so simple to understand rightly. Therefore, "*Thou hast to know something even of action, something of unlawful action and something of inaction; hard to understand is the nature of action.*" (IV, 17) What, then, is the mystery about action and inaction, on the right understanding of which a man is liberated from evil?

The next verse hints at this mystery. "*He who can see inaction in action, who can also see action in inaction — he is wise among men, he is devout, he is the performer of all actions.*" Bhagavan nowhere says that there is a short cut to liberation. He leaves us in no doubt as to the high moral and spiritual qualifications necessary for an aspirant for *moksha*. So insistent is He on this point that lest He should be misunderstood, whenever He refers to the attainment of liberation, He invariably describes the marks of such an individual — how he conducts himself and what moral equipment he should possess. Bearing all this in mind, we should not lightly pass over the above three verses about action and inaction. The ultimate right realization of the nature of action and inaction presupposes, therefore, all the high moral and spiritual attainments which alone liberate man from the bonds of *samsara*.

But the verses have application even to beginners. Thus, as soon as a man begins to free himself from the sway of desire and strives to replace personal inclination by duty as the motive of action, he sees that when the call of duty is not heeded and what ought to be done is left undone, he is bound by the very non-performance of duty, whilst work done in discharge of duty has no power to bind. Thus he begins to see action in inaction, and *vice versa*. The *mumukshu*, the aspirant for liberation, sees farther than this. He sees that the only way of rising above the binding power of action is through devotion to his duty and self-surrender to Bhagavan. Duty so performed causes the development of knowledge in him which makes possible the renunciation of all *karma*. In such

action as leads to knowledge, culminating in renunciation of *karma*, he sees inaction. And as renunciation of *karma*, or actionlessness, can be attained through action, he sees, in this actionlessness, action which made the attainment of actionlessness possible. But the Sage realizes the truth of action in inaction and *vice versa* in a still deeper sense. He sees that the cause of action is desire; and he sees further that this desire pervades the senses, the mind and the intellect (*Buddhi*). Knowing this, he ever keeps himself above the three by rooting out desire and establishing himself in the Light of *Ishvara*.

In the words of *Light on the Path*, he has raised his individuality out of the shadow into the shine and has, therefore, lifted himself out of the region in which *karma* operates. He has realized the actionless Self, and in all actions he sees inaction. Further, as a result of his utter purity and rooting out of *ahankara*, he has become a perfect channel of the One Life and is at perfect rest and peace. But from him continuously flow the divine influences which purify, elevate and spiritualize everything about him. His very presence vivifies and stimulates the better nature of those about him, and he draws out the best that is in them. Thus, though he seems to be doing nothing, yet he does all that ought to be done. Of such a Sage the 18th verse says: "*He is wise among men, he is a real Yogi, he is the performer of all action.*"

A short story illustrates the truth of how a Sage becomes a performer of all action by virtue of his identifying himself with the One Self, and how a tiny rill of individual effort could be made to embrace in its beneficent results the whole universe through identification with the One Self. Once, it is said, Mahadeva, the Great God, had to perform a sacrifice (*yajna*), and all thirty-three crores of gods had to be invited to this ceremony. So the Great God made His son, Karthikeya Swami, go round and invite all the gods to the sacrifice. The vehicle of Karthikeya Swami is a peacock, and bestriding this vehicle strutted forth Karthikeya Swami on his long and tedious errand. Several days passed and the day appointed for the sacrifice was very near. But the rider of the peacock had scarcely carried the invitation to a tithe of the number of the guests, and it became evident that the invitation would not reach all the *devas* in time. It became necessary to

entrust this work to some wiser person, and accordingly, Ganapati was chosen for it.

Now Ganapati, as his physiognomy shows, is the wisest of gods. The large elephant's head carries a big brain, and he has the skill and craft to support the weight of this bulky head and his rotund belly on the back of a tiny mouse. Such is Ganesh, the god of wisdom — he who performs the maximum work with minimum labour. What a poor insignificant creature is a mouse beside the showy, strutting peacock. Yet Ganesh was chosen to do the work. The time at his disposal was very short, and looking to the number of guests to be invited and the vehicle on which to go, it seemed all but a hopeless task. Yet Ganapati, thinking himself for a while, gathered himself up for doing his father's bidding. Thrice did he go round the Great God, and prostrating himself before Him, who is the God of Gods, invoked all the thirty-three crores of gods in His name and gave them the invitation through the Great One, and on the appointed day came all the guests to the sacrifice.





VI

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAGE

This discourse was based on the next six verses from the 19th to the 24th of chapter IV. Verse 19 contains a general definition of a Sage: "*He whose engagements are all devoid of desires and purposes, and whose actions have been burnt by the fire of wisdom, Him the wise call a Sage.*" When a man becomes impersonal, that is, when he has realized his Self, all desires and thoughts of the personal self depart from him. But still there is the idea of self and not-self, which is the root-ignorance, and unless this is dispelled by the Light of *Ishvara*, the seed of *karma* is not burnt out. In a Sage, even this seed of *karma* has been burnt out. Hence his actions have no binding power because they cannot sprout and grow any longer. Therefore are actions said to be burnt by the fire of wisdom, in the definition of a Sage which we are considering.

The next five verses describe the two orders among the Sages defined in the 19th verse. Even after liberation, a few of them, for some reason, continue to live amongst people and mix with them in worldly vocations. They have no purpose of their own to serve. But they engage themselves in action to set an example to other men and body forth in their daily work and conduct the ideal of true sacrifice as Janaka did. There is a second order of the Sage very rare to meet with. He lives a life of obscurity and seclusion, at peace with all beings, solely devoted to the religious enlightenment of his race. He lives unknown and unrecognized, radiating in all directions strong spiritual impulses that purify and ennoble. Such a Sage embodies the ideal of renunciation.

In the five verses from 20 to 24 which we are considering, the three verses 20, 23 and 24 refer to the order which embodies the ideal of sacrifice, and verses 21 and 22 to the order embodying the ideal of renunciation. Understood in this sense, the apparently meaningless repetitions in these five verses gain a deep significance

and a perfect appositeness. Taking the Sage embodying in his life and conduct the ideal of sacrifice, we have in verses 20, 23 and 24 the following statements. Verse 20 runs: "*Having abandoned attachment for the fruits of action, ever content, dependent on no one, though engaged in actions, nothing at all does he do.*" The Sage has realized the One Self. He is ever established in that supreme bliss of the Self and is therefore ever content; he is dependent on none, because everything derives its reality from the One Self, which he has become, and though he is engaged in actions for setting an example to men, he does not lose his hold on the consciousness of the Self, and he is not bound by what he does.

He is further described in the 23rd verse: "*Of the man whose attachment is gone, who is liberated, whose mind is established in knowledge, who acts for the sake of sacrifice (yajna) — his whole action melts away.*" Here sacrifice (*yajna*) means Narayana, Bhagavan. The Sage has no attachment whatsoever and he performs sacrifices to satisfy the *Yajna Purusha* who is Narayana. How his whole action is reduced to ashes in this fire of wisdom-sacrifice is described in the next verse: "*Brahman is the offering, Brahman the oblation, by Brahman is the oblation poured into the fire of Brahman, Brahman verily shall be reached by him who always sees Brahman in action.*" What to the ordinary man appear as the five distinct elements in a sacrifice — (1) the performer of the sacrifice, (2) the oblation, (3) the pouring of the oblation into the fire, (4) the fire, (5) the instrument by which the oblation is poured into the fire — all these are verily the *Brahman* to the Sage. It is not by an intellectual effort that he sees in each of these elements *Brahman*, but there is not present to his consciousness anything but *Brahman*, the Self, and thus are all his actions reduced into *Brahman*, the Self, without any residue.

The second order of the Sage embodying the ideal of renunciation is extolled in verses 21 and 22 thus: "*Free from desire, with the mind and the self controlled, having relinquished all possessions, doing mere bodily action, he incurs no sin; satisfied with what comes to him by chance, rising above the pairs of opposites, free from envy, equanimous in success or failure, though acting he is not bound.*" The only comments that can be offered on

these verses are the following. He has relinquished all possessions, he is devoid of the sense of 'mine'-ness. He does mere bodily action, which means that his actions are strictly restricted to keeping his body living, as regards which, again, there is no idea of possession in him. His body is not his but has now become a temple of divinity, as his *Jiva* has become Shiva, the Self. He is satisfied with what comes to him without effort, and is free from the pairs of opposites; he is the same amidst all changes in his environments. He is content to be obscure, and is not moved by jealousy when others are extolled for their merits and attainments.





VII

ACTION-SACRIFICE AND WISDOM-SACRIFICE

In the next nine verses of chapter IV, from 25 to 33, are enumerated the several kinds of sacrifice which people perform with definite objects. Verse 25 refers to the sacrificial rites in devotion to the minor *devas*, which *Karma Yogis* perform to gain some end. In this verse reference is also made to wisdom-sacrifice to make the enumeration exhaustive and in order to compare it with all other *yajnas* subsequently. This highest sacrifice consists in pouring the self by the Self into the fire of *Brahman*, so that the limitations of the conditioned self are destroyed by the fire of the *Brahman*, and the Self so purified and freed of limitations is realized as *Brahman* itself.

The 26th verse refers to the restraint of the senses and also to the sacrifice which consists in directing the senses only to such objects as are not forbidden by *Shastras*, and restraining them from forbidden objects. Verse 27 refers to the efforts of the student at concentrating his mind on the Self, in which effort the functions of the senses and vital airs are suspended as a result of deep thinking. Verse 28 tells us how some give away their wealth to the deserving, some observe austerities, some practise concentration of mind, some others recite the Vedic texts according to prescribed rules, some read scriptures with the object of understanding them, and some ascetics observe particular self-imposed vows very rigidly.

All such acts are called sacrifices. Hence the word 'sacrifice' as used here is very comprehensive. Even the practice of *pranayama* (restraint and regulation of breath) and regulation of food, which are referred to in verses 29 and 30, are called sacrifices. The performers of all these are extolled as knowers of sacrifice, and their sacrifices have the efficacy of destroying their sins, as against the impious who cook for themselves and eat verily sin and who are referred to in verse 13 of chapter III.

The man who is performing even the most trivial sacrifice for gaining a trivial object is a wiser and better man than one in whom the very idea of sacrifice is absent. Because, as the following verse puts it, *“Even this world is not for the non-sacrificer; whence the other, O best of Kurus?”* (IV, 31) Further, the nature of *karma* being determined by the motive inspiring it, if the above-enumerated sacrifices are performed with the object of reaching *Brahman*, that object also is gained in course of time through the purification of the mind and intellect resulting from the performance of the sacrifices. The 31st verse says: *“Eating ambrosia, the remnant of the sacrifice, they go to Eternal Brahman”*; and Shri Shankaracharya, commenting on the verse, says: *“Performing the sacrifices mentioned above, they eat at intervals prescribed food, in a prescribed manner; food so eaten is called ambrosia, amrita. If they wish for moksha they go to Brahman in course of time, not at once, as we should understand for consistency’s sake.”*

Then comes verse 32, which runs: *“Thus manifold sacrifices are revealed at the mouth of Brahman; know them all as born of action. Thus knowing, thou shalt be liberated.”* This verse in one word points out the crucial difference between wisdom-sacrifice and all the other sacrifices enumerated above. The latter, says Bhagavan, are all born of action, are of the not-self, because the Self is actionless, and if this actionless Self is realized, one becomes liberated. The transcendental superiority of wisdom-sacrifice over all the sacrifices is dwelt upon, and the reason for it is given in the 33rd verse: *“Superior is wisdom-sacrifice to the sacrifice with objects, O harasser of thy foes; all action without exception, O son of Pritha, is comprehended in wisdom.”* Wisdom-sacrifice transcends all sacrifices with objects, because all action is comprehended in wisdom. All the good that can be done by actions is achieved by wisdom, which, comprehending all actions, transcends them all.





VIII

THE SUREST WAY TO MOKSHA

In the 33rd verse of chapter IV, wisdom was praised; and in the following verses, i.e., the 34th onwards, Bhagavan describes this wisdom and points out the surest means of attaining that wisdom. Verses 34 and 39 should be read together as having a bearing on the means of attaining wisdom. Verse 39 brings out what verse 34 contains by implication. The 34th verse runs thus: "*Know this (wisdom) by long prostration, by enquiry, by service; those men of wisdom who have realized the truth will teach thee wisdom.*"

This wisdom is ultimately to be imparted to his disciple by the Guru who has realized the Truth, but what should be the equipment with which the disciple should approach his Guru? To understand the full significance of the words "by long prostration, by enquiry, by service" in the above verse, we should ponder over what the 39th verse says. It runs: "*He obtains wisdom who is full of faith, who is devoted and who has subdued the senses, and having obtained wisdom he ere long attains to the supreme peace.*" Unless a man has faith in the existence of this wisdom, *Brahma Vidya*, and also in the existence of the *Jivanmuktas*, who are its custodians, his prostration cannot be genuine and sincere. When he has such faith, and also when he appreciates the greatness of this wisdom and is convinced of its being the only means of triumphing over the evil of *samsara*, then only is it possible for him to approach the Guru in that spirit of sincere humility and reverence which the physical action of long prostration symbolizes.

Thus faith is the first qualification that is necessary to prostrate truly before the Guru and approach him. Added to faith must be the earnest devotion to wisdom, and without this longing for wisdom he cannot properly enquire.

Before this, he had read the scriptures and had tried to understand them with a view to know the self through the not-self. By prosecuting his enquiries on analytical lines, he had understood

what *Atma* and what *anatma* is. But now he studies the scriptures to know the mystery of the One Life. His enquiries are deeper, they run on the lines of synthesis and are transcendental. He longs to attain to the *vidya*, the wisdom that alone can remove the root of ignorance of separativeness — *avidya*. He longs to know that which is beyond both self and not-self and of which both self and not-self alike are expressions. The deeper and more earnest are his enquiries and longings, the more clearly does he see the greatness of the Guru; for he is the embodiment of Divine Wisdom and he alone, who is also the representative of *Ishvara*, can dispel the darkness of *avidya*, the false separative knowledge, by kindling the light of true wisdom. Realizing this, his devotion to the Guru increases, and out of devotion and love he entirely surrenders himself to the Guru.

The second qualification is therefore a deep longing for and devotion to wisdom. Says *Light on the Path*:

Those that ask shall have. But though the ordinary man ask perpetually, his voice is not heard. For he asks with his mind only; and the voice of the mind is only heard on that plane on which the mind acts. . . . To ask is to feel the hunger within — the yearning of spiritual aspiration. (p. 20)

The third qualification is "service". With this goes the subdual of the senses in the 39th verse. Hitherto he had controlled the senses in order to realize his self against his not-self. But now the senses must be trained and tuned to see the unity, the One Life. He must now strive to realize the One Life in his action and in his daily life, which now becomes one service of his Guru. Says Bhagavan in the 27th verse of chapter IX: "*Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever austerity thou engagest in, do it as an offering to Me.*" Out of devotion and love he meditates on and worships his *Gurudeva*; and the inner spirit of surrender and worship is reduced to practice, and thus all his activities become one continuous service of his Guru. The senses are thus trained to see and realize unity, and he realizes the presence of his Guru at all times and at all places and in all actions. This is real *Seva* which sees *Sa eva Asamantat* — "*He indeed is everywhere.*"

By such discipline he qualifies himself to receive the wisdom from his Guru. As verse 34 of chapter IV says: "*Those men of wisdom who have realized the truth will teach thee wisdom.*" For *Light on the Path* says: "*When the disciple is ready, the Master is ready also.*" (p. 22) What this wisdom is and what its efficacy is in liberating man from all evil and ignorance are taught in the five following shlokas, from 35 to 39. "*Knowing which, thou shalt not again thus fall into error, O Pandava; and by which thou wilt see all beings in thy self and also in Me.*" (IV, 35)

This is true Wisdom by which all beings from Brahmā, the Creator, down to the tiniest blade of grass, as Shri Shankaracharya puts it in his commentary on this shloka, are seen in one's real Self, which is the Light of *Ishvara*, the One Life, and which is also *Ishvara* Himself. Thus does he realize his identity with *Brahman*, the Self, which, expressing itself from Brahmā down to the tiniest blade of grass, remains transcendent.

The significance of this profound wisdom, the supreme realization of the Self, is well brought out in the following story in chapters XIII and XIV of the tenth skandha of *Srimad Bhagavata*. It is said that once Brahmā, the Creator, in order to test the divine powers of Bhagavan, hid away the calves and cowherd-boys who were tending the calves and kept them under his *Maya*. Shri Krishna, out of compassion for the mothers of the *gopas* and cows, and also with a view to teach Brahmā, became himself all the calves and cowherd-boys, even to the minutest detail of colour and dress. About a year passed, and things went on as usual without the parents of the cowherd-boys noticing any change excepting that they felt a deeper love for their boys, as did the cows also for their calves.

Balarama, who until now believed that the *gopas* were the incarnations of the gods and the cows of the *Rishis*, could not account for this sudden increase in the love of both human and bovine parents for their offspring evolved from Bhagavan's *Maya*. So also was Brahmā perplexed when he could not distinguish between the calves and cowherd-boys (whom he had concealed and kept under *Maya*) and their duplicates which he now found engaged as usual in the wood, until Bhagavan, out of compassion for Brahmā and with a view to show how utterly unreliable

outward forms are in disclosing the reality, appeared himself in His Divine Form from each of the calves and cowherds which He had created. Balarama also saw the error of considering individualities, however high, as the final reality.

All forms, processes and individualities derive their value and interest as indicating the Self, but utterly fail as measures of the immeasurable Self whom no number of *brahmandas* can exhaust and whose mystery Brahmā himself cannot fathom. Such is the wisdom of the Self that the Guru imparts to his disciple, and on gaining which the disciple attains, as the 39th verse says, supreme peace.

It is a wise injunction handed down by Hindu tradition which says: "Seek not to trace back the origin of a *Rishi*, and a river." The *Rishi*, the *Jivanmukta*, is *par excellence* the embodiment of Divine Wisdom, the wisdom of the Self, the negation of the separative. But man's ambitious curiosity lays its blasphemous hand on the most sacred and cherished ideals and foists its limitations and imperfections on the limitless and perfect. Hence we have the sad spectacle of modern Theosophical literature, revelling in trivial and weird stories purporting to be past lives of Mahatmas, which read like third-rate novels. Not content with such desecration, we find even Bhagavan Himself dragged down and duplicated to support newfangled theories.

The greatness of Divine Wisdom as the only means of attaining liberation is taught in the following three verses 36 to 38 of chapter IV:

Even shouldst thou be most sinful of all the sinfuls,
thou shalt verily cross all sin by the barque of wisdom.
As kindled fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does
wisdom-fire reduce all actions to ashes. Verily there
exists here no purifier equal to wisdom. He who is
perfected by *Yoga* finds it in time in himself by himself.

To the man seeking *moksha*, even *dharma* becomes a sin, because *dharma* itself is separative, and the only barque of safety in which the sea of *avidya* of separative life can be crossed is wisdom, which, by its innate nature reducing everything to unity, burns out all sin.

Shri Shankaracharya, commenting on the statement in the

above verses that wisdom-fire burns action to ashes as fire burns fuel, says that a simile should not be taken literally, but what is meant to be conveyed is that wisdom renders all action impotent as regards its binding power. The attainment of wisdom not only enables man to perform action without being bound by it, but it gives him the power to consume by the fire of wisdom even such of his past *karma* as has not begun to work itself out.

This brings us to the subject of the records of the past lives, where they are preserved and how and to whom they become accessible. There are three records of past events. The physical memory of man is a record of past events, but of this life only and is not of the events of past lives. The second record is found in the astral light, which alone is accessible to the psychic. The third record is *Akasha*, the cosmic ether. This is the most permanent record and lasts for *kalpas* and *kalpas*. But this is accessible only to the Initiate who is on the threshold of liberation and who has to square up all his past accounts before becoming perfect. This power of reading the past comes to him as a result of his spiritual progress and the consequent illumination.

Therefore does Bhagavan say: *"I am in the hearts of all men, and from me come memory, knowledge, and also the loss of both."* (*Gita*, XV, 15) Shri Shankaracharya, commenting on this, says: *"Just as memory and knowledge occur in persons as a result of their good deeds, so as a result of their sins, loss of memory and knowledge occur in the sinful."* Says *Light on the Path*:

The operations of the actual laws of *karma* are not to be studied until the disciple has reached the point at which they no longer affect himself. The initiate has a right to demand the secrets of nature and to know the rules which govern human life. He obtains this right by having escaped from the limits of nature and by having freed himself from the rules which govern human life. He has become a recognized portion of the divine element, and is no longer affected by that which is temporary. He then obtains a knowledge of the laws which govern temporary conditions. Therefore you who desire to understand the laws of *karma*, attempt first to free yourself from these laws; and this can only be done

by fixing your attention on that which is unaffected by those laws. (p. 90)

From the above authoritative statements it should be clear that these records cannot be used by so-called occultists for writing out stories for the delectation of their followers, which are taken to substantiate their claims to occult powers. Perhaps the record in the astral light may be within their ken, but the results of such psychic visions are not at all reliable, because the psychic who has not burnt out the residue of senses, mind and individuality in the fire of wisdom cannot but project himself and fancy that he reads external records which are nothing but his secret thoughts and desires externalized.

More reliable perhaps are the results arrived at by the unpretentious Professor Denton through psychometry, published in his book called the *Soul of Things*, than the weird tales of personal loves and hates which are nowadays published in Theosophical books as evidences of occultism and which are claimed as the results of the researches in Akashic records. This is another instance in which high names and doctrines have been dragged down to the level of modern ignorance.

It is worthy of notice that at three different places in chapter IV of the *Gita* it has been shown how wisdom lifts a man above the operations of *Karma*. These are not meaningless repetitions of the same teaching but are meant to show the three aspects of wisdom-sacrifice, and how the fire of wisdom, by reducing to ashes the triad — *karta* the doer, *kriya* the deed and *karma* the object of the deed — lifts the man of wisdom above the operations of the law of *Karma*. In the description of wisdom-sacrifice given in verse 24, it is shown how *kriya*, the whole action with all its accessories, is rendered impotent as regards its power to bind; the description in verse 25 tells us how, by the identification of the purified self, *karta*, with *Brahman*, the One Self, action loses its binding power; and lastly, the description in verse 35 tells us how, by reducing the whole outside world, the *karma* (not-self), into the Self, action is burnt to ashes. There can be no vain repetitions in the *Gita*, seeing that it is the concentrated essence of the highest teaching and thought that is capable of appreciation by man. All that man's mind can speculate upon and man's spirit can yearn for with

regard to the mystery of life is found deeply embedded in the apparently simple aphorisms.

Attempts are always made to read into the *Gita* one's own pet theories, and partisans have sought its high authority to establish their own creeds. Some have called it the book of devotion, others as inculcating action. But the *Gita* is as comprehensive as life itself. It is the Book of Life and embraces in its majestic sweep of divine teaching all phases of life. It is the glory of Bhagavan's teaching that out of His infinite compassion He limits Himself to suit even the narrowest intellect, takes cognizance of lowly acts and practices, and shows how even these can be turned towards Himself and be thus spiritualized. Ignoring Him and His divine teachings, those who hanker after other knowledge are, as Udhava says:

He who rejecting Vasudeva goes after other gods is like the unfortunate man who feeling thirsty on the banks of Ganga, runs in search of a well.





IX

THE DOCTRINE OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA

In studying the *Bhagavad Gita* it is necessary, at the outset, to remember that the eighteen discourses are intimately connected with one another, and that each discourse describes a particular aspect of human life, and leads us on to the next in orderly sequence. For purposes of our study, however, it is convenient to arrange the discourses in three broad groups. Taking the first as an introductory discourse, you find that Shri Krishna refers in the next five chapters to the several schools of philosophy that flourished at the time, namely, the *Sankhya*, *Karma*, *Jnana*, *Sannyasa* and *Abhyasa*, each describing the path towards salvation.

The great Lord then examines the merits and defects of each school and points out that there are, in Nature, two important entities or factors which the several schools have lost sight of, and without the help of which the paths recommended by those philosophers will not be of much avail. He then expounds his own doctrine with regard to the goal of human life, and from this standpoint supplies the key, as it were, with which the different viewpoints could be reconciled so as to evolve them in a harmonious whole in proper setting. This doctrine is enunciated in the next group of six chapters, beginning with the Seventh Discourse.

The Great Lord, referring to Himself in another connection, says, "*Though I am unborn, of imperishable nature and though I am the Lord of beings, yet presiding over (controlling) my own nature I am born through my Maya.*" (IX, 6) Now, every system of philosophy postulates the existence of a First Cause, and though there is difference of opinion as to the nature of this First Cause or its attributes, it is agreed on all hands that this First Cause (*Parabrahm*) is omnipresent and eternal; is not *jnatha* (ego), not *jnanam* (consciousness), not

jneyam (non-ego). Any positive definition of this principle is impossible, and whatever description of it can be attempted is only by means of a negative definition. It is unknowable, and therefore referred to as *Avyaktamurti*, and only becomes knowable when manifesting itself as the Logos or *Ishvara*; so it is possible to know something about its manifestations. When evolution commences, it becomes active, and at the time of cosmic activity there starts from it what might be called a centre of conscious energy. This is the Word made manifest, *Ishvara* or *Shabdabrahman*.

He is also described as *Sat-Chit-Ananda* in chapter XIV, verse 27, where Bhagavan says: "*I am the image or the seat of the Immortal and Indestructible Brahmā, of the Eternal Law (Dharma) and of absolute happiness.*" He is *Sat*, who ever is (that is, without becoming or change in past, present or future). He is *Chit* because in Him the eternal *Dharma* of cosmos, the whole law of cosmic evolution, abides. He is *Ananda*, because he is the abode of bliss, and the highest happiness possible for man is attained when the *Jivatma*, the human soul, reaches Him. He is thus an object of the highest knowledge that man is capable of acquiring. You can have some little glimpse or conception of His nature in the following shlokas, where Bhagavan says:

By Me all this world is pervaded, in My form unmanifested (*Avyaktamurti*). (IX, 4-5) All beings dwell in me and I do not dwell in them. Look at My condition when manifested as *Ishvara*. He is the beginning of all creation and the end of all evolution. (VII, 6) All beings in the manifested Cosmos as well as the whole of this universe are woven in Me as a row of gems on a string. (VII, 7)

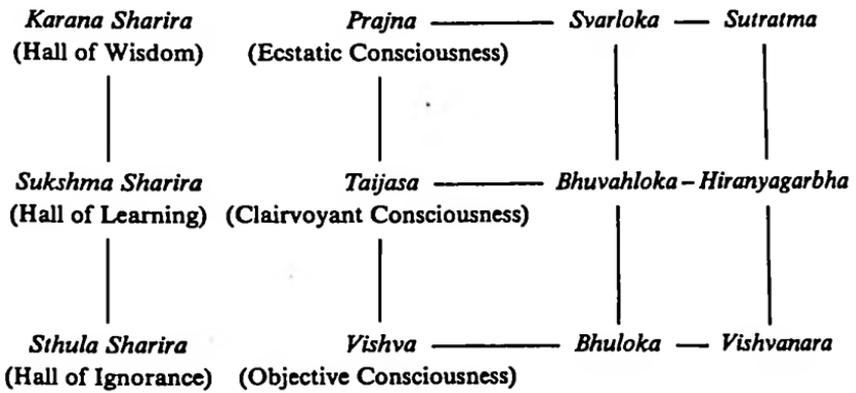
This view is again confirmed later on, where Bhagavan says: "*Know that all beings (unmoving or moving) have come from the union of My two Prakritis.*" (XIII, 26) What are these two *prakritis* which are under His control? Bhagavan says, "*Earth, water, fire, air, ether, Manas, Buddhi and ahankara — this is my eightfold Prakriti.*" (VII, 4) This is *Mulaprakriti*, undifferentiated, giving rise to five *tanmatras*, *ahankara*, *Buddhi* and *Manas*. There is another *prakriti* (VII, 5), which is superior and which supports and sustains the whole universe. It is called

**PRINCIPLES OF MAN, SOLAR SYSTEM
AND COSMOS**

Maheshvara Parabrahm
(*Shabdabrahman, Sat-Chit-Ananda*)
(*Paramatma*)

Daiviprakriti
(*Gayatri, Maha Chaitanya*)
(*Chitshakti*)

Mulaprakriti
(*Avyakta, Maya*)



the *Maha Chaitanya* of the whole cosmos. It is the one great power that guides the whole course of evolution, leading Nature towards its goal. It is the source of light, of various modes of consciousness, and of life manifested in every kind of organism that we know of in Nature.

When evolution begins, *Ishvara* wakes up, so to say, with the image or conception of what is to be in the cosmos, which *Daiviprakriti* or His Light catches and impresses on cosmic matter which is already manifested. This Light may, therefore, be said to be a kind of link between objective matter and the subjective thought of *Ishvara*. Whilst *Mulaprakriti* is the cause of bondage, *Daiviprakriti* is the cause of illumination. It is also symbolized as *Gayatri* in our Hindu philosophy. It represents the life-aspect, whilst *Mulaprakriti* represents the form-aspect in cosmos. This is further illustrated in shlokas 8 to 11 of chapter VII, where Bhagavan says, with reference to his *vibhutis*: "*In water I am sapidity, I am the light in the sun and the moon. I am the syllable Om in the Vedas, sound in ether, humanity in men.*"

Here Lord Krishna refers to all the excellent qualities manifested in every region of phenomenal existence as springing from Himself, and regrets that the world does not understand His real nature. For Bhagavan says: "*The ignorant regard me as manifestation of Avyakta, not knowing my supreme and imperishable and best nature. I am not visible to all, veiled as I am by my Yogamaya. The deluded world does not comprehend Me who am unborn and imperishable.*" (VII, 24-25) This *Yogamaya* is His Light, *Daiviprakriti*, behind which is Bhagavan unperceived. The reference is to the view held by the Sankhya school that *Avyakta* (*Parabrahm* veiled by *Mulaprakriti*) takes on a kind of phenomenal differentiation on account of association with *upadhi* and, in the course of such differentiation, becomes the *Atma* of the individual. So in tracing the path towards the goal, if you could control the action of the *upadhi* and destroy the *maya* it has created, the result would be the complete extinction or annihilation of man's individuality and its final absorption (*laya*) in *Parabrahm*. This view, Lord Krishna says, is wrong, because *Ishvara* and His Light are here entirely lost sight of.

The Sankhyas consider *Mulaprakriti* as the source of matter as

well as of force, whilst *Daiviprakriti* is regarded as an aspect manifestation of *Mulaprakriti*. And when you try to trace the source of the *upadhi* to *Mulaprakriti*, in that attempt the individuality becomes lost in *Mulaprakriti*, and you cannot cross the neutral barrier without the help of *Ishvara*. Secondly, this view of the Sankhyas excludes the possibility of *Avataras* and *Jivanmuktas* coming down for the sake of helping humanity. For when once man has reached the stage at which his whole individuality is completely annihilated, the existence of an Avatar would be, as a matter of simple logical inference, an impossibility. Bhagavan, therefore, controverts this theory of the Sankhyas and strikes a clear note of warning in chapter XII, verses 3 to 5, against following this doctrine.

The Vedantins, however, try to find the source of consciousness. They hold that it is a mode or manifestation of the Light, which is Life, and that this Light permeates every kind of organism and is manifested in every one of the *upadhis* as the real Ego of man. Now, evolutionary progress is effected by the continual perfecting of the *upadhi* or organism through which the Light works. As the *upadhis* are rendered more and more pure and perfected, man's intelligence on the physical, astral and spiritual planes will become more and more perfect, until that stage is reached when man will be enabled to recognize and perceive Bhagavan. *Mukti* is, therefore, not the loss of individuality, but the perfection of individuality. The ego in the *sthula sharira* gains merely the experiences of everyday life; that is, the animal passions and emotions and ordinary thoughts connected with the physical wants of man are confined to the *sthula* and *sukshma shariras*.

But the *karana sharira* is the storehouse in which the best experiences of man are garnered in every incarnation. In fact, the germs of every quality or attribute that is noble and enduring, all the higher emotions, impulses and aspirations that go deep into the intellectual nature of man, are impressed on the *karana sharira*. Its place of existence is *sutratma*, and as the individual passes from incarnation to incarnation with its fund of experiences, a higher individuality is evolved, thus keeping up the continued existence of the *Jiva* as an individual Monad. It is the real Ego of man. Bhagavan throws out a kind of feeler, as it were, of His Light into various organisms and assimilates the spiritual

experiences which result from its action as it vibrates on the organism along a series of incarnations. The individuality of man thus becomes united to that of *Ishvara*. He who is *prajna* then becomes the *sarvajna*.

There is another great difficulty for man to understand the nature of the Supreme Self and it is this. Bhagavan says: "*The whole world is deluded by three sorts of things composed of gunas, and therefore does not know Me, and this Maya of the three gunas is divine and hard to surmount.*" *Guna* is a technical term. *Guna* is not the property or attribute of any substance, like the colour of an object. The *gunas* are born of *prakriti*, which is the root of *samsara*. The *gunas* are said to bind *Kshetrajna*, as it were, because they exist having *Kshetrajna* as the basis of their existence. (XIV, 5) *Prakriti* is the mother of all material objects. The sun, moon, stars, mountains, seas, forest, men, birds, beasts, mind and body — all are generated from her. The *gunas* are mentioned in chapter XIV, verses 6 to 8.

As a result of past *samskaras*, they produce effects characteristic of the *guna* with which a man is born. *Guna*, in that sense, is a result of *karma*, and *karma* in its turn determines the *guna*. The *gunas* pervade the whole universe, for "*There is no being on earth or heaven who is free from the three gunas.*" (XVIII, 40) This subject Bhagavan explains at great length in the last discourse, with special reference to all activities of man, such as knowledge, action, intellect and pleasure. It is enough for the present to note that *tamas* is connected with the gross passions and pleasures experienced in the *sthula sharira*, *rajas* with the passionate and restless activity of the mind in the *sukshma sharira*, and *sattva* with the noble and higher aspirations in the *karana sharira*, the essence of all this bundle of attributes being comprised in *Parabrahm*. Bhagavan says that "*Verily this Divine illusion of Mine, made of gunas, is hard to surmount. Whoever seek Me alone, they cross over this illusion.*" (VII, 4)

How to cross the illusion made of the *gunas*? Perform *karma* for His sake (as *yajna*), and in the course of performance of duty in a proper and disinterested manner you get rid of desires and the mind becomes purified when *bhakti* slowly develops. So long as you identify your self with *upadhis*, there is differentiation, but when *Parabhakti* sets in, all ignorance and delusion are destroyed.

And when you go to Bhagavan with supreme devotion, you can cross the neutral barrier and reach the gateway which points towards the Goal. When the soul has reached that stage of evolution, when it does not want anything of the world, when it has outgrown the promptings of desire and gained freedom by love, there are no more duties to be performed, and not till then can man give up *dharma*. So Bhagavan says, "Give up all *dharma*, come to Me for shelter and I shall liberate you." (XVIII, 66)

"All beings are subject to *moha*, deluded by attachment and aversion", says Bhagavan. So when their senses, mind and intellect are all coloured and they cannot have a perfect knowledge of things as they really are, even of the external world, how can you expect to acquire a knowledge of the Self and of Bhagavan? True, there are different kinds of devotees: the distressed, the seekers of knowledge and of wealth, and the wise. From one standpoint these can be classed according to the nature of the three *gunas*. But the *karta* is one who has a longing to reach Bhagavan; as he seeks to know how he can satisfy this longing, he becomes a *jignasu*; when he feels the peace and bliss of Bhagavan, he is the real *artharathi*; and lastly, he becomes the real *Jnani* when he knows the real nature of Bhagavan. Such a *Jnani* who cultivates *ananya bhakti* will reach the goal after many births. (VII, 19) Such a one is hard to find, because Bhagavan says: "Among thousands one only strives for perfection (purity), for purifying himself by *tapas* and *dhyana*, and even among those who become perfect scarcely one reaches me" (knows me in truth). (VII, 3) The path of liberation is long and tedious, full of obstacles and dangers. Some with the object of immediate gain or impelled by a desire for *siddhis* (powers) worship the *devatas*, thus reaching a stage, in the course of evolution, at which one is absorbed in them and cannot reach Bhagavan. (VII, 23) So you must not forget the centre who is Bhagavan (*Ishvara*) all along.

There are those whose sin has come to an end by good deeds, who are freed from the delusion of attachment and aversion, and who worship Me with full resolve, and these also strive for liberation from birth and death. This is the Path of Light or *Archaradi*

Marga (Self-conscious path). Those who follow this Path of Light go to *Brahmaloka*. (VII, 24) They realize in full the supreme *Brahman*, the *Adhyatma* (*Pratyagatma* or Logos), *Karma* (action); realize Me in the *Adhibhuta* (physical region), in the *Adhidaiva* (region of the *devatas*) and in the *Adhiyajna* (region of sacrifice); realize Me at the time of departing, steadfast in mind. (VII, 29-30)

This path is also referred to in *Bhagavata*, skanda VII, chapter xv, verse 54. This is indeed a noble object in view, but to use the words of a Great Teacher, it is after all an exalted and glorious kind of selfishness. The other path (atomic path) is referred to in chapter VIII, verse 25, and is called "*the Dhuma Marga or the Path of Smoke, followed by Karma Yogins, who perform different kinds of sacrifices and, worshipping Me, reach svarga*". (IX, 20)

Lord Krishna impresses on the mind of Arjuna that there is a direct path leading towards liberation. It is called *Raja Vidya* and referred to in chapter IX, verses 2 and 3, thus: "*Kingly Science, Kingly Secret, Supreme purifier is this; immediately comprehensible, unopposed to Dharma, very easy to perform, imperishable; but persons having no faith in this Dharma, without reaching Me, remain in the path of the mortal world.*" It is the path of illumination followed by *Jivanmuktas*, who, without even caring for their own salvation, wish to be born again merely for the sake of the suffering and struggling humanity. Bhagavan therefore says to Arjuna: "*He whose mind is attached to Me, who performs Yoga, who takes refuge in Me, without doubt, will know Me in full.*" In this connection you will remember what is said in the last two verses of the Sixth Discourse:

One who has controlled his mind is better than a man of austerity (performer of different *vritas* such as *chandrayana*, etc.), better than a *Jnani* (teacher of *Shastra*), better than a *Karmin* (performer of *Agnihotra*, etc.). Among all these *Yogis*, he whose inner Self abides in *Ishvara* is the real *Yogi*.

Now what is this *Yoga*? Lord Krishna sums up his teaching, in

brief, in these verses:

Fix thy *Manas* in Me, place thy *Buddhi* (intellect) in Me; if you cannot fix your thought steadily on Me, then follow *abhyasa*; if you cannot do this, then do *karma* for My sake; and even if you are not able to do this, do thou at least abandon the fruit of any action with a pure mind. (XII, 8-11)

At the initial stage of budding spiritual consciousness, the devotee voluntarily renounces the fruit of his action, even though he is conscious that he is the doer of action. As he offers the fruits of every such action to Bhagavan with intensity and aspiration, he is slowly drawn towards Bhagavan and conceives an attachment for Him, which in due course develops into steady devotion and love. He performs *karma* as *yajna* and for His sake, with the object of pleasing Him. Then he begins to concentrate his mind, having brought it under control, and resisting all external thoughts and stimuli and meditating upon Bhagavan with one-pointed devotion, reaches Him who is in the centre of the universe. He realizes that his physical centre and the cosmos are the expression of one and the same Divine Life. Such a one, Bhagavan says, "*Who hates no being, is friendly and compassionate, free from attachment and egoism, steady-minded, self-controlled, with Manas and Buddhi fixed on Me, devoted to me, is dear to Me.*" (XII, 13-14) Such a one, "*knowing Me hither as the Sarathi (Charioteer), now knows Me in truth, that is, as Bhagavan.*"





KSHETRA AND KSHETRAJNA

With the Thirteenth Discourse commences the third part of the *Bhagavad Gita*. In the second part the Great Lord, Shri Krishna, explained His doctrine with regard to the path of liberation by pointing out the source and end of evolution, the manifested cosmos, His own place in Nature, His *vibhutis*, the marks of the liberated, and the steps leading towards the Goal.

In studying the Seventh Discourse you find that the Great Lord, while enunciating His doctrine, refers to *jnana* as "*the knowledge which being known, nothing more here remains to be known*" (VII, 2), and declares this knowledge as "*that which, having known, thou shalt be liberated from the bondage of samsara*". (IX, 1) It is that knowledge which, you will remember, Bhagavan says only those who themselves realized the truth and reached the Goal could impart, and by which "*thou shalt see all beings in thyself and also in Me*". (IV, 35) It is this knowledge which Bhagavan now explains at greater length in the Thirteenth Discourse of the *Gita*. Lord Krishna starts by saying, "*The knowledge of Kshetra and Kshetrajna is deemed by Me as true knowledge*" (XII, 2), and expatiates on the same subject by first narrating what the *Kshetra* is, what its attributes are, what qualities it generates, its source and the reason of its existence; what *Kshetrajna* is and what powers He possesses (XIII, 3); and then pointing out that the possession of this true knowledge, if properly acquired, that is, when the proper means of attaining that knowledge are adopted, leads to emancipation from the wheel of *samsara*. (XIII, 23) He then winds up his argument by saying that "*They who by the eye of wisdom perceive the distinction between Kshetra and Kshetrajna, and the liberation of all beings from prakriti, the differentiation of prakriti which is the cause of avidya or ignorant delusion, reach the supreme Goal.*" (XIII, 34)

Now what is this Supreme Goal? Bhagavan refers to it

in chapter VIII, verse 3: "Brahman is the Imperishable (Akshara), the Supreme." It is "that Imperishable Goal which the knowers of the Vedas declare, which the self-controlled and the passion-free enter". (VIII, 11) "It is called the Unmanifested, the Imperishable. That is the highest Goal, which having reached, none return. That is My Supreme Abode." (VIII, 21) This is described in chapter XIII, verse 12, as "The beginningless, Supreme Brahman", which is "neither Sat nor Asat"; and more fully explained in the next four verses (XIII, 14-17). It is, to use the language of Western philosophers, the First Cause, or *Parabrahm*, the existence of which *Brahma Vidya*, *Raja Vidya* or *Para Vidya* postulates. It is neither Ego nor non-Ego nor consciousness, and as such it is impossible for human knowledge to predicate anything about it. It is the basis of material manifestations in the cosmos, or the basis of evolution.

It is not *Sat*, because the word *Sat* is generally used to denote *jati* (genus), *kriya* (act), *guna* (quality) or *sambandha* (relation). Nor can it be *Asat*, for without it there could be no material phenomena. But for it, the *indriyas* could not operate and the power which makes the senses work is innate in it. It is admitted by physiologists that in evolution the exercise of functions gradually developed the necessity for the organs of senses.

It is unattached, yet supports everything and is above the three *gunas*. It is outside as well as inside; at the same time it is in the middle. Being very subtle, it is very incomprehensible. It is far away to one who is ignorant, but very near to a man of knowledge. It is undivided, but appears to be divided in the *bhutas* (sensible matter). At one time it is passive, at another time it is active. It is absolute *Jyoti*, the Light of Lights, which cannot be described, and is beyond *prakriti*.

It is neither *jnatha* (ego), nor *jnanam* (consciousness), nor *jneyam* (non-ego). It may be symbolized as the boundless circle, the zero (no-thing). The zero becomes a number only when one of the other nine figures precedes it and thus manifests its value and potency.

Such description, graphic as it is, of something which defies any description would indeed dishearten any person — at the mere

thought of the knowledge of *Parabrahm* being difficult of attainment. So in order to cheer up Arjuna, Bhagavan at once says in the 17th shloka: "*Knowledge, the knowable and the Goal of knowledge, (It) is seated especially in the heart of every one.*"

Thus, there can be no manifestation without the First Cause, and all the physical phenomena that you see, though due to *prakriti*, have *Parabrahm* as their basis. Now you find in the Seventh Discourse reference by Bhagavan to two kinds of *prakriti*, one inferior, divided eightfold, and the other superior *prakriti*, the very life by which the universe is upheld (VII, 4-5), and that "*these are the womb of all creatures, I (the Ishvara) the source and the dissolution of the whole universe*". (VII, 6) In human life these refer or correspond to the *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*, respectively. Shri Krishna says the true nature of *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* is sung by "*Rishis in many ways in various chants, in Brahma Sutras, which are logical and definite*". (XIII, 2) For you find in the *Brahma Sutras* a clear and consistent theory of Vedantic philosophy with regard to the composition of man as an entity, the nature of the three *upadhis* and their relation to the soul, on the one hand, and their connection between themselves, on the other. The Lord says: "*This, the body, is called the Kshetra, that which knows it is called the Kshetrajna; do thou also know Me, Kshetrajna, in all Kshetras.*" (XIII, 1-2) The human body is called *Kshetra*. It is only when the human body is evolved, *Jivatma* enters. (*Aitareya Upanishad*, I.iii.12) So, when the Light of *Ishvara* enters the human body, it is termed the *Jivatma*, and the body becomes the field where the law of *Karma* begins to operate and the fruits of action reaped. Evolution begins from *Ishvara*, whilst *Karma*, the law of cause and effect, from *Mulaprakriti*. *Kshetra* is therefore the *upadhi*, and *Kshetrajna* the Ego which works through the mind and senses. "*The great elements, ahankara, Buddhi, also the Avyakta; the ten senses and the one (Manas) and the five objects of sense; desire, hatred, pleasure, pain, the aggregate (the combination of the body and the senses), intelligence, courage, constitute the Kshetra with its modifications.*" (XIII, 5-6) The elements referred to here are the *mahabhutas* or the five great *tanmatras*, which pertain to the abstract qualities of

supersensible (subtle) matter; the *pancha bhutas* refer to sensible matter in which the variations of the abstract qualities are observed. The former are generals of which the latter are particulars. *Ahankara* is the sense of 'I'-ness, the false or artificial 'I'. In the course of evolution, *Buddhi* comes first and presents itself merely as consciousness without the sense of 'I'-ness, and thereafter comes *ahankara*. Next comes the mind (*Manas*), the function of which is *sankalpa* (selection) and *vikalpa* (rejection). Then come the *indriyas*, the *jnanendriyas* and *karmendriyas*, and the five gross elements. Desire and other qualities mentioned here refer to the qualities of the inner sense (*antaskarana*). This illustrates that *prakriti* is responsible for the mental and moral qualities of man. Herbert Spencer says that the physical organism has a great deal to do with the mental structure of man, and psychology therefore finds a foundation for itself in physiology.

Bhagavan therefore says that "*the body is Kshetra, I am Kshetrajna, and that is the real knowledge*". Our Sages have explained three *upadhis* (*sthula*, *sukshma* and *karana*) and sixteen states of consciousness, namely, three *avasthas* (states), *jagrat*, *svapna* and *sushupti*, in each of the three *upadhis*, and above these nine, seven other states to which only the *Jivanmuktas* have access. The Light of *Ishvara* permeates every kind of organism and is manifested in every one of the *upadhis* as the real Ego of man. If you observe a ray of light falling on a clear mirror, make the ray reflect on a polished metallic plate, and then make this reflection of it in its turn fall upon a wall; you will see three images, one clearer than the other. Comparing for a moment the sun to *Ishvara* and the three surfaces to the three *upadhis* — *karana*, *sukshma* and *sthula* — you will at once understand that the three reflections of the sun or the light will correspond to the three images (*pratibimb*as), for the time being considered as the Self. These *bimb*as are not of the same lustre. The lustre of this *bimba* may be compared to man's knowledge, and it grows feebler and feebler as the reflection of light is transferred from a clear *upadhi* to one less clear, and so on till you get to the *sthula sharira* (physical body). Our knowledge of the Self, therefore, depends mainly on the condition of the *upadhi*.

The different states of consciousness mean simply this — that the *Atma*, or Self, observes different (nine) classes of objects. It is

the one observer of the generalization which the mind that rules and guides the senses makes from the impressions of the senses when collected and arranged. In *jagrata avastha* (waking consciousness), when a person sees the objects with the senses and the light of the sun, etc., and his mind draws deductions from the impressions of the senses, he is not conscious of the awareness of the Self, and so "*the Self's luminousness is for the beholder difficult to discriminate*". In *svapna avastha* (dreamy state), there is self-luminosity, for you create things from the impressions gathered in the mind with the help of *Chaitanya*. (Shri Shankaracharya's commentary on *Brahma Sutras*, chapter III, pada ii, sutra 4)

In *sushupti* (dreamless sleep), you become one with yourself. The Light of *Ishvara* is the *turiya avastha*, or the fourth state. It is the *Atma*. According to the ordinary Vedantic classification, there are four states of conscious existence, namely, *vishva*, *taijasa*, *prajna* and *turiya*. These may be described as the objective, clairvoyant, ecstatic and ultra-ecstatic states of consciousness. The seats or *upadhis* relating to these states are the *sthula sharira* (physical body), the *sukshma sharira* (subtle body), the *karana sharira* (human monad) and *Daiviprakriti* (Light of the Logos). The fourth (*Turiya Chaitanya*, the fourth life-wave) is *Daiviprakriti*, which is the real *Atma*, and is "*realized by merging the other three in it in the order of the lower in the higher*". So merge the objective consciousness into the clairvoyant consciousness, then merge this into the ecstatic consciousness, and lastly the ecstatic consciousness into the ultra-ecstatic consciousness. (*Mandukya Upanishad*, shloka 2)

The fourth life-wave (*Maha Chaitanya*) is the "*sole essence of the consciousness of the Self*" and indicates the transcendental consciousness "*of peace, bliss and unity*". (*Mandukya Upanishad*, shloka 7)

Let us now look at the activity of the *Kshetrajna* from a different standpoint, that is, in relation to the *upadhis* according to the Vedantic classification. In the *annamaya kosha* there is the life of sensation. This relates to the *sthula sharira*. In the *pranamaya kosha* there is the life of desire. In the *manomaya kosha* there is concrete activity, and the mind collects all sense impressions and turns them into perceptions and concepts by

sankalpa (assimilation) and *vikalpa* (differentiation). Here the thinking faculty is highly developed and the person is not in the world of senses. It is the life of a thinker, scholar, painter, sculptor, musician or mathematician. Both these (*pranamaya* and *manomaya*), however, relate to *sukshma sharira*. But in *vijnanamaya kosha* you have the life of a philosopher, where the penetrative intellect is developed by study and deep thinking, as a result of which abstract ideas are formed. A western philosopher says, "I exist because I think." In the *anandamaya kosha* is the life of bliss. After the highest mental abstraction, spiritual bliss begins, which is a part of the bliss of renunciation. The last two *koshas* relate to the *karana sharira*, which is, so to say, the gateway of initiation. The highest state of *ananda* is supreme love and devotion, when the real teaching of the Guru begins. It is at this stage you become serene and quiet. But there is another *kosha*, which is the shining golden sheath of the Great Ones, wherein you realize the true Self, the Light of *Ishvara*, free from *avidya*. It is called the *hiranyamaya kosha* of the *Jivanmuktas*, in which *Brahman* (Divine Light) ever shines and which the sun or the moon cannot illumine.

Real knowledge is, therefore, that which treats of the *upadhis*, consciousness and self-consciousness, from the lowest *annamaya kosha* to the highest *anandamaya*. How do you attain this *jnana* or knowledge? Shri Krishna says that this knowledge results from the development of certain virtues or moral qualities as a necessary means of attaining such *jnana*. These are "humility, modesty, innocence, patience, uprightness, service of teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control, unflinching devotion to Me, constancy in spiritual knowledge and understanding the end of the knowledge of truth". (XIII, 7-11) These attributes are also declared to be knowledge, for knowledge is their end. By this knowledge you get to know *Ishvara*, and the knowledge includes devotion as well. Bhagavan now says: "Kshetra and knowledge and that which has to be known have been set forth; My devotee, on knowing this, is fitted for My state." (XIII, 18) So, when these virtues are developed, he becomes, by means of devotion, a *Jnani*. Devotion is the insatiable thirst of the human spirit for the Divine, a thirst that can never be satisfied either by the reading of scriptures or the performance of rites or

ceremonies; it can be satisfied by individual experience alone. Says *Katha Upanishad*, (I.ii.23)

This *Atma* (*Paramatma* — Supreme Self) is not attainable by the study of the Vedas, nor by keen intellect (capable of understanding the meanings conveyed by Shastras), nor by great learning. It is attainable by him alone who longs to reach it and to him this Self reveals its real nature.

Just as food is necessary for sustaining physical life, even so meditation and worship are needed for keeping up the spiritual life. The physical man must be made more ethereal by taking pure food; moral man more self-denying and philosophical; mental man more penetrating and profound; and spiritual man more devotional. The first preliminary is, therefore, the purification of the *upadhis*, and as man goes on evolving the *koshas*, devotion to *Ishvara* comes. The *sthula sharira* and the *sukshma sharira* are the 'negative pole', and *Daiviprakriti* and *Ishvara* are the 'positive pole'. If *karana sharira* comes under the attraction of the negative pole, it becomes subject to the passions of embodied existence, but when it comes under the influence of the positive pole, one becomes liberated. The battle rages when you have to cross the neutral barrier — *Mahasmashana* — success in crossing which depends entirely on one's past virtuous *karma* and complete devotion to Bhagavan. Out of the personality is evolved the individuality, which is later on transferred to *Ishvara*. There can be no *mukti* till the *ahankara* is completely annihilated and all evil eradicated by the fire of devotion. "Sweep clean the threshold of your heart by pure life, garnish the dwelling place of the Beloved with virtues; when thou departest, He enters in and shows His Face to him whose self is gone." At first the devotee starts as *Dasoham*. i.e., "I am the servant." The next stage of devotion is when he says and feels "He is Mine." Lastly comes the stage *Soham*, i.e., "I am He, Thou art myself", when the devotee is in a state of perfect union and oneness with the Beloved.

In that *Parabhakti* the devotee, on account of oneness, feels that what he sees, hears, etc., is Vasudeva.





XI

MULAPRAKRITI, DAIVIPRAKRITI AND ISHVARA

In the early part of the Thirteenth Discourse of the *Gita*, it was mentioned that the two *prakritis* correspond to *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* and that these were the womb of all creatures. The question therefore arises: How can all beings be said to have been evolved from the two *prakritis*? Bhagavan says: “*Whatever is born, the unmoving or moving, know that to be from the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna.*” (XIII, 26) Now, the original *Kshetra* is *Mulaprakriti*, and the real *Kshetrajna* is *Ishvara*. What then is this union? It is not contact. It cannot be mutual inherence, for they are not related to each other as cause and effect. Their natures are different. *Kshetra* is object whilst *Kshetrajna* is subject. The connection, therefore, is of the nature of *adhyasa*, which consists in confounding the attributes of the one with those of the other. It is a sort of illusion due to *ajnana* or ignorance, as when a rope is mistaken for a snake. Shankaracharya says that if you want to realize the *Kshetrajna*, you must separate the ego from the body; and when you begin to realize the real *Purusha*, *avidya* disappears and you attain knowledge.

If all beings evolve out of the *Prakritis*, who then is *Ishvara*? The two *Prakritis* depend on *Ishvara*, who is the source of evolution. “*Prakriti and Purusha are both beginningless*”, says the Great Lord. Here *Prakriti* is *Mulaprakriti* and *Purusha* is *Daiviprakriti*. They are both beginningless because *Ishvara* is eternal, and the two are under His control. If, as some hold, *Purusha* and *Prakriti* have a beginning, then there would be nothing left for *Ishvara* to rule over prior to their birth. Nor can *Ishvara* be held to be the cause of *samsara* because, in that case, the *Muktas* will be subject to the same disability of *samsara* and there can be no meaning in *mukti* or liberation. *Ishvara*, therefore, is the source of evolution, whilst *Mulaprakriti* is the cause of *samsara* or bondage. That is why it is said that no *puja* can be

performed without first offering *puja* to the *peetham* (seat of the deity), whilst *namaskarams* are to be made to both (*Mulaprakriti* and *Daiviprakriti*).

Prakriti as such cannot be destroyed; what is destroyed is the *avidya* that she causes. Krishna says: "All emanations and qualities are born of *Prakriti*. In the production of effect and causes (instrument), *Prakriti* is said to be the cause; in the experience of pleasure and pain, *Purusha* is (said to be) the cause." (XIII, 19-20) In other words, *Prakriti* is the cause of the body, thirteen instruments (ten *indriyas*, *Manas*, *Buddhi*, *ahankara*) and five sense objects, and all qualities such as *sukha*, *dukha*, *moha* (or pleasure, pain, delusion), which are seated in the *karanas* or senses, are also included under the term *karana*.

The other interpretation is that *karyas* are sixteen, namely, ten *indriyas*, *Manas* and five sense objects, whilst *karana* is *Mahat*, *ahankara* and the *pancha tanmatras*. At the beginning of evolution *Mahat* existed, i.e., vague consciousness, like the consciousness that comes to the waking man without the sense of 'I'; this is followed by *ahankara* and *tanmatras*, namely, *shabda* (sound), *sparsa* (touch), *rupa* (colour), *rasa* (taste) and *gandha* (smell), as such, being abstract super-sensible generals. The *Purusha*, who is *bhokta*, is the *Jivatma* in the *karana sharira*, because he identifies himself with *Prakriti* and enjoys and suffers. Instead of identifying yourself with *Ishvara*, you identify yourself with *Prakriti* (i.e., differentiated *Prakriti*, which is *avidya*) and attach yourself to the qualities, and the result is *samsara*. In other words, first there is *avidya*, or ignorance, due to differentiation or the feeling of separateness, which causes desire or *kama*, which in its turn produces *karma* or action, resulting in pleasure and pain, thereby causing bondage. So long as you identify yourself with the body, your consciousness is in the body, but as a result of evolution, if there is purification, consciousness is transferred from *upadhi* to *upadhi*, until at last it is united to that of *Bhagavan*.

But there is another *Purusha*, who is *Bhagavan* himself. Lord Krishna says: "I am the same to all beings; to Me there is none hateful or dear." (IX, 29) *Bhagavan* is, therefore, simply a disinterested witness (*upadrishtha*) (XIII, 22), watching the career of the human monad and not concerning Himself with its interests. But he goes on to say: "I take interest in the welfare of

those men who worship Me and think of Me alone, with their attention always fixed on Me." (IX, 22) Then he becomes *anumantha* and *bharta* (supporter); that is, where real spiritual progress is made, he takes greater interest in the welfare of the individual who is his devotee and becomes his light and guide, watches over him and protects him by giving him knowledge, the light of wisdom. (X, 11) "*To them who are ever devout, worshipping Me with love, I give Buddhi Yoga (Yoga of right knowledge of My essential nature) by which they come to Me. I, dwelling in them, out of My compassion for them, destroy the darkness born from ignorance by the shining light of spiritual wisdom.*" (X, 10-11) Then he becomes the *bhokta* (enjoyer), for "*I am indeed the Enjoyer of all sacrifices*" (IX, 24); "*Know Me as the Enjoyer of sacrifice and of austerity.*" (V, 29) And as *bhokta* He takes from the Soul that portion of its individuality in the *karana sharira* (into which is garnered the best experiences of each incarnation), which is high and spiritual enough to live in His own individuality; and when the man reaches the highest spiritual development, the devotee finds that he is no more a reflection of the *Paramatma*, but *Maheshwara* and *Paramatma*.

Such a one, says Lord Krishna, "*who thus knows Purusha and Prakriti by illumination, escapes the wheel (cycle) of births and deaths in whatever condition he may happen to be*". (XIII, 23) What are the means of attaining the knowledge of the *Atma* by which one can secure liberation? Shri Krishna says: "*By meditation, some behold the self in the Self by the Self.*" (XIII, 24) These are the *Uttama Adhikarins*. Vedantins come under this class. The Vedantin must possess *sadhana chatusthaya* (four qualifications), namely: *nityanitya viveka*, discrimination between the real and the unreal, the self and the non-self; *ihaloka paraloka vairagya*, or indifference to the fruits of action in this world and the other world (*svarga*); *shat sampatti*, i.e., *sama* (control of the mind); *dama* (control of the five organs of knowledge and five organs of action); *uparati* (tolerance); *titiksha* (endurance); *shraddha* (faith in the teaching of the Vedanta and the Guru); *samadana* (composure); and *mumukshutvam* (desire for liberation).

To man, the world is a mirror to see the self, and is hence the

subject of his study. The scientist studies it by observation, whilst the philosopher does it by contemplation and gets to know the nature of the self. The man first observes the world around him, then recognizes the relation between the sensations and the sense objects and forms concepts by correspondences (*sankalpa*) and differentiation (*vikalpa*), and thus develops his faculties by analytical thinking. He separates himself from his senses and listens to the teachings of scriptures (*shravana*) through the *Acharya* regarding the nature of the self. He then studies these truths and ponders over them by cogitation (*mananam*), and when, by mental abstraction and profound contemplation (*nididhyasa*), he grasps the abstract truths through his penetrative intellect, he becomes convinced of the highest truth, the One Reality.

Even then the scripture says to him: “Atma (Paramatma) is not attainable by the study of the Vedas nor by keen intellect, etc.; to reach Ishvara there must be the quenchless thirst for Him.” Now *Ishvara* is *Shabdabrahman*, the Word manifest, the Nameless Name. He is transcendental (*nirguna*), but out of pure compassion for us and for the purpose of helping humanity, takes a human form. (IX, 11) So when, after study and deep thinking, the devotee begins to concentrate his mind and fixes it on the image, he goes “from the circumference to the centre”, so to say. By means of *nama*, *rupa* and *mantra* he transcends his mind and gets within, and his centre of gravity is slowly shifted from the head to the heart, which now flows towards Bhagavan as a stream of oil, continuous and unbroken. For, Shri Krishna says in the Sixth Discourse, when the senses become insensitive and the mind is serene and quiet, the *antaskarana*, which is the bridge between the lower mind (head) and the higher mind (heart), becomes purified, and *Atman*, which is the Supreme Intelligence (*Chaitanya*) and the all-resplendent Light of *Ishvara*, is seen. (VI, 20)

The next class of devotees (*Madhyama Adhikarans*) are those to whom *Sankhya Yoga* appeals. It is the *Yoga* of analysis, by which the aspirant builds up a strong centre of individuality, as described in the Second Discourse. He dissociates himself from his body, his senses, feelings and emotions and realizes that he is distinct from his sensations and perceptions and that the

pleasures and pains or the joys and sorrows of his life do not affect the Self, the Self whom *"weapons cleave not nor waters wet, nor wind drieth, the unperceivable, the unthinkable and the unchangeable Self"*. (II, 23-25) He realizes the harmony of the Inner Self.

There is, then, the third class of devotees who are *Karma Yogis*. They say: *"Do karma for the sake of the Lord, and carry on the wheel of samsara for Bhagavan's sake."* Lord Krishna says: *"Surrendering all actions to Me, with thy thoughts on the Self, without hope and egotism and without anxiety, engage in battle. Those who constantly practise this teaching are also liberated."* (III, 30-31) You see, therefore, that in the devotees of the first class there is mental abstraction and spiritual devotion with the recognition of the Light of *Ishvara*; in the second class, though the Light of *Ishvara* is not recognized, the devotee realizes the Self which is the individuality in the *karana sharira*; whilst in the third class, the devotee does all action, such as walking, sleeping, talking, eating, etc., as an offering to Bhagavan, and the mind having thus become purified, the man qualifies himself for *Sankhya Yoga*. Then there is also a fourth class of devotees who have no knowledge as to the true nature of the Self, but learn this from the Teachers and worship according to their instructions; these too cross the ocean of *samsara*. (XIII, 25)

Samsara is due to the union of *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*, resulting from ignorance. A person whose eyes are affected sees many moons, whilst the man of true or proper vision sees only one. Even so, owing to ignorance, differences are seen, but the Sage sees that all is one. You must first separate yourself from the limitations, and then eventually realize that all beings exist in Him. *"He sees who sees the Supreme Lord, remaining the same in all beings, the undying in the dying."* (XIII, 27) Until and unless you see unity in diversity, there can be no real knowledge. (IV, 35) Remember that Lord Krishna first explained the distinction between the self and non-self and then, out of love, showed to Arjuna His universal Form only after giving him the divine sight, i.e., in *Daiviprakriti*, the Light of *Ishvara*. Bhagavan says: *"He who sees the Lord seated the same everywhere does not destroy his self."* He realizes that *Brahman* is the source and

end of evolution. He realizes that *karmas* are done by the attributes of *Prakriti*, whilst *Atma* is actionless. By the one there is difference, as a result, whilst with the other there is unity.

“The imperishable Paramatma, who is anadi (having no beginning) and without gunas, though dwelling in the body, is actionless.” (XIII, 31) Why? The Lord of the world does not create any *karma* or the conditions for its working. (V, 14) He disclaims all responsibility for *karma* or any of the effects produced by the three *gunas*, which are, so to say, the children of *Mulaprakriti*. Says Bhagavan in shlokas 14 and 15 of the Fifth Discourse: *“The Lord of the world does not bring about or create karana, or the condition by which people attribute karma to themselves; nor does He make people feel the effects of their karma. It is the law of natural causation that works. He does not take upon himself the sin or the merit of any one. Real knowledge is smothered by delusion, and hence created beings are misled.”*

“Nor do these acts bind me, remaining like one unconcerned, unattached to those acts.” (IX, 9) The Self (*Atma*), seated in the body, is, like the *Akasha*, unpolluted, though all-pervading. Like the sun which illumines the whole world, the *Atma* illumines all bodies. The sun’s ray is colourless, but the difference in colour is due to the matter on which the ray of the light falls. Even so, the *Jivatma*, owing to past experience and different attributes, assumes different characters. He who realizes the whole variety of beings as resting in Him reaches *Brahman*, the Supreme Goal. (XIII, 30) Lord Krishna concludes His teaching in the last verse thus:

Those who know by the development of the inner vision that differentiated *Prakriti* is the cause of bondage will know the real Lord. If you understand the difference between *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* by the eye of wisdom, and separate yourself from all *upadhis* and limitations, you go to the Supreme Goal.





XII

WORSHIP ME WITH ALL BHAVAS

In the Fifteenth Discourse Lord Krishna enunciates, in brief, the true doctrine of the *Gita* with regard to the real nature of the Self, the goal of humanity and the path leading towards that goal. Shri Shankaracharya, in his commentary, says that the whole teaching of the *Gita Shastra* is here summed up, nay, the whole teaching of the Vedas embodied as well, for it is said that "*knowing this doctrine — and not otherwise — a man becomes wise and has accomplished all duties*". (XV, 20)

While studying the Thirteenth Discourse, recall how the Great Lord explains that the dwelling of the *Kshetrajna* in the *Kshetra* and his attachment for the *gunas* form the cause of *samsara* — "*Attachment to qualities is the cause of his birth in good and evil wombs.*" (XIII, 21) In the next discourse He explains what the *gunas* are, how they bind him, and in what way liberation from the *gunas* can be attained, and concludes by saying that "*He who serves Me with unflinching devotion, crossing beyond the gunas, is fit to become Brahman.*" (XIV, 26) The Great Lord now describes the nature of *samsara* in figurative terms of the Ashwatha tree, and says that "*He who knows it (Ashwatha) is a Veda-knower.*" (XV, 1) How is this described? Read shlokas 1 to 3:

The eternal Ashwatha, with roots above and branches below, whose leaves are the Vedas, below and above spread its branches, nourished by the *gunas*; the sense-objects are its buds; below in the world of men stretch forth the roots resulting in action. Its form is not perceived as such here, neither its end, nor its origin, nor its existence.

This tree of *samsara* (mundane existence) rests on a continuous series of births which is without a beginning or an end and is, therefore, eternal. The tree of *samsara* is so called because it is the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The root of *samsara* is

Mulaprakriti, which is the basis of all material manifestation in the cosmos. Whilst *Ishvara* is the beginning of all creation and the end of all evolution, that which keeps up the continued existence of *samsara* is *prakriti*. From man to the unmoving objects down below, and from him up to the abode of Brahmā, the creator of the universe, whatever regions are attained as the suitable reward of knowledge and action, they are nourished and fattened by three *gunas* — *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* — which form their material basis (*upadana*). *Mulaprakriti* as such is eternal, but when it becomes differentiated, it gives rise to *avidya*. The primary root is therefore differentiated *prakriti*, whilst the secondary roots are *kama* and *krodha*, which give rise to *karma*. (III, 37) As the leaves serve to protect the tree, so do the Vedas serve to protect the tree of *samsara*, treating of *dharma* and *adharma* and its fruits, pleasure and pain, the results of past actions, namely, the *vasanas* of attachment and aversion. *Samsara* is, therefore, necessary for learning the lessons of life; first, a knowledge of good and evil, which leads one on to abstain from evil and gain wisdom; and when the duties of life are discharged in a proper manner (III, 8), the mind gets purified; then, by concentration, you bring it under control; and when the penetrative intellect is developed by cogitation on the eternal verities, you gain illumination through devotion and secure liberation by reaching Bhagavan. It is then that you understand the root of *samsara* (*prakriti*); that is to say, you take objective cognizance of it by reaching the Logos (Bhagavan) and become *sarvajna*, omniscient.

So, at the first rung of the ladder, you have the performance of *karma*; *karma* in thought, word and deed. Selfish *karma* binds you and keeps you down, whilst unselfish *karma* elevates you. Lord Krishna says: “*The world is bound by action unless performed for the sake of sacrifice; so, free from attachment, do thou perform action.*” (III, 9) Again He says: “*Do thou also perform action, as did our forefathers in the old time.*” (IV, 15) So, *karma* has to be performed as *yajna*, for “*this world is not for the non-sacrificer*”. (IV, 31) In the lower world this sacrifice is demonstrated by a policy, so to say, of ‘give and take’; but in *Karma Yajna*, you give everything, without expecting anything in return. The scriptures refer to five kinds of *yajna*, namely, *Brahma Yajna* (study of the Vedas), *Daiva Yajna*, *Pitri*

Yajna, Bhuta Yajna and Nara Yajna. (Manu Smriti, III, 70) Shri Krishna says: "Many and various are the sacrifices spread at the doorway of Brahman." (IV, 32)

But energy expended in the pursuit of knowledge is superior to ritualistic sacrifices, and above all is *Jnana Yajna* or wisdom-sacrifice, for He says: "*All actions in their entirety culminate in wisdom*" (IV, 33); and "*As the burning fire reduces fuel to ashes, so does the fire of wisdom reduce all actions to ashes.*" (IV, 37)

The constant enemy of the wise is *kama* (III, 39), and your enemies in *samsara* are two, *kama* and *krodha*, pertaining to the senses (III, 37), and unless and until these are vanquished, you cannot get dispassion. How will you do this? Shri Krishna says: "*Do your karma as a matter of duty, renouncing the fruits of action.*" (III, 19) This is the negative aspect of sacrifice. The other aspect, or positive aspect, of sacrifice is to do *karma* for the good of all, with an altruistic motive: "*Having an eye for the welfare of the world, thou shouldst perform action.*" (III, 20) This, however, is attended with some danger, for it brings in its train a higher ambition, an aspiration for name or fame, glory or power; and so egoism still remains latent in a subtle form. This will only disappear when *karma* is performed as an offering to Bhagavan with the fire of devotion. Shri Krishna says: "*Dedicate unto Me all actions with thy mind fixed on the Supreme.*" (III, 30) Thus, by means of *nishkama karma*, as well as *karma* performed as *yajna* or sacrifice to Bhagavan, the mind becomes purified, but *kama* and *krodha* (attachment and aversion), which still remain latent, can only be got rid of by concentration and meditation on Bhagavan as manifested Deity (*sakara upasana*). And as the penetrative intellect is developed by deep study and profound meditation, you get to recognize the eternal verities, the truths relating to the real nature of the Self, the *Paramatma*, and of the Light of *Ishvara*. It is at this stage that he realizes the true greatness of the Guru and of Bhagavan. The brain then becomes the generator of great spiritual energy to be used for the good of all, and he becomes His Warrior, so to say, for the emancipation of the struggling human souls, by dispelling darkness and removing ignorance. Thus, having cut asunder *kama* and *krodha* in the senses, mind and intellect, which are the secondary roots of

samsara, the aspirant has then to seek the *Tatpada* (*Parabrahm*), “the goal whither having gone, none return”. How? Shri Krishna says: “Take refuge in the primeval Purusha (who is Bhagavan), from whom streams forth the current of evolution.” (XV, 4) By self-surrender and renunciation, aided by supreme devotion, the aspirant gets illumination with the help of the Guru and the compassion of Bhagavan, and reaches the goal. In the case of Arjuna, however, Bhagavan was the Guru as well as the Lord. But remember that both are necessary, namely, the *prasad* of the Guru and Divine Grace, and the one cannot be secured without the other. For, says the *Yoga Vasishtha*:

So long as the compassion of Parameshvara (the great Lord) is not secured by complete devotion, one does not get the real Guru and the true Shastra (Teaching).

That goal, Shri Krishna says, is “*My Supreme Abode, which the sun, moon or fire does not illumine.*” (XV, 6) It is the goal already referred to by Him in the Eighth Discourse of the *Gita* as the “*Eternal Brahma, the Supreme*” (VIII, 3), “*the Unmanifested, Imperishable, the Highest Goal, which having reached, none return. That is My Supreme Abode.*” (VIII, 21) It is the goal eternal, which those *Muktas* who are “*free from pride and delusion, with the evil of attachment conquered, ever contemplating the Self, with desires repelled and liberated from the pairs of opposites*”, reach. (XV, 5)

They have annihilated the *ahankara* and reduced it to ashes by burning in the *chidagnikunda* (the heart), wherein dwells the Divine Fire. They are free from delusion because they have separated themselves from all *upadhis* by giving up attachment. They are free from hatred towards enemies and from love towards friends. They have reached the Light of *Ishvara*, and yet they meditate upon the centre of that Light which is the Supreme Self. They are *Jivanmuktas* and, having no desire even for *mukti*, renounce it for the purpose of helping humanity. They reach that goal when the *Jivatma* (individual soul) becomes united with, or assimilated to, *Ishvara* (Logos).

What is this *Jivatma*? Shri Krishna says: “*It is the amsa that*

emanates from Me and which is manifested from the beginning of time that becomes the *Jivatma* in the world of living beings, and attracts the mind and the five senses, which have their basis in *prakriti*." (XV, 7) This *Jivatma* is the spark which hangs from *Ishvara*, the Flame, by the finest thread of *Daiviprakriti*, and which is enclosed in the film of *Hiranyamaya* matter (which is *karana sharira*). *Jivatma* is the Light of the Logos, *Chaitanya*, which becoming differentiated, forms the individual Ego in combination with *karana sharira*. Now, *karana sharira* is *karana* because it is the father of the other two bodies, *sthula* and *sukshma*. It may also be said to be their child because its growth depends upon the best experiences which they hand up to it.

Its growth or development in man is brought about —

- (1) a. By renunciation of the fruits of *karma* (*nishkama karma*);
- b. By altruistic *karma* (*Lokasangraha*);
- c. Through *karma* performed as *yajna*, or sacrifice, to *Yajna Purusha*, who is *Bhagavan*;
- (2) Through virtue, or the law of self-sacrifice, following which the several virtues mentioned in shlokas 7 to 11 of the Thirteenth Discourse are evolved, namely, humility, sincerity, patience, etc. Because there is in man that spark of divinity, the nature of which is ever to give, to sacrifice, the law of self-sacrifice should govern his actions as opposed to the law of self-assertion, the latter leading to success of progress in the evolution of the physical universe;
- (3) Through deep thinking and cogitation on the truths mentioned in the scriptures; and
- (4) Through perfect devotion to *Bhagavan*.

It is the *karana sharira* which is the seat of human individuality. The *Jivatma* or the human monad is the one connecting link between the several incarnations of man. *Shri Krishna* says: "When the Lord, *Jivatma* (human monad), quits one body and enters another, he carries with him the mind and the senses as the wind carries the fragrance of flowers from their source." (XV, 8) So, when the *Jivatma* leaves the body, it takes with it all the germs of conscious existence, the essence of five *tanmatras*, *Manas* and *ahankara*. In every stage of conscious existence, these

seven elements are always present, namely, the five senses, the mind which guides and rules the senses and draws deductions from their impressions when collected and arranged, and the Ego (*Atma*) or the sense of 'I'-ness, which is the observer of the generalizations deduced from the sense impressions. In dreaming, for example, objects appertaining or appealing to the senses of sight, touch, etc., pass before the dreamer; his mind classifies these impressions and the dreamer feels the sense of 'I', the observer. These seven elements exist in the *sthula* as well as the *sukshma*, and are latent, so to say, in *karana sharira*. Then, the *Jivatma* takes the essence of all these experiences and the impulses generated in connection with the seven elements of conscious existence residing in *karana sharira*, thereby forming a kind of energy, as it were, which brings about the future incarnations (the environments being those determined by the past *karma* of the man), and becomes the cause of rebirth, because the impulses already generated cannot be fructified in the region of *svarga*.

So, the *Jivatma*, or individual soul, is an integral portion of *Paramatma* (Supreme Self); it is like the reflection of the sun in water. (The reflection is but a portion of the real sun, and on the removal of water it returns to the original sun, and remains as that very sun.) The deluded, however, do not perceive Him, because they are under the influence of the *gunas*, pleasure and pain (*sukha* and *dukha*), and their mind is forcibly attracted by the enjoyment of objects, visible and invisible. But those in whom the Eye of Wisdom has been opened do recognize Him. (XV, 10) Those who strive, through deep study and deep thinking, endowed with *Yoga*, i.e., when the senses are subdued (when the senses are tranquil and insensitive), when the mind is calm and serene, and when their whole being is steady, see the reflection of the Supreme Self in themselves, just as one can see the reflection of the sun on the still surface of a lake when not disturbed by the wind. But others who strive to study, but whose minds have not been regenerated by austerities and subjugation of the senses, who have not abandoned their evil ways, whose pride of having studied the scriptures has not been given up, do not perceive Him. (XV, 11)

What then are His powers? They have already been mentioned in the Seventh Discourse (8-10), and more specifically described in the Tenth Discourse, where Lord Krishna, after explaining His

vibhutis, concludes by saying: "There is no end of My divine glory; whatsoever is glorious, good, beautiful or strong, know that to be a part of My splendour." (X, 40-41) Lord Krishna gives now a brief summary of His powers in the following verses:

Know that the splendour which belongs to the sun and illumines the whole world, which is in the moon and in fire, is from Me; entering into the earth, I sustain all things by My energy; I am the cause of the moisture that nourishes herbs; becoming the fire of digestion, I enter into the bodies of all that breathe and, being united with *prana* and *apana*, I cause food of the four kinds to digest. (XV, 12-14)

What Bhagavan says here is that all the qualities exhibited in matter, as in fire, the sun, light or any other object, originally emanated from Him, because it is His light and energy that gives to matter all the qualities that enable it afterwards to form the various organisms in the manifested cosmos; the properties commonly associated with matter and all those tendencies of chemical action that we see in the chemical elements did not belong to it or them originally. Matter, which is differentiated *prakriti*, becomes endowed with these properties by the action on it of the current of life, which emanates from the Logos, or *Ishvara*.

This is well illustrated in *Kena Upanishad*, where the mysterious appearance of Parashakti (*Daiviprakriti*) in *svarga* is thus referred to. It is said that when Parashakti first appeared in *svarga* in a mysterious form, Indra wanted to know what it was. He first sent Agni to enquire what it was that appeared in that particular form. Then Parashakti asked Agni what functions he fulfilled or what were his latent capacities. Agni replied that he could reduce almost everything to ashes. In order to show that this attribute did not originally belong to Agni, but was simply lent to him, Parashakti placed before him a little bit of grass and asked him to reduce it to ashes. Agni tried his best, but failed. Vayu was next sent; he attempted to blow it away, but failed miserably. All this was done to show that Parashakti, or the Light of the Logos, endows even the *pancha tanmatras* with qualities that did not originally belong to *Mulaprakriti*. The great Lord then says: "Penetrating the

earth, I support all beings by My energy." From the standpoint of Western science, it is the earth that attracts all bodies by the force of gravity. If so, how do you account for phenomena such as levitation?

What is true of the macrocosm (*brahmanda*) is also true of the microcosm (*pindanda*). The two great forces in Nature, attraction and repulsion, are both included in *kundalini*, which, according to our scriptures, is a manifestation of His *shakti* residing or latent in the *muladhara chakra* (sacral plexus), which is closely connected with the earth. Another manifestation of the same light or energy appears as "*vaishvanara fire which is within the human body and by which the food is digested*". (*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad*, V.ix.1)

It is for this reason that all the food should first be offered to Bhagavan before it is eaten, so that the food may become transmuted into higher forces. Then, later, on, Shri Krishna says: "*I am seated in the hearts of all*", a statement once referred to while explaining His *vibhutis* to Arjuna in the Tenth Discourse. (20) Here the heart is the cavity below the *Anahata Chakra*, which is a plexus; and you can find *Ishvara*, who dwells in it, only when you go within the heart (*hridaya*), or withdraw yourself within yourself, so to say, after transcending the senses, mind and intellect; and, when aided by pure devotion, you get illumination, as a result of past virtue and good *karma*, you attain a knowledge of things that transcend the ordinary limits of time and space, and of visible Nature; and acquire the capacity to get a glimpse of the previous lives from the Akashic records. Hence He says: "*Wherefore, from Me, the Self of all sentient beings, are memory and knowledge.*" (XV, 15) Bhagavan (Divine Voice) is the real *Ishvara* of the Vedantins and the Saviour of mankind. Through Him alone can salvation and immortality be secured by man. "*The end and object of all Initiation is to ascertain His attributes and connection with humanity, realize His sacred presence in every human heart, and discover the means of transferring man's higher individuality, purified and ennobled by the virtuous karma of a series of incarnations, to His lotus feet as the most sacred offering which a human being can bestow.*" Therefore, Shri Krishna says: "*I am that which is to be known through the Vedas*", because He is the Divine Voice and

He is the author of the Vedanta, being the *Paraguru*. Through Him the teaching is imparted to the great Gurus, who form the Brotherhood of Adepts; and He knows the Vedas, as He is the *Shabdabrahman* from whom the Vedas proceed. "He is the Supreme Self, the eternal Lord, who pervades the three worlds and sustains them, and in the world and in the Vedas He is known as Purushottama, because He transcends both the perishable and the imperishable." (XV, 17-18) Here Lord Krishna divides all existing entities in Nature into two classes, those not permanent, *ksharam* or perishable, by which is meant the manifested cosmos, and *Aksharam* or imperishable, which is called *Kutashtha* or undifferentiated *prakriti*. This *Kutashtha* is the *Mayashakti* of the Vedantins. It is the illusion-power of the Lord, the germ from which the perishable being takes its birth. It is the seat of all latent *samskaras* or tendencies, of desires, actions, etc., pertaining to mortal creatures. It is the *Avyakta* of the Sankhyas, or *Mulaprakriti*, already referred to as *Kutashtha* in the 3rd shloka of the Twelfth Discourse. Although *Akshara* is not destroyed at the time of cosmic *Pralaya* (VIII, 18-19), as are all things that come out of it, yet there is something superior in Nature to that of *Aksharam*, and it is the *Uttama Purusha* (*Maheshvara*), or *Paramatma*. For *Ishvara* is the beginning of creation and end of all evolution. He is the one means and the most effectual means of obtaining salvation. Therefore, Shri Krishna puts the whole doctrine in a nutshell in the last two shlokas: "Knowing that I am Purushottama, he who worships Me with all bhavas becomes sarvajna." (XV, 19-20) Now this comprises five *bhavas*, namely, *Deha-bhava*, *Indriya-bhava*, *Mano-bhava*, *Buddhi-bhava* and *Aham-bhava*. How are we to offer these *bhavas* to Bhagavan?

First, take *Deha-bhava*. The *deha*, or physical body, must be kept pure. There is the statement in the *Bhagavata* which says that the acquisition of the human body is a great opportunity in Nature, and that the *devas* or other highly evolved beings preferred to accept it when the choice was put before them; and as food is necessary to maintain the physical body, the food to be partaken of must be pure, so that the body may become a temple of Bhagavan and fit for receiving His divine influence. The pure magnetic food is to be taken not for the reason that yourself may

be kept clean. For says *Light on the Path*: "**The self-righteous man makes for himself a bed of mire. Abstain because it is right to abstain, not that yourself shall be kept clean.**" Secondly, food must be partaken after performing one or other of the five kinds of sacrifices, namely, *Brahma Yajna*, *Daiva Yajna*, *Pitri Yajna*, *Nara Yajna* and *Bhuta Yajna*. Lord Krishna says: "**The righteous who eat the remnant of the sacrifice are freed from all sins, but the impious who cook for their own sake, eat sin.**" But of all *yajnas*, the best is *Japa Yajna*, the silent repetition of *mantra*. (X, 25) Thirdly, we must cease from wicked ways and make the body a fit instrument by proper discipline and control, the object being to transmute the physical or brute energy, by steady devotion, into moral and spiritual force through the workings of the brain and the heart. The person who is devoted to Bhagavan may be living in a palace, fed with rich and luxurious food and surrounded by all objects of gratification, and yet these do not attract him. From palace to a hovel, from luxury to penury, he moves with equal calm, through riches or poverty. He is always content with what cometh to him and is homeless (XII, 19), as his heart is always set on Him who is the real home.

Then there is the *Indriya-bhava*. The world is the world of Bhagavan manifested, and affects our senses in different ways. The senses, in their origin and activity, are indicative of the One Life; and the specialization of the visual and other faculties tends to prove the existence, in the germinal state, of a principle of synthesis, i.e., the presence of a generalized and universal perceptivity. That shows that there is one *Chaitanya*, which the senses can perceive if only the barrier of likes and dislikes formed between ourselves and the external world as a result of the taint of personality is removed. These do not appertain to the objects of the senses. What makes harmonious relations difficult or impossible is the personality, which is affected by our likes and dislikes. The story of the *sadhu* fully illustrates this: A *sadhu* once observed a cow passing in front of him. The butcher, who was following it, came to the *sadhu* and asked him if he had seen the cow pass by. The *sadhu* was in a dilemma. He could not speak an untruth; nor could he speak the truth that the cow did pass him by, because the butcher was sure to follow and kill her. So the *sadhu* calmly said: "The eyes see, but they don't speak; the tongue

speaks, but does not see." The butcher could not understand the parable and asked the *sadhu* what it was that sees, speaks, hears, etc. The *sadhu* said that there was One Life — *Chaitanyam* — which works through all the senses and shows its powers. The butcher immediately asked if that Life was present in him and in the cow as well. On hearing the *sadhu's* reply that it was so, the butcher gave up his pursuit and desisted from killing the cow.

Then there is the *Mano-bhava*. This is offered by leading a life of renunciation in the little things of life. You must strive to live and love the unity in thought, word and deed. You must not merely preach but practise it by thinking of others first, trying to supply their needs first before your own. Your mind must become free from attachment and aversion. The attachment must expand into universal love.

Bearing no ill-will to any being, friendly and compassionate, free from attachment and egoism, balanced in pleasure and pain, and forgiving, ever content, steady-minded, self-controlled, resolute, with *Manas* and *Buddhi* dedicated to (fixed on) Me, such a devotee is dear to Me. (XII, 14)

As a result of this renunciation and freedom from attachment, the mind becomes pure. You must then concentrate and fix the mind and meditate upon Bhagavan in the form of a manifested Deity. Just as you catch the rays of the sun's light through a lens and focus them so as to burn a piece of cotton, even so, through such a form you can receive the Light of *Ishvara* and burn up all the desires of the heart. Thus meditation, aided by intense devotion, gradually brings on the longing to reach *Paramatma*. The devotee's attitude of mind shows a marked change. First, he begins with *shravana* and shows an eagerness to listen to the glories of Bhagavan; then the devotee takes delight in *kirtana* (IX, 14) and begins to participate in it along with congenial or kindred souls. (X, 9) He then desires to see the form which he worships, the transcendental loveliness which surpasses everything in the world. Then comes *sparsa* (touch), when the devotee touches the lotus feet of the Lord by prostration and feels the oneness, or solidarity, because all spiritual influences flow from

His lotus feet; then *ghrana*, where the devotee smells the fragrance of the flowers which, when offered to Bhagavan, become magnetized by the Light of *Ishvara*. The devotee then eats his food after offering the same first to Bhagavan. This is *rasanam* (taste). He also offers by *hasta* (hand) flowers and fruits to Him at His feet. So the mind directs the five senses towards Bhagavan, and the devotee visits the holy places of pilgrimage which are centres of great spiritual influence charged, so to say, by great beings.

Then there is the *Buddhi-bhava*. By study and cogitation on the truths explained in the scriptures, the devotee attains knowledge which is to be used for the service of others so that they may be brought to His lotus feet. His intellectual conviction grows deep and strong, and as he offers himself to Bhagavan, he begins to realize the inner joy and peace which gradually changes his conviction into faith and his intellectual perception into personal experience, whence true devotion begins.

Last but not least is *Aham-bhava*. This is entire self-renunciation or complete surrender to Bhagavan.

Salutation to Lord Shiva, the tranquil, the cause of
the three causes (material, instrumental and efficient). O
Supreme Lord, Thou art the goal, I offer myself to
Thee.

In this connection, compare the Sufi couplet: "*If you want to float on water, you must die.*" Even so, if you wish to float in the ocean of *samsara*, the personal self of your personality must die. Lord Gauranga says: "*Be more humble than grass, more enduring than a tree as regards heat and cold, and respect others without respecting yourself. In this way the Lord has to be praised.*" So Shri Krishna says: "*He who worships Me with all bhavas becomes sarvajna.*" (XV, 19) That is the true Doctrine of the *Gita*; and the man who knows this and lives up to it becomes wise and happy, for he may be said to have accomplished all his duties in life.

This then is the true Doctrine of the *Bhagavad Gita* expounded in the second part of the book. Yet we find in the earlier chapters indirect references to it, when the Great Lord critically examines the theories put forward by the different philosophers with regard

to the path leading towards the Goal. The *Bhagavad Gita* should not be looked upon merely as a dialogue between Arjuna and Shri Krishna just before the Great War, but is intended by the author to be a treatise dealing with the origin, trials and destiny of man. Arjuna, who is also called by the name Nara in the *Gita*, is the real Monad in man, whilst Shri Krishna is the Logos or the Spirit that comes to save man; and the discourses in the first part of the book will be found to be in orderly sequence and closely interconnected as pointing out the steps on the path leading the disciple towards the Goal. The First Discourse treats of *vishada*, which is also called *Yoga*, because it is not the passing despondency of the disappointed man but the deeper sadness felt in the heart, caused by the blankness of his existence and the unreality of things seen and felt by the separative self in man. It describes the position of the *Jivatma* or Monad in man as it enters the threshold of manhood after passing its stages of irresponsible childhood and of disciplined youth.

At this stage the Great Lord commences the teaching of the *Sankhya Yoga* in the Second Discourse. It begins with the analysis of man and shows that man is not his body, that pleasure and pain are fleeting, that the Self is "*not born, nor doth he die, nor, having been, ceaseth he any more to be, unborn, eternal, unchangeable*". (II, 20) "*Just as a man casts off worn-out clothes and puts on others which are new, so the embodied (Self) casts off worn-out bodies and enters others that are new.*" (II, 21) So the aspirant should, by analysis, dissociate himself from his body, sensations and feelings, emotions and thoughts, and realize the Self. If the aspirant is not thus capable of realizing the Self, he should follow *Buddhi Yoga*. Let him do his work, casting off attachment and giving up the desire for *phalam* (fruit), balanced in mind, whether success or failure falls to his lot. (II, 47-48) Shri Krishna says: "*Be free from the triad of the gunas, free from pairs of opposites, ever remaining in the sattva, self-possessed.*" (II, 45) He will then attain to the disciplined and one-pointed reason by which he will realize the Self, which is the centre of individuality in the *karana sharira*. Having realized the harmony of the Self, the *Sankhya Yogi* begins to trace the *upadhis* to their source, which is *Avyaktam*.

The theory of the Sankhya school is that *Avyaktam* is the basis

of the differentiated *prakriti*, with all its *gunas*; that *purusha* is merely a kind of passive substratum of the cosmos, whilst *prakriti* is responsible for all that is done in the cosmos, and for all the results of *karma* due to *upadhi*. Now as you rise from *upadhi* to *upadhi* in gradual succession, and when you try to rise from the last *upadhi* (*karana*) to the *Avyaktam*, your consciousness is lost, and there is no connection that will enable your consciousness to bridge the interval. This *Avyaktam* is *Mulaprakriti*, which produces all the organisms or *upadhis* that constitute the whole cosmos, and the consciousness manifested in every *upadhi* is traceable to the Light of the Logos and not to *Avyaktam*. It is, therefore, easier for a man to follow his own consciousness further and further into the depths of his innermost being and ultimately reach the Logos, than to try to follow *upadhi* to its source, which is *Avyaktam* or *Mulaprakriti*. Shri Krishna therefore says: “*The difficulty of those whose minds are set on Avyaktam is great. The path towards Avyaktam is travelled by embodied souls under very great difficulties.*” (XII, 5) So even for him who follows the Sankhya doctrine, the true path when the *karana sharira* is reached is to lose sight of the *upadhi* altogether and to fix his attention solely upon the energy of the Light of the Logos that is working within it; and, in trying to trace its origin, he will reach its source, which is the Logos, through the Divine Light (*Daiviprakriti*) and, from the standpoint of the Logos, try to reach *Parabrahm*, where he will be able to take objective cognizance of *Avyaktam*.

So when the aspirant has, by *nishkama karma*, purified the mind and by dissociation or analysis realized the Self and gained the harmony of the Self, he has still to realize the harmony of the non-self in relation to the outer world; and for this reason the next step of *Karma Yoga* is explained in the Third Discourse. The theory of *Karma Yogis* is that: *karma* is not due to *upadhi* alone, but due to the effects produced by the two elements, *upadhi* and *Chaitanya*; *karma* cannot be entirely given up; and if you perform the rituals prescribed in the Vedas, you will receive the assistance of the *devatas* to reach *svarga*, and in the end you will attain supreme happiness. Shri Krishna controverts this doctrine by saying that the *devatas* are beings on the plane of the *karana sharira* and can never give you immortality, because the *devatas*

themselves are not immortal. The happiness in *svarga* is not eternal, and you will have to return to objective existence in a new incarnation. He says: "*They who worship the Shining Ones go to the Shining Ones, but My worshippers come to Me.*" (IX, 25; VII, 23) So the Great Lord says that *karma* cannot be given up but must be performed as *yajna*, or offering to *Yajna Purusha*, who is *Ishvara*. "*The world is bound by action unless performed for the sake of sacrifice, for that sake perform action free from attachment.*" (III, 9) "*With an eye to the welfare of the world thou shouldst perform action.*" (III, 10)

So, for the *Sankhya Yogin*, the only method by which he can harmonize his self with the non-self (the outer world) is the performance of *karma* as *yajna* (sacrifice). How? By *Bhuta Yajna*, the aspirant develops the virtues of compassion and kindness towards the animal world. By *Nara Yajna*, he will maintain and establish harmony and goodwill in his relations towards men in their social and religious life, inasmuch as his thoughts and actions affect his fellows as members of the body politic, either for good or evil. By *Pitri Yajna* he will be enabled to have better bodies from the *Pitris*, whose function it is to provide necessary instruments for his evolution. By *Daiva Yajna* the powers of his consciousness are harmonized to their sources in the macrocosm and the centre (the self) is thus harmonized with the *tattvas* and their presiding intelligences. By *Brahma Yajna*, that is, study of the scriptures which deal with the truths revealed by the Great *Rishis*, and by meditating on them for the purpose of helping humanity, he becomes an instrument in their hands for its evolution.

Thus, with the help of the *yajnas*, a dim realization of the One Life dawns on the aspirant as a result of the desire for establishing the harmony of the non-self, and he who was a spectator now becomes a co-worker with Nature. The *Yajna Purusha* is *Ishvara*, who is the enjoyer of sacrifices (V, 29), and so the Great Lord says this to the *Karma Yogin*: "*Surrendering all actions to Me, with thy thoughts resting on the Supreme Self, from hope and egoism freed, devoid of fear, do thou fight.*" (III, 30) So, when the aspirant has realized the harmony of the Inner Self according to *Sankhya*, and maintained the harmony of the non-self in relation to the outer world by means of *karma* done as *yajna*

(sacrifice) and for the welfare of the world as enjoined in the Third Discourse, he becomes fit to receive *jnana* as a necessary consequence, which is now explained in the Fourth Discourse. Here the Lord first describes the manifold sacrifices born of action and says: "*Manifold sacrifices are spread at the mouth of Brahman. Know them all as born of action. But superior is wisdom sacrifice to the sacrifice with objects. All action without exception is comprehended in wisdom.*" (IV, 32-33)

The theory of the *Jnana Marga* philosophers is that all *karma* is merely symbolical and intended as a stepping-stone to gain knowledge; that there is a deep meaning underlying the whole ritual that deals with real entities, with the secrets of Nature and all the faculties embedded in man's *prajna*; that the knowledge of intellectual elements underlying the ritual would be more important for man's salvation than any physical act could be; and so these philosophers recommended *japam*, *pranagnihotram* and other methods as substitutes for external rituals. Now Shri Krishna says that even this knowledge will not bring the aspirant any nearer the Goal, for *jnana* is not directed towards its proper source. There must be some definite aim before you in your search after truth, a complete view of the path to be traversed and the ultimate goal to be reached in order that the knowledge gained may bear fruit. The men of science who investigate into the secrets of Nature for the advancement of knowledge are working almost on the lines of these philosophers, but that kind of investigation and knowledge will not by itself enable a man to attain immortality or *mukti*. Such knowledge is not enough, for Shri Krishna says: "*He whose engagements are all devoid of desires and purposes, and whose actions have been burnt by the fire of wisdom, him the wise call a Sage.*" (IV, 19) He becomes fit for receiving illumination through the Light of *Ishvara*, with the help of the Guru.

The true knowledge is that "*by which thou wilt see all beings in thyself and also in Me*" (IV, 35) — the knowledge by which all beings from Brahmā the Creator down to the blade of grass are seen in one's real Self, which is the Light of *Ishvara*. It can be imparted by *Jivanmuktas* forming the hierarchy of Adepts who awaken in the disciple the Divine Vision (spiritual clairvoyance) and transmit to him the Light of the Logos. They form the

Guruparampara, the highest of whom is described thus:

Oh! the wondrous splendour
 beneath the Banyan Tree:
 There sits Gurudeva, a youth,
 The disciples are elders;
 The Teaching is Silence,
 And all doubts are dispelled.

It is the Light of the Logos (*Daiviprakriti*) which keeps up the *Guruparampara*; for it is the spiritual light that is transmitted from Guru to the disciple when the time for real Initiation comes. It is the bond of union and brotherhood which maintains and preserves the chain of spiritual intercourse through all the great *Jivanmuktas* of the world, and to enter into any such brotherhood one should bring oneself within the influence of that spiritual Light of the Logos.

Jnana is followed by *Sannyasa Yoga* in the Fifth Discourse. What is *sannyasa*? It is not renunciation of action (*karma sannyasa*) at all. The Lord says that as between *karma sannyasa* and *Karma Yoga*, the latter is certainly superior, for you gain all the advantages of *sannyasa* by doing *karma* as a matter of duty. Shri Krishna says:

He should be known as a perpetual renouncer who neither hates nor desires, for free from the pairs of opposites, he is easily set free from bondage. (V, 3)

He who, without depending on the fruits of action, performs the bounden duty, he is a *sannyasi* — not he who is without fire and without action. (VI, 1)

He who does actions, offering them to *Brahman*, abandoning attachment, is not tainted by sin, as a lotus leaf by water. (V, 10)

But the true *Paramartha Sannyasa* is that which is based upon *jnana* (true knowledge) and not merely renunciation of action. When the aspirant becomes fit to receive illumination, he attains *jnana* with the help of *Gurudeva* and sees the oneness of life through the Light of the Logos. This Light (*Daiviprakriti*) impregnates the body, senses, mind and intellect with the powers

of automatic activity, so that these (the body and senses, mind and intellect) may work without his aid.

Shri Krishna says: *"By the body, by the mind, by the intellect, by mere senses also, Yogis perform action, without attachment, for the purification of the self."* (V, 11) The *sannyasi* who has subdued his senses, renounces all action, in speech, thought and deed, by discrimination, rests happily in the body — a nine-gated city, with the Self for its monarch, inhabited by the citizens of the senses, mind and intellect, all working for the sole benefit of the Lord who is the real SELF. (V, 13) Such a one, self-controlled and intent on the welfare of all beings, rests in Brahma (V, 19), which is *Turiya Chaitanyam* and which is the real *Atma* (*Mandukya Upanishad*, shloka 7); and in the steady contemplation of *Brahman* attains *Brahman's* bliss. (*Gita*, V, 24) Such a *sannyasi* *"on knowing Me, the Lord of all sacrifices and austerities and the Great Lord of all worlds, attains Peace"*. (V, 29) Now, whether for the *Sankhya Yogin*, the *Karmin*, the *Jnani* or even for the *Sannyasi* (the sage who wishes to attain *Yoga*), the control of the mind is an important factor to be reckoned with; and it was the votaries of this school of philosophy (*Abhyasa Yoga*) that recommended different methods by which the mind could be controlled by man.

Shri Krishna says: *"The mind is hard to restrain and restless; but by practice (abhyasa) and by indifference (vairagya) it may be restrained."* (VI, 35) How? *"When a man, renouncing all thoughts, is not attached to sense objects and actions, then he is said to have attained Yoga."* (VI, 4) So, *"Little by little, let him withdraw, by reason (Buddhi) held in firmness; keeping the mind established in the Self, let him not think of anything."* (VI, 25) The Great Lord then gives other directions with regard to the practice of *Yoga* and emphasizes the fact that these methods are useful for training in one's birth and likely to leave permanent traces on a man's soul in future incarnations, so that in the course of many births he acquires facility in *Yoga*, little by little, and thereafter reaches the Supreme Goal. But of such *Yogis*, Lord Krishna says, *"Who, full of faith, worships Me, with his Inner Self abiding in Me, he is deemed by Me as most devout."* (VI, 47)

So Shri Krishna, in recommending his own Doctrine, combines

all that is good in the different systems of philosophy and adds to each the necessary means of obtaining salvation, which follow as logical inferences from the existence of the Logos and its Light, and its right relationship to man and to the principles that operate in the cosmos. His own Doctrine, as stated above, is enunciated in the following six discourses and the whole teaching is summed up in brief in the Fifteenth Discourse.





Deeds of sacrifice, of mortification, and of charity are not to be abandoned, for they are proper to be performed, and are the purifiers of the wise. But even those works are to be performed after having renounced all selfish interest in them and in their fruit.



APPENDIX

METAPHYSICAL PREMISES OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA

The *Bhagavad Gita*, as it at present stands, is essentially practical in its character and teachings, like the discourses of all religious teachers who have appeared on the scene of the world to give a few practical directions to mankind for their spiritual guidance. Just as the sayings of Christ, the discourses of Buddha, and the preachings of various other philosophers which have come down to us are essentially didactic in character and practical in their tone, so is the *Bhagavad Gita*. But these teachings will not be understood — indeed, in course of time, they are even likely to be misunderstood — unless their basis is constantly kept in view. The *Bhagavad Gita* starts from certain premises, which are not explained at length — they are simply alluded to here and there, and quoted for the purpose of enforcing the doctrine, or as authorities, and Krishna does not go into the details of the philosophy which is their foundation. Still there is a philosophical basis beneath his teachings, and unless that basis is carefully surveyed, we cannot understand the practical applications of the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*, or even test them in the only way in which they can be tested. . . .

This is a very vast subject, a considerable part of which I cannot at all touch; but I shall lay down a few fundamental principles which are more or less to be considered as axiomatic in their character — you may call them postulates for the time being — so many as are absolutely necessary for the purpose of understanding the philosophy of the *Bhagavad Gita*. . . .

The first principle, or rather the first postulate, which I have to lay down is the existence of what is called *Parabrahm*. Of course, there is hardly a system of philosophy which has ever denied the existence of the First Cause. Even the so-called atheists have never denied it. Various creeds have adopted various theories as to the nature of this First Cause. All sectarian disputes and differences have arisen, not from a difference of opinion as to the existence of

the First Cause, but from the differences of the attributes that man's intellect has constantly tried to impose upon it. Is it possible to know anything of the First Cause? No doubt it is possible to know something about it. It is possible to know all about its manifestations, though it is next to impossible for human knowledge to penetrate into its inmost essence and say what it really is in itself. All religious philosophers are agreed that this First Cause is omnipresent and eternal. Further, it is subject to periods of activity and passivity. When cosmic *pralaya* comes, it is inactive, and when evolution commences, it becomes active.

But even the real reason for this activity and passivity is unintelligible to our minds. It is not matter or anything like matter. It is not even consciousness, because all that we know of consciousness is with reference to a definite organism. What consciousness is or will be when entirely separated from *upadhi* is a thing utterly inconceivable to us, not only to us but to any other intelligence which has the notion of self or ego in it, or which has a distinct individualized existence. Again it is not even *Atma*. The word *Atma* is used in various senses in our books. It is constantly associated with the idea of self. But *Parabrahm* is not so associated; so it is not ego, it is not non-ego, nor is it consciousness — or to use a phraseology adopted by our old philosophers, it is not *jnatha*, not *jnanam* and not *jnyam*. Of course, every entity in this cosmos must come under one or the other of these three headings. But *Parabrahm* does not come under any one of them. Nevertheless, it seems to be the one source of which *jnatha*, *jnanam* and *jnyam* are the manifestations or modes of existence. There are a few other aspects which it is necessary for me to bring to your notice, because those aspects are noticed in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

In the case of every objective consciousness, we know that what we call matter or non-ego is after all a mere bundle of attributes. But whether we arrive at our conclusion by logical inference, or whether we derive it from innate consciousness, we always suppose that there is an entity — the real essence of the thing upon which all these attributes are placed — which bears these attributes, as it were, the essence itself being unknown to us.

All Vedantic writers of old have formulated the principle that *Parabrahm* is the one essence of almost everything in the cosmos.

When our old writers said *Sarvam khalvidambramā*, they did not mean that all those attributes which we associate with the idea of non-ego should be considered as *Brahman*, nor did they mean that *Brahman* should be looked upon as the *upadana karanam* in the same way that earth and water are the *upadana karanam* of this pillar. They simply meant that the real thing in the bundle of attributes that our consciousness takes note of, the essence which seems to be the bottom and the foundation of all phenomena, is *Parabrahm*, which, though not itself an object of knowledge, is yet capable of supporting and giving rise to every kind of object and every kind of existence which becomes an object of knowledge.

Now this *Parabrahm*, which exists before all things in the cosmos, is the one essence from which starts into existence a centre of energy, which I shall for the present call the Logos.

This Logos may be called in the language of old writers either *Ishvara* or *Pratyagatma* or *Shabdabrahman*. It is called the *Verbum* or the Word by the Christians, and it is the divine *Christos* who is eternally in the bosom of his father. It is called *Avalokiteshwara* by the Buddhists; at any rate, *Avalokiteshwara* in one sense is the Logos in general, though no doubt in the Chinese doctrine there are also other ideas with which it is associated. In almost every doctrine they have formulated the existence of a centre of spiritual energy which is unborn and eternal, and which exists in a latent condition in the bosom of *Parabrahm* at the time of *pralaya*, and starts as a centre of conscious energy at the time of cosmic activity. It is the first *jnatha* or the ego in the cosmos, and every other ego and every other self, as I shall hereafter point out, is but its reflection or manifestation. In its inmost nature it is not *unknowable* as *Parabrahm*, but it is an object of the highest knowledge that man is capable of acquiring. It is the one great mystery in the cosmos, with reference to which all the initiations and all the systems of philosophy have been devised. . . .

The few propositions that I am going to lay down with reference to this principle are these. It is not material or physical in its constitution, and it is not objective; it is not different in substance, as it were, or in essence, from *Parabrahm*, and yet at the same time it is different from it in having an individualized existence. It exists in a latent condition in the bosom of *Parabrahm* at the time of *pralaya*, just, for instance, as the sense of ego is latent at the

time of *sushupti* or sleep. It is often described in our books as *Satchidanandam*, and by this epithet you must understand that it is *Sat*, and that it is *Chit* and *Anandam*.

It has consciousness and an individuality of its own. I may as well say that it is the only *personal* God, perhaps, that exists in the cosmos. But not to cause any misunderstanding, I must also state that such centres of energy are almost innumerable in the bosom of *Parabrahm*. It must not be supposed that this Logos is but a single centre of energy which is manifested by *Parabrahm*. There are innumerable others. Their number is almost infinite. Perhaps even in this centre of energy called the Logos there may be differences; that is to say, *Parabrahm* can manifest itself as a Logos not only in one particular, definite form, but in various forms. At any rate, whatever may be the variations of form that may exist, it is unnecessary to go minutely into that subject for the purpose of understanding the *Bhagavad Gita*. The Logos is here considered from the standpoint of the Logos in the abstract, and not from that of any particular Logos, in giving all those instructions to Arjuna which are of a general application. The other aspects of the Logos will be better understood if I point out to you the nature of the other principles that start into existence subsequent to the existence of this Logos or *Verbum*.

Of course, this is the first manifestation of *Parabrahm*, the first ego that appears in the cosmos, the beginning of all creation and the end of all evolution. It is the one source of all energy in the cosmos, and the basis of all branches of knowledge, and what is more, it is, as it were, the Tree of Life, because the *Chaitanyam* which animates the whole cosmos springs from it. When once this ego starts into existence as a conscious being having objective consciousness of its own, we shall have to see what the result of this objective consciousness will be with reference to the one absolute and unconditioned existence from which it starts into manifested existence. From its objective standpoint, *Parabrahm* appears to it as *Mulaprakriti*. Please bear this in mind and try to understand my words, for here is the root of the whole difficulty about *Purusha* and *Prakriti* felt by the various writers on Vedantic philosophy. Of course, this *Mulaprakriti* is material to it, as any material object is material to us. This *Mulaprakriti* is no more *Parabrahm* than the bundle of attributes of this pillar is the pillar

itself; *Parabrahm* is an unconditioned and absolute reality, and *Mulaprakriti* is a sort of veil thrown over it. *Parabrahm* by itself cannot be seen as it is. It is seen by the Logos with a veil thrown over it, and that veil is the mighty expanse of cosmic matter. It is the basis of all material manifestations in the cosmos.

Again, *Parabrahm*, after having appeared on the one hand as the ego, and on the other as *Mulaprakriti*, acts as the one energy through the Logos. I shall explain to you what I mean by this acting through the Logos by a simile. Of course, you must not stretch it very far; it is intended simply to help you to form some kind of conception of the Logos. For instance, the sun may be compared with the Logos; light and heat radiate from it; but its heat and energy exist in some unknown condition in space, and are diffused throughout space as visible light and heat through its instrumentality. Such is the view taken of the sun by the ancient philosophers. In the same manner, *Parabrahm* radiates from the Logos, and manifests itself as the light and energy of the Logos. Now we see the first manifestation of *Parabrahm* is a Trinity, the highest Trinity that we are capable of understanding. It consists of *Mulaprakriti*, *Ishvara*, or the Logos, and the conscious energy of the Logos, which is its power and light; and here we have the three principles upon which the whole cosmos seems to be based.

First, we have matter; secondly, we have force — at any rate, the foundation of all the forces in the cosmos; and thirdly, we have the ego or the one root of self, of which every other kind of self is but a manifestation or a reflection. You must bear in mind that there is a clear line of distinction drawn between *Mulaprakriti* (which is, as it were, the veil thrown over *Parabrahm* from the objective point of view of the Logos) and this energy which is radiated from it. Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, as I shall hereafter point out, draws a clear line of distinction between the two; and the importance of the distinction will be seen when you take note of the various misconceptions to which a confusion of the two has given rise in various systems of philosophy. Now bear in mind that this *Mulaprakriti* which is the veil of *Parabrahm* is called *Avyaktam* in Sankhya philosophy. It is also called *Kutashtha* in the *Bhagavad Gita*, simply because it is undifferentiated; even the literal meaning of this word conveys more or less the idea that it is undifferentiated as contrasted with differentiated matter.

This light from the Logos is called *Daiviprakriti* in the *Bhagavad Gita*; it is the gnostic *Sophia* and the Holy Ghost of the Christians. It is a mistake to suppose that Krishna, when considered as a Logos, is a manifestation of that *Avyaktam*, as is generally believed by a certain school of philosophers. He is on the other hand *Parabrahm* manifested; and the Holy Ghost in its first origin emanates through the *Christos*. The reason why it is called the mother of the *Christos* is this. When *Christos* manifests himself in man as his Saviour, it is from the womb, as it were, of this Divine Light that he is born. So it is only when the Logos is manifested in man that he becomes the child of this Light of the Logos — this *maya*; but in the course of cosmic manifestation *Daiviprakriti*, instead of being the mother of the Logos, should, strictly speaking, be called the daughter of the Logos.

To make this clearer, I may point out that this light is symbolized as *Gayatri*. You know *Gayatri* is not *Prakriti*. It is considered as the Light of the Logos, and in order to convey to our minds a definite image, it is represented as the light of the sun. But the sun from which it springs is not the physical sun that we see, but the Central Sun of the light of Wisdom; hence we do not use in our *sandhyavandanam* any symbol representing the physical sun. This light is further called the *Maha Chaitanyam* of the whole cosmos. It is the life of the whole of Nature. It will be observed that what manifests itself as light, as consciousness, and as force, is just one and the same energy. All the various kinds of forces that we know of, all the various modes of consciousness with which we are acquainted, and life manifested in every kind of organism, are but the manifestations of one and the same power, that power being the one that springs from the Logos originally. It will have to be surveyed in all these aspects, because the part that it really plays in the cosmos is one of considerable importance.

As far as we have gone we have arrived at, firstly, *Parabrahm*; secondly, *Ishvara*; thirdly, the Light manifested through *Ishvara*, which is called *Daiviprakriti* in the *Bhagavad Gita*, and lastly that *Mulaprakriti*, which seems to be, as I have said, a veil thrown over *Parabrahm*. Now creation or evolution is commenced by the intellectual energy of the Logos. The universe in its infinite details and with its wonderful laws does not spring into existence by mere chance, nor does it spring into existence merely on account of the

potentialities locked up in *Mulaprakriti*. It comes into existence mainly through the instrumentality of the one source of energy and power existing in the cosmos, which we have named the Logos, and which is the one existing representative of the power and wisdom of *Parabrahm*.

Matter acquires all its attributes and all its powers which, in course of time, give such wonderful results in the course of evolution by the action of this light that emanates from the Logos upon *Mulaprakriti*. From our standpoint, it will be very difficult to conceive what kind of matter that may be which has none of those tendencies which are commonly associated with all kinds of matter, and which only acquires all the various properties manifested by it on receiving, as it were, this light and energy from the Logos. This Light of the Logos is the link, so to speak, between objective matter and the subjective thought of *Ishvara*. It is called in several Buddhist books *Fohat*. It is the one instrument with which the Logos works.

What springs up in the Logos at first is simply an image, a conception of what it is to be in the cosmos. This light or energy catches the image and impresses it upon the cosmic matter which is already manifested. Thus spring into existence all the manifested solar systems. Of course, the four principles we have enumerated are eternal, and are common to the whole cosmos. There is not a place in the whole cosmos where these four energies are absent; and these are the elements of the fourfold classification that I have adopted in dealing with the principles of the mighty cosmos itself.

Conceive this manifested solar system in all its principles and in its totality to constitute the *sthula sharira* of the whole cosmos. Look on this light which emanates from the Logos as corresponding to the *sukshma sharira* of the cosmos. Conceive further that this Logos, which is the one germ from which the whole cosmos springs — which contains the image of the universe — stands in the position of the *karana sharira* of the cosmos, existing as it does before the cosmos comes into existence. And lastly conceive that *Parabrahm* bears the same relation to the Logos as our *Atma* does to our *karana sharira*.

These, it must be remembered, are the four general principles of the infinite cosmos, not of the solar system. These principles must not be confounded with those enumerated in dealing with the

meaning of *Pranava* in Vedantic philosophy and the Upanishads. In one sense *Pranava* represents the macrocosm and in another sense the microcosm. From one point of view *Pranava* is also intended to mean the infinite cosmos itself, but it is not in that light that it is generally explained in our Vedantic books, and it will not be necessary for me to explain this aspect of *Pranava*. With reference to this subject I may, however, allude to one other point, which explains the reason why *Ishvara* is called *Verbum* or *Logos*, why in fact it is called *Shabdabrahman*. The explanation I am going to give you will appear thoroughly mystical. But if mystical it has a tremendous significance when properly understood. Our old writers said that *Vach* is of four kinds. These are called *para*, *pasyanti*, *madhyama*, *vaikhari*. This statement you will find in the *Rig Veda* itself and in several of the Upanishads.

Vaikhari Vach is what we utter. Every kind of *vaikhari Vach* exists in its *madhyama*, further in its *pasyanti*, and ultimately in its *para* form. The reason why this *Pranava* is called *Vach* is this, that these four principles of the great cosmos correspond to these four forms of *Vach*. Now the whole manifested solar system exists in its *sukshma* form in this light or energy of the *Logos*, because its image is caught up and transferred to cosmic matter, and again the whole cosmos must necessarily exist in the one source of energy from which this light emanates. The whole cosmos in its objective form is *vaikhari Vach*, the Light of the *Logos* is the *madhyama* form, the *Logos* itself the *pasyanti* form, and *Parabrahm* the *para* aspect of that *Vach*. It is by the light of this explanation that we must try to understand certain statements made by various philosophers to the effect that the manifested cosmos is the *Verbum* manifested as cosmos.

These four principles bear the same relationship to one another as do these four conditions or manifestations of *Vach*.

I shall now proceed to an examination of the principles that constitute the solar system itself. Here I find it useful to refer to the explanations generally given with reference to *Pranava* and the meaning of its *matras*. *Pranava* is intended to represent man and also the manifested cosmos, the four principles in the one corresponding to the four in the other. The four principles in the manifested cosmos may be enumerated in this order. First, *Vishvanara*. Now this *Vishvanara* is not to be looked upon as

merely the manifested objective world, but as the one physical basis from which the whole objective world starts into existence. Beyond this and next to this is what is called *Hiranyagarbha*. This again is not to be confounded with the astral world, but must be looked upon as the basis of the astral world, bearing the same relationship to the astral world as *Vishvanara* bears to the objective world. Next to this there is what is now and then called *Ishvara*; but as this word is likely to mislead, I shall not call it *Ishvara*, but by another name also sanctioned by usage—*Sutratma*. And beyond these three, it is generally stated, there is *Parabrahm*.

As regards this fourth principle, differences of opinion have sprung up, and from these differences any amount of difficulty has arisen. For this principle we ought to have, as we have for the cosmos, some principle or entity out of which the other three principles start into existence and which exist in it and by reason of it. If such be the case, no doubt we ought to accept the *Avyaktam* of the Sankhyas as this fourth principle. This *Avyaktam* is the *Mulaprakriti* which I have already explained as the *veil* of *Parabrahm* considered from the objective standpoint of the Logos, and this is the view adopted by the majority of the Sankhyas.

Into the details of the evolution of the solar system itself it is not necessary for me to enter. You may gather some idea as to the way in which the various elements start into existence from these three principles into which *Mulaprakriti* is differentiated by examining the lecture delivered by Professor Crookes a short time ago upon the so-called elements of modern chemistry. This lecture will at least give you some idea of the way in which the so-called elements spring from *Vishvanara*, the most objective of these three principles, which seems to stand in the place of the protyle mentioned in that lecture. Except in a few particulars, this lecture seems to give the outlines of the theory of physical evolution on the plane of *Vishvanara* and is, as far as I know, the nearest approach made by modern investigators to the real occult theory on the subject.

These principles, in themselves, are so far beyond our common experience as to become objects of merely theoretical conception and inference rather than objects of practical knowledge. Of

course, if it is so difficult for us to understand these different principles as they exist in Nature, it will be still more difficult for us to form any definite idea as to their basis. But at any rate, the evolution and the work of differentiation of these principles is a matter which appertains more properly to the science of physics than to the science of spiritual ethics, and the fundamental principles that I have laid down will suffice for our present purpose. You must conceive, without my going through the whole process of evolution, that out of these three principles, having as their one foundation *Mulaprakriti*, the whole manifested solar system with all the various objects in it has started into being. Bear in mind also that the one energy which works out the whole process of evolution is that Light of the Logos which is diffused through all these principles and all their manifestations. It is the one Light that starts with a certain definite impulse communicated by the intellectual energy of the Logos and works out the whole programme from the commencement to the end of evolution.

If we begin our examination from the lowest organisms, it will be seen that this One Life is, as it were, undifferentiated. Now when we take, for instance, the mineral kingdom, or all those objects in the cosmos which we cannot, strictly speaking, call living organisms, we find this Light undifferentiated. In the course of time when we reach plant life it becomes differentiated to a considerable extent, and organisms are formed which tend more and more towards differentiation. And when we reach animal life, we find that the differentiation is more complete, and this Light moreover manifests itself as consciousness. It must not be supposed that consciousness is a sort of independent entity created by this Light; it is a mode or a manifestation of the Light itself, which is Life. By the time we reach man, this Light becomes differentiated and forms that centre or ego that gives rise to all the mental and physical progress that we see in the process of cosmic evolution. This differentiation results in the first instance from the environment of particular organisms. The various actions evoked in a given organism and those which it evokes in other organisms or in its surroundings, and the actions which it generates in itself at that stage, can hardly be called *Karma*. Still its life and actions may perhaps have a certain effect in determining the future manifestations of that life-energy which is acting in it. By the time

we reach man, this One Light becomes differentiated into certain monads, and hence individuality is fixed.

As individuality is rendered more and more definite, and becomes more and more differentiated from other individualities by man's own surroundings and the intellectual and moral impulses he generates and the effect of his own *karma*, the principles of which he is composed become more defined. There are four principles in man. First, there is the physical body, about which we need not go into details, as they appertain more to the field of enquiry of the physiologist than to that of the religious investigator. No doubt certain branches of physiology do become matters of considerable importance in dealing with certain subjects connected with Yoga philosophy; but we need not discuss those questions at present.

Next there is the *sukshma sharira*. This bears to the physical body the same relationship which the astral world bears to the objective plane of the solar system. It is sometimes called *kamarupa* in our theosophical dissertations. This unfortunate expression has given rise also to a misconception that the principle called *kama* represents this astral body itself, and is transformed into it. But it is not so. It is composed of elements of quite a different nature. Its senses are not so differentiated and localized as in the physical body, and, being composed of finer materials, its powers of action and thought are considerably greater than those found in the physical organism. *Karana sharira* can only be conceived as a centre of *prajna* — a centre of force or energy into which the third principle (or *sutratma*) of the cosmos was differentiated by reason of the same impulse which has brought about the differentiation of all these cosmic principles. And now the question is, what is it that completes this trinity and makes it a quaternary?* Of course, this is the Light of the Logos. As I have already said, it is a sort of light that permeates every kind of organism, and so in this trinity it is manifested in every one of the *upadhis* as the real *jiva* or the Ego of man.

Now, in order to enable you to have a clear conception of the

* The reflected image of the *Logos* formed by the action of this light of *karana sharira* may be considered as the fourth principle in man and it has been so considered by certain philosophers. But in reality the real entity is the Light itself and not the reflected image.

matter, I shall express my ideas in figurative language. Suppose, for instance, we compare the Logos itself to the sun. Suppose I take a clear mirror in my hand, catch a reflection of the sun, make the rays reflect from the surface of the mirror — say upon a polished metallic plate — and make the rays which are reflected in their turn from the plate fall upon a wall. Now we have three images, one being clearer than the other, and one being more resplendent than the other. I can compare the clear mirror to *karana sharira*, the metallic plate to the astral body and the wall to the physical body. In each case a definite *bimbam* is formed, and that *bimbam* or reflected image is for the time being considered as the self. The *bimbam* formed on the astral body gives rise to the idea of self in it when considered apart from the physical body; the *bimbam* formed in the *karana sharira* gives rise to the most prominent form of individuality that man possesses. You will further see that these various *bimbams* are not of the same lustre.

The lustre of this *bimbam* you may compare to man's knowledge, and it grows feebler and feebler as the reflection is transferred from a clear *upadhi* to one less clear, and so on till you get to the physical body. Our knowledge depends mainly on the condition of the *upadhi*, and you will also observe that just as the image of the sun on a clear surface of water may be disturbed and rendered invisible by the motion of the water itself, so by a man's passions and emotions he may render the image of his true self disturbed and distorted in its appearance, and even make the image so indistinct as to be altogether unable to perceive its light.

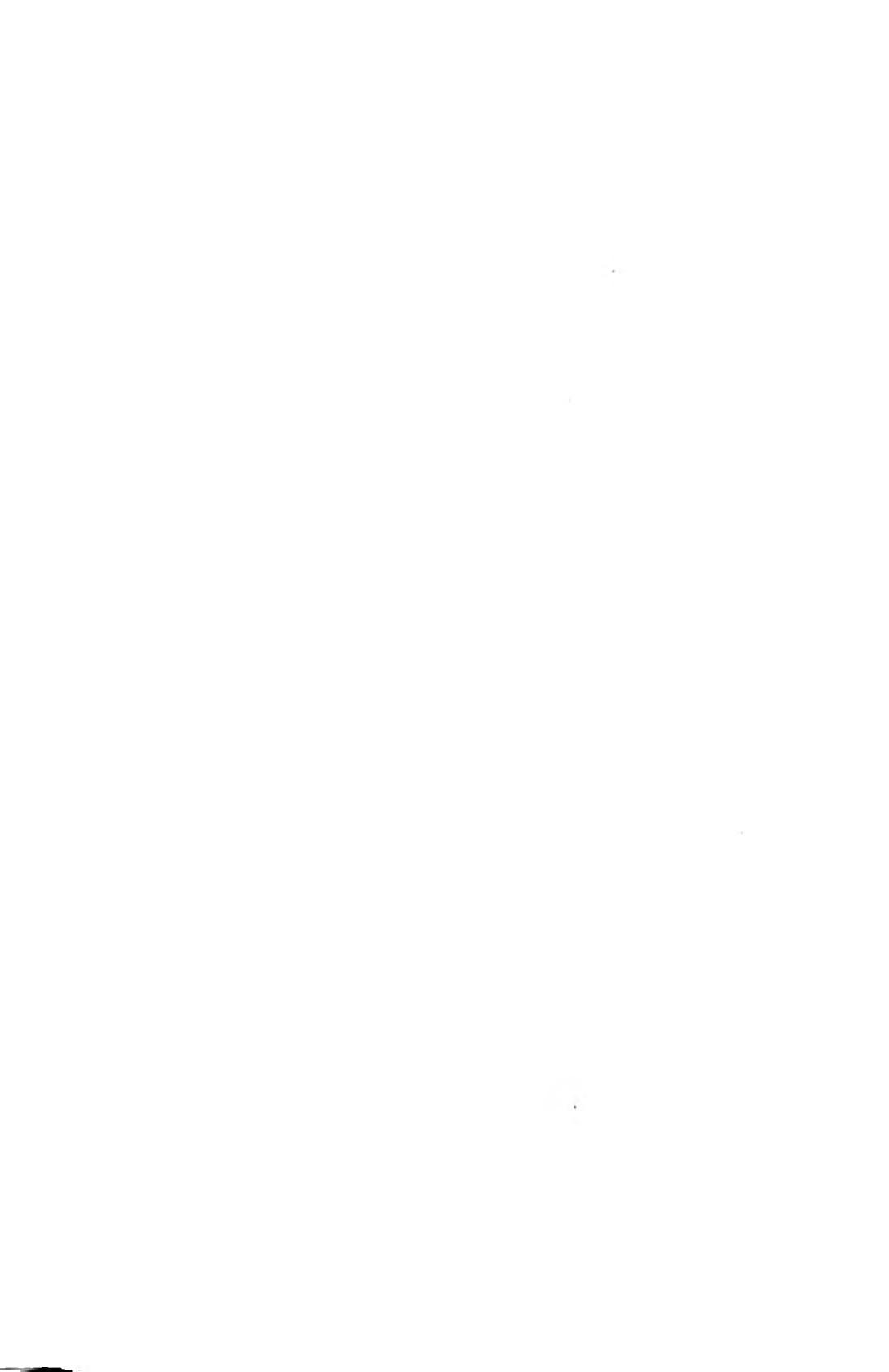
You will further see that this idea of self is a delusive one. Almost every great writer on Vedantic philosophy, as also both Buddha and Shankaracharya, have distinctly alleged that it is a delusive idea. You must not suppose that these great men said that the idea of self was delusive for the same reason which led John Stuart Mill to suppose that the idea of self is manufactured from a concatenation of series of mental states. It is not a manufactured idea, as it were, not a secondary idea which has arisen from any series of mental states. It is said to be delusive, as I have been trying to explain, because the real self is the Logos itself, and what is generally considered as the ego is but its reflection. If you say, however, that a reflected image cannot act as an individual being,

I have simply to remind you that my simile cannot be carried very far.

We find that each distinct image can form a separate centre. You will see in what difficulty it will land us if you deny this, and hold the self to be a separate entity in itself. If so, while I am in my objective state of consciousness, my ego is something existing as a real entity in the physical body itself. How is it possible to transfer the same to the astral body? Then, again, it has also to be transferred to the *karana sharira*. We shall find a still greater difficulty in transferring this entity to the Logos itself, and you may depend upon it that unless a man's individuality or ego can be transferred to the Logos, immortality is only a name. In certain peculiar cases it will be very difficult to account for a large number of phenomena on the basis that this self is some kind of centre of energy or some existing monad transferred from *upadhi* to *upadhi*.

In the opinion of the Vedantists, and, as I shall hereafter point out, in the opinion of Krishna also, man is a quaternary. He has first the physical body or *sthula sharira*, secondly the astral body or *sukshma sharira*, thirdly the seat of his higher individuality, the *karana sharira*, and fourthly and lastly, his *Atma*. There is no doubt a difference of opinion as to the exact nature of the fourth principle, as I have already said, which has given rise to various misconceptions. Now, for instance, according to some followers of the Sankhya philosophy, at any rate those who are called *nireswara sankhyas*, man has these three principles, with their *Avyaktam* to complete the quaternary. This *Avyaktam* is *Mulaprakriti*, or rather *Parabrahm* manifested in *Mulaprakriti* as its *upadhi*. In this view *Parabrahm* is really the fourth principle, the highest principle in man; and the other three principles simply exist in it and by reason of it. That is to say, this *Avyaktam* is the one principle which is the root of all self, which becomes differentiated in the course of evolution, or rather which appears to be differentiated in the various organisms, which subsists in every kind of *upadhi*, and which is the real spiritual entity which a man has to reach.





PANDIT BHAVANI SHANKAR

With deep regret we have to chronicle the passing away of our good friend Pandit Bhavani Shankar on the Full Moon day of the Hindu month of Ashada — the 4th of July. Born in August 1859, he was seventy-seven years of age, active to the last in the regular performance of his Tapas and ever ready to help and instruct his fellow men. H.P. Blavatsky landed in Bombay in February 1879 and not long after Bhavani Shankar came, a young man of twenty, and put himself under her guidance. . . . After the departure of H.P. Blavatsky and Damodar Mavalankar from India in 1885, he took earnestly to the study of the *Gita* which became his textbook for Theosophical exposition. Up and down the vast peninsula Bhavani Shankar travelled from 1891-1909. . . . After the formation of the United Lodge of Theosophists in Bombay he very soon recognized that real Theosophical Work was being carried on and under its auspices gave a series of talks in October 1931, September 1932 and September 1933. He participated in White Lotus Day meetings of the Bombay Lodge — the last occasion was 1934. Soon after he went north and never returned to this city. The Lodge has lost a good and valued friend in the passing away of this great Devotee.

August 1936
Bombay

The Theosophical Movement

GLOSSARY

Abhagna. Literally, unbreakable, of permanent value; a term applied to certain poetical compositions of Divine Wisdom by the saints of Maharashtra. 18

Abhimana. Thirst for individual power and glory; pride. 19

Abhyasa. Practice; systematic exercise in meditation. 13, 14, 47, 55, 86

Abhyasa Yoga. Yoga of meditation (see *Abhyasa* and *Yoga*). 86

Acharya. Spiritual teacher, guru; a name generally given to Initiates, meaning 'Master'. 8, 66

Achyuta. That which is not subject to change or fall; the opposite of *chyuta*, 'fallen'. A title of Vishnu. 12

Adarshanam. Invisible. 9

Adharma. Unrighteousness, vice; the opposite of *Dharma*. 10, 25, 70

Adhibhuta. Physical region. The First Being; also primordial element. *Adhibhuta* is a title of Vishnu, the 'first Element' containing all elements, the unfathomable Deity. 15, 54

Adhidaiva. Substratum of all *devatas*. 17, 19, 54

Adhiyajna. Region of sacrifice. 20, 54

Adhyasa. Confounding the attributes of the one with those of the other. 63

Adhyatma. *Pratyagatma* or Logos; individual or universal living soul. 54

Advaitam. Unity (see *Shantam*). 14

Agneya chakra. The plexus at the base of the nose. 19

Agni. The god of fire in the Vedas; the oldest and the most revered of gods in India. He is one of the three great deities — Agni, Vayu and Surya — and also all the three, as he is the triple aspect of fire: in heaven as the Sun; in the atmosphere or

air (Vayu) as lightning; on earth as ordinary fire. Agni belonged to the earlier Vedic *Trimurti* before Vishnu was given a place of honour. 75

Agnihotra. The act of offering oblation to Agni. 54

Aham-bhava. Egoism and its surrender. 77, 80

Ahankara. The sense of 'I'-ness, the false or artificial 'I'; the conception of 'I', self-consciousness or self-identity; the 'I', the egotistical and mayavic principle in man, due to our ignorance which separates our 'I' from the Universal One Self. Personality, egoism. 10, 21, 31, 33, 48, 58, 59, 62, 64, 72, 73

Aitareya Upanishad. The name of an Upanishad of the *Rig Veda*

Ajnana. Non-knowledge; absence of knowledge rather than 'ignorance' as generally translated. An *ajnani* means a 'profane' (see *Avidya*). 63

Akasha. The subtle, supersensuous spiritual essence which pervades all space; the primordial substance erroneously identified with Ether (see *Mulaprakriti*). 20, 44, 45, 68, 76

Akshara(m). Imperishable; Supreme Deity; literally, indestructible, ever perfect. 57, 77

Akshauhinis. A military unit. 8

Amrita. The ambrosial drink or food of the gods; the food giving immortality; the elixir of life churned out of the Ocean of Milk. 39

Amsa. A portion; fragment. 72

Anadi. Having no beginning. 68

Anahata chakra. The plexus above the cavity of the heart. 76

Ananda. Bliss, joy, felicity, happiness. 48, 61

Anandamaya kosha. The illusive sheath of bliss; the mayavic or illusory form; the appearance of that which is formless. 61

Ananya bhakti. Exclusive devotion to *Ishvara*, the Supreme Self. 53

Anatma. Non-*Atma*. 41

Annamaya kosha. A Vedantic term; the same as *sthula sharira* or the physical body. It is the first 'sheath' of the five sheaths

accepted by the Vedantins. 60, 61

Antaskarana. The bridge between the lower mind (head) and the higher mind (heart), between the divine Ego and the personal soul of man. 59, 66

Anumantha. One who consents or decides. 65

Apana. Inspirational breath; a practice in *Yoga*. *Prana* and *apana* are the expirational and the inspirational breaths. It is called 'vital wind' in *Anugita*. 75

Aparokshanubhuti. Literally, direct perception. One of the treatises of Shankaracharya. 19

Apastamba Dharma Sutra. *Apastamba* is a branch of *Krishna Yajur Veda*. Literally, *Dharma Sutra* belonging to that branch

Archana. Self-forgetfulness in meditation; the fifth of nine stages of devotion (see *Nava Vidha Bhakti*). 11

Archaradi Marga. Path of Light; self-conscious path. 53

Arjuna. Literally, the white. The third of the five brothers Pandu or the reputed sons of Indra (esoterically, the same as Orpheus). A disciple of Krishna, who visited him and married Subhadra, his sister, besides many other wives, according to the allegory. During the fratricidal war between the Kauravas and the Pandavas, Krishna instructed him in the highest philosophy while serving as his charioteer. 7, 8, 11, 12, 67, 72, 81

Artharthi. One desirous of the wealth of spiritual wisdom (see *Shat sampatti*). 53

Asat. A philosophical term meaning non-being, the incomprehensible nothingness; the unreal, or *prakriti*, objective Nature regarded as an illusion. 57

Ashramas. (Four) stages of life. 10

Ashwatha. The Bo-tree; the Tree of Knowledge, *ficus religiosa*. 69

Atma(n). The Universal Spirit, the divine Monad, the seventh Principle, so-called, in the septenary constitution of man; the Supreme Soul. 8, 41, 50, 59, 60, 62, 65, 66, 68, 74, 86

Atmanivedana. State of self-surrender devoid of any duality or sense of separateness. The ninth of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*), in which the devotee disappears and

- Bhagavan** is all in all. 12
- Avastha.** States of consciousness. 59
- Avatar(a).** Divine incarnation; the descent of a god or some exalted Being, who has progressed beyond the necessity of rebirths, into the body of a simple mortal. Krishna was an Avatar of Vishnu. 7, 13, 24, 25, 51
- Avidya.** Opposed to *vidya*, knowledge. Ignorance which proceeds from, and is produced by, the illusion of the senses. 41, 43, 56, 61, 63, 64, 70
- Avyakta(m).** The unrevealed cause; indiscrete or undifferentiated; the opposite of *vyakta*, the differentiated. The former is used of the unmanifested, and the latter of the manifested Deity, or of *Brahman* and *Brahmā*. 49, 50, 58, 77, 81, 82
- Avyaktamurti.** The Unknowable, *Parabrahm*, the First Cause or the Causeless Cause. It becomes knowable only when manifesting as Logos or *Ishvara* (see *Brahma*). 48
- Balarama.** Shri Krishna's elder brother. 42, 43
- Bhagavad Gita.** Literally, the Lord's Song. A portion in the *Bhisma Parva* of the *Mahabharata*, the great epic poem of India. It contains a dialogue wherein Krishna and Arjuna have a discussion upon the highest spiritual philosophy. The work is pre-eminently esoteric. 7, 46, 47, 81
- Bhagavan.** Literally, blessed Lord; Shri Krishna
- Bhagavata (Shrimad).** One of the Puranas giving the events of the life of Shri Krishna
- Bhakta.** Devotee. 11, 12, 22
- Bhakti.** Devotion. 14, 52
- Bharta.** Supporter. 65
- Bhavas.** (Five) states of being, pertaining severally to the body, senses, *Manas*, *Buddhi* and 'I'-ness. 77, 80
- Bhaya.** Fear. 26, 27
- Bhokta.** Enjoyer. 64, 65
- Bhuloka.** Physical world. 49

Bhutas. Sensible matter. 57

Bhuta Yajna. Service or sacrifice by beneficent thoughts and actions to all living beings. 71, 78, 83

Bhuvahloka. Astral world. 49

Bimba(m). Reflection. 59

Brahma(n). The student must distinguish between *Brahman* the neuter, and *Brahmā*, the male creator of the Indian pantheon. The former, *Brahman*, is the impersonal, supreme and incognizable principle of the universe from the essence of which all emanates and into which all returns, which is incorporeal, immaterial, unborn, eternal, beginningless and endless. It is all-pervading, animating the highest god as well as the smallest mineral atom. *Brahmā*, on the other hand, the male and the alleged creator, exists periodically in his manifestation only, and then again goes into *pralaya*, i.e., disappears (see *Avyaktamurti*). 16, 22, 23, 36, 38, 39, 42, 45, 48, 54, 57, 61, 67-69, 71, 72, 84-86

Brahmāloka. Region of *Brahmā*. 15, 26, 54

Brahmanda. Macrocosm. 43, 76

Brahmarandhra. A spot on the crown of the head connected by *sushumna*, a cord in the spinal column, with the heart. A mystical term. 19

Brahmarishis. The Brahminical *Rishis* (see *Rishi*). 10

Brahma Sutras. A treatise by Veda Vyasa on Vedanta philosophy

Brahma Vidya. Spiritual wisdom, the esoteric science about the two *Brahmas* and their true nature (see *Brahma*). 13, 15, 24, 40, 57

Brahma Yajna. Study of the Vedas and other scriptures. 70, 78, 83

Brahmin (Brahmana). The highest of the four castes in India. 30, 31

Buddhi. Universal Soul or Mind. The spiritual Soul in man (the sixth principle), the vehicle of *Atma*, esoterically the seventh. 17-19, 33, 48, 55, 58, 59, 64, 79, 86

Buddhi-bhava. By cogitation on eternal truths, the devotee attains knowledge and transmits it to others. 77, 80

- Buddhi Yoga.** Yoga of right knowledge; spiritual discernment, mental devotion. 8, 65, 81
- Chaitanya(m).** Supreme Intelligence, the all-resplendent Light of *Ishvara*. 60, 66, 73, 78, 79, 82
- Chakra(m).** Plexus; nerve centre. 17, 18
- Chandrayana (Vrita).** One of the (ritualistic) austerities. 54
- Chela.** Disciple. 19
- Chidagnikunda.** The heart, where the divine fire dwells and in which *ahankara*, 'I'-ness, is burnt by the Initiates to become *Jivanmuktas*. 72
- Chit.** Abstract consciousness. 48, 49
- Chitshakti.** The power that generates thought. 49
- Daivi Yajna (Deva Yajna).** Sacrifice to obtain the grace of the divine hierarchy. 70, 78, 83
- Daiviprakriti.** Light of the Logos; Light of *Ishvara*; Divine Light; *Maha Chaitanya* of the whole cosmos; primordial, homogeneous light (see *Chaitanya*). 17, 49-51, 60, 62, 63, 64, 67, 73, 75, 82, 85
- Dakshinamurti Stotra.** One of the compositions of Shankaracharya
- Dama.** Control of the five organs of knowledge and five organs of action. 65
- Dasoham.** "I am the servant." 62
- Dasya.** Servant-Master relationship. The seventh of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*). 11
- Deha-bhava.** Performing bodily actions as a *yajna* for the magnetic purification of the body. 77
- Devarishis.** Literally, God's *Rishis*; the divine or godlike saints, those sages who attain a fully divine nature on earth. 10
- Devas (devatas).** Hierarchies of cosmic intelligences; gods, 'resplendent' deities. 17, 19, 33, 38, 53, 54, 77, 82
- Devi.** Goddess. Short form of *Daiviprakriti*. 17
- Dharma.** Religion; Eternal Law. 7, 25, 31, 43, 48, 53, 54, 70

- Dharmacharyas*. Instructors of *Dharma*. 8
- Dhi-guha*. Cave of the intellect; the space between the brows. 17
- Dhuma Marga*. Path of Smoke followed by *Karma Yogis*, who perform different kinds of sacrifices. 54
- Dhyana*. Literally, contemplation; meditation; a state of abstraction which carries the ascetic far above the planes of sensuous perception and the material world. 53
- Dukha*. Sorrow. 64, 74
- Dvadashakshari Abhagna*. Twelve-syllabled *abhagna*
- Gachhatiti*. Going; evanescent; perishable. 9
- Ganapati*. God of wisdom; an elephant-headed god; son of Shiva. Literally, lord of hierarchies. 34
- Gandha*. Smell. 64
- Ganesh*. Same as *Ganapati*. 34
- Ganga*. The Ganges; the principal sacred river of India. 46
- Gauranga*. Chaitanya Maha Prabhu, sage of Bengal. 80
- Gayatri*. A most sacred verse addressed to the Sun, in the *Rig Veda*, which the Brahmins have to repeat mentally every morning and evening during their devotions. 49, 50
- Ghrana*. To smell the fragrance of flowers magnetized by the Light of *Ishvara*. 80
- Gita*. See *Bhagavad Gita*
- Gita Shastra*. Science of the *Bhagavad Gita*
- Gopas*. Cowherds. 42
- Gorakh*. Gorakshnatha, a great *Yogi* of the *Hatha Yoga* school. 19
- Guna(s)*. *Sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; a combination of these three *gunas*. 29, 30, 52, 53, 57, 68-70, 74, 81, 82
- Guru (Gurudeva)*. Master of Wisdom. 13, 14, 16, 17, 40-43, 61, 65, 71, 72, 77, 84, 85
- Guruparampara*. The Hierarchy and Brotherhood of Gurus, Preceptors and Teachers of Wisdom, at whose apex is Shiva,

the Maha-Yogi, the 'great ascetic', also called Mahadeva, the 'Great God'. 85

Hamsa (Hansa). A bird (swan) believed to possess the power of separating pure milk from a mixture of milk and water. 20

Hasta. Hand. 80

Hatha Yogi. Practitioner of the lower form of *Yoga*, in which physical means for purposes of spiritual development are used. The opposite of *Raja Yogi*. 18

Hiranyagarbha. The radiant or golden egg or womb. Esoterically, the luminous 'fire mist' or ethereal stuff from which the universe was formed. 49

Hiranyagarbha Brahmā. Brahmā, who, "having emerged out of his golden egg (*Hiranyagarbha*), fashions the material world (being simply the fertilizing and creative force in Nature)". Thereafter (i.e., following Brahmā's Day, a period of 2,160,000,000 years), "the worlds being destroyed in turn, by fire and water, he vanishes with objective nature, and then comes Brahmā's Night". 10

Hiranyamaya kosha. The shining, golden, *Hiranyamaya* body of the Great Ones. 61

Hiranyamaya matter. Golden radiant matter from which the *karana sharira* is built. 73

Hridaya. The heart. 14, 76

Ihaloka paraloka vairagya. Indifference to the fruits of action in this world and the next world (*svarga*). 65

Ikshvaku. The progenitor of the solar tribe (the *Surya Vansa*) in India and the son of Vaivasvat Manu, the progenitor of the present human race. 10

Indra. The god of the firmament, the king of sidereal gods; a Vedic deity. 75

Indriya-bhava. Striving at spiritual perception, through the senses, of the one *Chaitanya* which ensues when the personality, which creates a barrier between ourselves and the external world, is destroyed. 77, 78

- Indriyas.** The ten external agents; the five senses which are used for perception are called *Jnana-indriyas*, and the five used for action *Karma-indriyas*. 57, 59, 64
- Ishtadeva.** The favourite deity worshipped by the devotee. 13, 14, 16
- Ishvara.** The 'Lord' or the personal god — the Divine Spirit in man. Literally, sovereign (independent) existence. A title given to Shiva and other gods in India. Shiva is also called *Ishvaradeva*, or sovereign *Deva*
- Itchashakti.** The power of the will. 21
- Itihasa.** History; a record of events that actually happened. 7
- Jagrat (jagrat avastha).** Waking state among the three states of consciousness, the other two being *svapna* and *sushupti*. 59, 60
- Janaka.** One of the Kings of Mithila of the Solar race. He was a great royal Sage and lived twenty generations before Janaka, the father of Sita, who was King of Videha. 35
- Japa Yajna (japam).** Silent repetition of sacred texts. 78, 84
- Jati.** Genus. 57
- Jignasu.** Enquirer. 53
- Jiva.** The Monad or *Atma-Buddhi*; Life as the Absolute. 37, 51
- Jivanmukta.** An Adept or Yogi who has reached the ultimate state of holiness and separated himself from matter; a Mahatma, or *Nirvaneer*, a 'dweller in bliss' and emancipation. Virtually one who has reached *Nirvana* during life. 10, 13, 21-25, 28, 40, 43, 51, 54, 59, 61, 72, 84, 85
- Jivanmukti.** State of the *Jivanmukta*. 13
- Jivatma(n).** The One Universal Life, generally; but also the Divine Spirit in man. 7, 9, 13, 20, 21, 24, 27, 48, 58, 64, 68, 72-74, 80, 81
- Jnana.** Occult Wisdom; Knowledge. 27, 47, 56, 61, 84, 85
- Jnana Marga.** The path of Occult Wisdom. 13, 14, 84
- Jnanashakti.** Ability to see the past and future. 21
- Jnana Yajna.** Wisdom-sacrifice. 71
- Jnana Yoga.** One of the schools of philosophy. 7, 9, 47

Jnanam. Consciousness. 57

Jnanendriyas. See *Indriyas*. 59

Jnaneshvara. A young *Yogin*; author of the mystical work, *Dnyaneshwari*, a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*. 18

Jnani. Teacher of *Shastra*. One who knows the real nature of Bhagavan. 22, 23, 53, 54, 61, 86

Jnatha. Ego; knower. 47, 57

Jneyam. Non-ego; that which is to be realized. 48, 57

Jyoti. Light of Lights. 57

Kalpa. The period of a mundane revolution, generally a cycle of time, but usually it represents a Day and Night of Brahmā. 44

Kama. Evil desire, lust, volition; the cleaving to existence. *Kama* is generally identified with *Mara*, the tempter. 8, 64, 70, 71

Karana. Cause, metaphysically. 59, 64, 68, 73, 82

Karanas. Senses — *Mahat* (or *Manas*), *ahankara* and *pancha tanmatras*. 64

Karana sharira. The Hall of Wisdom. Causal body, corresponding to *Buddhi* and the higher *Manas*, or Spiritual Soul. 14-16, 20, 26, 27, 49, 51, 52, 59-62, 64, 65, 73, 74, 81, 82

Karana sharira self. The higher man. 26, 67

Karma. Physically, action; metaphysically, the law of retribution, the law of cause and effect or ethical causation. 9, 20, 21, 30, 32, 33, 35, 39, 44, 45, 47, 52, 54, 55, 58, 62, 64, 67, 68, 70, 71, 73, 74, 76, 82-86

Karma Marga. Disinterested performance of religious and secular duties. 13, 14

Karma sannyasa. Renunciation of action; non-performance of the duties of life (see *Sannyasa* and *Karma Yoga*). 85

Karma Yajna. Attachment to the fruits of action. 70

Karma Yoga. *Yoga* by renunciation of the fruits of action. 9, 47, 82, 85

Karma Yogi(n). Person engaged in *Karma Yoga*; the third of four classes of devotees. 38, 54, 67, 82, 83

- Karmendriyas.* See *Indriyas.* 59
- Karmin.* Performer of *Agnihotra* (offering oblations into fire), etc. 54, 56, 86
- Karta.* The doer. 45, 53
- Karthikeya Swami.* The Indian god of war, son of Shiva. He is also the personification of the power of Logos. The planet Mars. He is a very occult personage. 33
- Karyas.* Ten *indriyas*, *Manas* and five sense objects (see *Karanas*). 64
- Katha Upanishad.* An Upanishad dealing principally with the philosophy of life after death
- Kirtana.* Singing devotional songs together with kindred souls; the second of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*). 11, 79
- Kosha.* Sheath; body. 61, 62
- Krishna (Shri).* The eighth Avatar of Vishnu
- Kriya.* The deed. 45, 57
- Kriyashakti.* The mysterious power of thought which enables an individual to produce external, perceptible and phenomenal results by its own inherent energy; one of the seven forces of Nature; creative potency of the *siddhis* (powers) of the full *Yogis*. 21
- Krodha.* Anger, hatred, aversion. 8, 26, 27, 70, 71
- Ksharam.* Perishable (see *Akshara*). 77
- Kshatriyas.* The second of the four castes into which the Hindus were originally divided. 10, 30, 31
- Kshetra.* The human body, the temple of the divine man. 52, 56-59, 61, 63, 67-69
- Kshetrajna.* Embodied Spirit; the conscious Ego in its highest manifestations; the reincarnating principle; the 'Lord' in us. 52, 56-60, 63, 67-69
- Kundalini (Kundalinishakti).* The power of life; one of the forces of Nature; that power that generates a certain light in those who sit for spiritual and clairvoyant development. It is a power

known only to those who practise concentration and *Yoga*. 17-19, 21, 76

Kunti. The wife of Pandu and the mother of the Pandavas

Kurukshetra. The battlefield near Delhi where the *Mahabharata* war was fought and where the Lord gave discourses of *Bhagavad Gita* to Arjuna. 21

Kurus (Kauravas). The foes of the Pandavas in the *Bhagavad Gita*, on the plain of *Kurukshetra*

Kutashtha. Undifferentiated *Prakriti*. It is the illusion power of the Lord, the germ from which the perishable being takes its birth. 77

Kutichaka. One who resides in a humble hut of leaves. 19

Laya(m). Absorption. 9, 50

Loka. A region or circumscribed place. In metaphysics a world or sphere or plane. The Puranas in India speak of seven and fourteen *lokas*, above and below our earth, of heavens and hells. 16

Lokasangraha. For the welfare of the world; for the benefit of mankind. 73

Machendra. Matsyendranath, a great *Hatha Yogin*. 19

Madhyama Adhikaran. The second of four classes of devotees, or claimants to Esoteric Wisdom; those to whom *Sankhya Yoga* appeals come under this category. 66

Mahabharata. The celebrated epic poem of India; literally, the great war. 7

Mahabhutas. The five great *tanmatras*, i.e., earth, fire, air, water and ether. 58

Maha Chaitanya(m). *Daiviprakriti*, fourth life-wave; the sole essence of the consciousness of the Self (see *Turiya Chaitanyam*). 49, 50, 60

Mahadeva. Literally, Great God; a title of Shiva. 33

Mahasmashana. The great burning-ground where *ahankara* is

burnt to ashes and a full-blown Adept, a *Jivanmukta*, emerges. 21, 62

Mahasushupti. The neutral barrier which the Initiate has to overcome before qualifying for the fourth initiation. When isolated from its three bodies, the *Jivatma* passes into *Mahasushupti*, the neutral barrier, the great *Sunyam*, which strikes terror even in the philosopher who may have perfected his individuality, and which may be overcome only through devotion to Bhagavan. It is also called the *Mahasmashana*, the great cremation ground, as it is here that the Initiate cremates his individuality and *ahankara* ('I'-ness) and emerges a full Master of Wisdom. 21, 27

Mahat. Literally, the Great One. The first principle of universal Intelligence and Consciousness. 64

Mahatma. Literally, Great Soul. An Adept of the highest order. An exalted being who, having attained to the mastery over his lower principles, is thus living unimpeded by the 'man of flesh', and is in possession of knowledge and power commensurate with the stage he has reached in his spiritual evolution. Called in Pali *Rahat* and *Arhat*. 22, 43

Maheshwara Parabrahm. The Great Lord, the Causeless Cause or the Supreme Spirit. 49, 65, 77

Mananam. Cogitation; meditation. 66

Manas. Mind. 48, 55, 58, 59, 64, 73, 79

Mandukya Upanishad. This Upanishad belongs to *Artharva Veda* and speaks of the entire range of human consciousness

Mano-bhava. Leading a life of renunciation in the little things of life. 77, 79

Manomaya kosha. A Vedantic term, meaning the *sheath (kosha)* of the *Manomaya*, an equivalent for the fourth and fifth principles in man. In esoteric philosophy this *kosha* corresponds to the dual *Manas*. 60, 61

Mantra(s). Verses from the Vedic works, used as incantations and charms. By *mantras* are meant all those portions of the Vedas which are distinct from the *Brahmanas*, or their interpretation. 18, 21, 66, 78

- Mantrikashakti.*** The power or the occult potency of mystic words, sounds, numbers or letters in these *mantras*. 21
- Manu.** The great Indian legislator, the progenitor of mankind, almost a divine being. 10
- Manu Smriti.*** The laws and injunctions of Manu
- Margas.*** The paths leading to *Nirvana*. 14
- Maya.*** Illusion; the cosmic power which renders phenomenal existence and the perceptions thereof possible. In Hindu philosophy that alone which is changeless and eternal is called reality; all that which is subject to change through decay and differentiation and which has therefore a beginning and an end is regarded as *maya* — illusion. 18, 21, 22, 24, 42, 47, 49, 50, 52
- Mayashakti.*** The power of *maya*. 77
- Moha.*** Delusion. 53, 64
- Moksha.*** Liberation; the same as *Nirvana*; a post-mortem state of rest and bliss for the pilgrim soul. 26, 29, 32, 39, 43
- Muktas.*** Those who have attained *moksha*. 63, 72
- Mukti.*** Same as *moksha*; perfection of individuality. 9, 51, 62, 63, 72, 84
- Muladhara chakra.*** Sacral plexus at the base of the spine. 18, 76
- Mulaprakriti.*** Literally, the root of Nature (*Prakriti*) or matter. The Parabrahmic root, the abstract deific feminine principle — undifferentiated substance; *Akasha*. 48-51, 58, 63, 64, 68, 70, 75, 77, 82
- Mumukshu.*** The aspirant for liberation (*moksha*). 32
- Mumukshutva(m).*** Desire for liberation (from reincarnation and the thralldom of matter). 31, 65
- Mundaka Upanishad.*** An Upanishad of the *Artharva Veda*
- Munis.*** Saints or Sages. 19
- Nadi.*** The human artery, vein or nerve. 19
- Nama.*** Name. 66
- Namaskarams.*** Reverence, obeisance, salutations. 64

Nara. Man, the original, eternal man. 7, 81

Nara-Hari. One of the names of the manifested Deity. 19

Nara Yajna. Service of humanity as a sacrifice. 71, 78, 83

Narayana. The 'Mover on the Waters' of space: a title of Vishnu in his aspect of the Holy Spirit, moving on the waters of creation. In esoteric symbology it stands for the primeval manifestation of the life-principle, spreading in infinite Space. 36

Nava Vidha Bhakti. Nine stages of devotion through which the devotee ascends. 11

Nididhyasa. Mental abstraction and profound contemplation. 66

Nirguna. Transcendental; without attributes. 66

Nishkama karma. Performance of the duties of life without selfishness, as a sacrifice. 71, 73, 82

Nityanitya viveka. Discrimination between the real and unreal. 65

Nivritti Dharma. Duties of life for attaining liberation (*moksha*). 10

Om. A mystic syllable, the most solemn of all words in India. 21, 50

Padasevana. Service of the holy feet. The fourth of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*). 11

Pancha bhutas. Five elements, viz., earth, water, fire, air and *Akasha*. 58

Pancha tanmatras. The types or rudiments of the five elements; the subtle essence of these, devoid of all qualities and identical with the properties of the five basic elements — earth, water, fire, air and ether; i.e., the *tanmatras* are, in one of their aspects, smell, taste, touch, sight and hearing. 64, 75

Pandava. Descendent of Pandu

Pandita. A learned or wise man. 8

Parabhakti. Supreme devotion, by means of which the devotee enters Bhagavan and becomes *Brahman*. 23, 52, 62

- Parabrahm.** Literally, beyond Brahmā. The Supreme Infinite Brahma; the Absolute — the attributeless, the secondless Reality as the end and goal of existence. The impersonal and nameless Universal Principle. 47, 50, 52, 57, 58, 72, 82
- Paraguru.** Supreme Teacher. 77
- Paramahamsa.** One who has realized THAT, i.e., that He, the One Life and himself are one. 21
- Paramartha Sannyas.** Renunciation informed by wisdom (*jnana*). 85
- Paramatma.** The Supreme Soul of the universe. 49, 62, 65, 66, 68, 71, 74, 77, 79
- Parantapa.** One who harasses his foes, a name of Arjuna
- Parashakti.** The great force — one of the six forces of Nature; that of light and heat; *Daiviprakriti*, the Light of the Logos. 21, 75
- Parashurama.** A Puranic Sage, an Avatar. 25
- Para Vidya.** Supreme knowledge. 57
- Parivrajaka.** A wanderer. 15
- Peetham.** The seat of the Deity; the idol of worship. 64
- Phalam.** Fruit. 8, 9, 81
- Phalgutaya.** Literally, the nature of *phalam* itself — something that vanishes, something insubstantial. 9
- Pindanda.** Microcosm. 76
- Pitris.** The ancestors or creators of mankind. They are of seven classes, three of which are incorporeal, *arupa*, and four corporeal. 83
- Pitri Yajna.** Sacrifice to ancestors (*Pitris*). 70, 78, 83
- Prajapati.** Progenitors; the givers of life to all on this earth. They are seven and then ten. Brahmā, the Creator, is called Prajapati as the synthesis of the Lords of Being. 30
- Prajna.** One of the four states of conscious existence of the Vedantic classification; ecstatic consciousness; the description

given in the *Mandukya Upanishad* of the spiritual Ego (consciousness) of the Initiate upon his receiving the third initiation. 20, 49, 52, 60, 84

Prakriti. Same as *Mulaprakriti*; Mother Nature; Nature in general; Nature as opposed to *Purusha* — spiritual Nature and Spirit, which together are the two primeval aspects of the One Unknown Deity. 25, 30, 48, 52, 56-59, 63-65, 68, 70, 73, 75, 77, 82

Pralaya. A period of obscuration or repose — planetary, cosmic or universal — the opposite of *manvantara*. 26, 77

Pranagnihotram. Offering the fire of life as an oblation to the Spiritual Self. 84

Prana. Life-Principle; the breath of life. 75

Pranamaya kosha. The vehicle of *prana*, life, or the *linga sharira*; a Vedantic term. 60, 61

Pranayama. Restraint of breath, a *Hatha Yoga* practice. 18, 38

Prasad. Grace. 72

Pratibimbas. Images; reflections. 59

Pratyagatma. The same as *Jivatma*, or the one living Universal Soul — *Alaya*. 54

Pravritti Dharma (Pravritti Marga). Duties of the four castes (*varnas*) and of the four stages (*ashramas*) of life. 10, 11

Pritha. A name of the mother of Arjuna (of Pandavas). 29

Puja. An offering; worship and divine honours offered to an idol or something sacred. 63, 64

Purusha. Same as *Daiviprakriti*; Heavenly Man; Spirit; the same as *Narayana* in another aspect. 30, 63-65, 72, 73, 82

Purusha-Sukta. A text used in Vedic rituals. 31

Purushottama. Literally, best of men; metaphysically, however, it is Spirit, the Supreme Soul of the universe; a title of *Vishnu*. 77

Raga. The 'obstruction' called love and desire in the physical or terrestrial sense. 26

Raja(h). King. 8

Rajarishis. Kingly Adepts. 10

Rajas. The 'quality of foulness' (i.e., differentiation) and activity in the Puranas. One of the three *gunas* or divisions in the correlations of matter and Nature, representing form and change. 52, 70

Raja Vidya. Kingly Science. 54, 57

Ramachandra, Shri. Seventh Avatar or incarnation of Vishnu. 25

Rasa(nam). Taste. 64, 80

Rishi. Adept; the inspired one. In Vedic literature the term is employed to denote those persons through whom the various *mantras* were revealed. 42, 43, 58, 83

Rupa. Colour; form. 64, 66

Sa Atma. Literally, this is the Self (see *Shantam*). 14

Sa eva Asamantat. "He indeed is everywhere." 41

Sadhana chatushtaya. Four qualifications of the Vedantin (given in the text). 65

Sadhu. Sage, holy man. 78, 79

Sahasra(m). Thousand-petalled lotus; the sacred plexus in the human brain. 17

Sakara upasana. Worship of (i.e., concentration and meditation on) the manifested Deity. 71

Sakha. Friend. 12

Sakhyata. The feeling of friendship, the eighth of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*). 11, 12

Sama. Control of the mind; of the *Bhava pushpas*, or 'flowers of sanctity', *sama* is the fifth, or resignation. 65

Samadana. Composure; that state in which a *Yogi* can no longer diverge from the path of spiritual progress; when everything terrestrial, except the visible body, has ceased to exist for him. 65

Sambandha. Relation. 57

- Samsara.** Mundane existence; the inconstant world. 20, 22, 23, 32, 40, 52, 56, 63, 64, 67, 69-72, 80
- Samskaras.** Literally, from *sam* and *kri*, 'to improve', 'refine', 'impress'. In Hindu philosophy the term is used to denote the impressions left upon the mind by individual actions or external circumstances, and capable of being developed on any future favourable occasion — even in a future birth. The *samskara* denotes, therefore, the germs of propensities and impulses from previous births to be developed in this, or the coming *janmas*, or reincarnations. In Tibet *samskara* is called *doodyed*, and in China is defined as, or at least connected with, action or *karma*. It is, strictly speaking, a metaphysical term, which in exoteric philosophies is variously defined; e.g., in Nepal as illusion, in Tibet as notion, and in Ceylon as discrimination. The true meaning is connected with *karma* and its working. 52, 77
- Sankalpa.** Selection; assimilation; correspondences. 59, 61, 66
- Sankhya.** The system of philosophy founded by Kapila Rishi, a system of analytical metaphysics, and one of the six *darshanas* or schools of philosophy. It discourses on numerical categories and the meaning of the twenty-five *tattvas* (the forces of Nature in various degrees). Also called 'atomistic school'. 8, 9, 47, 50, 51, 66, 67, 77, 81, 82, 83
- Sankhya Yogi(n).** *Yogi* of the Sankhya school. 9, 81, 83, 86
- Sannyasa.** Life of renunciation of an ascetic or *sannyasi*. 47, 85
- Sannyasi.** A Hindu ascetic who has reached the highest mystic knowledge, whose mind is fixed only upon the supreme truth, and who has entirely renounced everything terrestrial and worldly. 85, 86
- Sarathi.** Charioteer. 55
- Sarvajna.** Omniscient; the stage above *prajna* (see *Prajna*). 52, 70, 77, 80
- Sat.** The one ever-present Reality in the infinite world; the divine essence which IS but cannot be said to exist, as it is absoluteness; *Be-ness* itself. Also used to denote *jati* (genus), *kriya* (act), *guna* (quality) or *sambandha* (relation). 48, 49, 57
- Sat-Chit-Ananda.** *Be-ness*; abstract consciousness and bliss. 48, 49

Sattva. Goodness; purity; one of the three *gunas* or three divisions of Nature (see *Guna*). 20, 52, 70, 81

Seva. Service. 41

Shabda. Sound. 64

Shabdabrahman. Ishvara, "the Word made manifest"; the Vedas; "Ethereal Vibrations diffused throughout Space". 48, 49, 66, 77

Shakti. The active female energy of the gods; in popular Hinduism, their wives and goddesses; in occultism, the crown of the astral light; the six forces of Nature synthesized; universal energy. 21, 76

Shambhu. One of the names of Shiva (see Shiva). 23

Shankaracharya (Shri.) The great religious reformer of India and teacher of the Vedanta philosophy. The greatest of all such teachers, regarded by the *Advaitas* (non-dualists) as an incarnation of Shiva and a worker of miracles. He established many *mathams* (monasteries) and founded the most learned sect among Brahmins, called the Smartava. The legends about him are as numerous as his philosophical writings. At the age of thirty-two he went to Kashmir, and reaching Kedarath in the Himalayas, entered a cave alone, whence he never returned. His followers claim that he did not die, but only retired from the world

Shantam Shivam and Advaitam . . . sa Atma. The Supreme Spirit in man is Peace, Bliss and Unity. 14

Shastra(s). Teaching(s) or science(s)

Shat sampatti. Literally, six (spiritual) assets or acquisitions (see *Artharthi*). 65

Shiva. The third person of the Hindu trinity (the *Trimurti*). He is a god of the first order, and in his character of Destroyer, mightier than Vishnu, the Preserver, as he destroys only to regenerate on a higher plane. 37, 80

Shivam. Bliss (see *Shantam*). 14

Shloka. The Sanskrit epic metre formed of thirty-two syllables; verses in four half-lines of eight, or in two lines of sixteen syllables each

- Shraddha.** Faith in the teaching of the Vedanta and the Guru; respect, reverence. 65
- Shravana.** The first of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*); in listening to the teachings of the scriptures and the glories of Bhagavan, the devotee rejoices. 66, 79
- Shudras.** The last of the four castes that sprang from Brahmā's body. 30, 31
- Shvetashvetara Upanishad (Yajur Veda).** An Upanishad belonging to *Krishna Yajur Veda*, named after the sage Shvetashvetara, or one who has purified his senses
- Siddhis.** Literally, attributes of perfection; phenomenal powers acquired through holiness by *Yogis*. 18, 19, 23, 53
- Skandha.** Part (of a book). 42
- Smaranam.** Brooding; meditation; the third of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*). 11
- Soham.** "I am He; Thou art myself." 21, 62
- Soundaryalahari.** A hymn to *Daiviprakriti* by Shri Shankaracharya. 23
- Sparsa.** Touch. 64, 79
- Sthitaprajna.** One who has perceived the Supreme Reality (*Brahman*) in his Self. 16
- Sthula sharira.** In metaphysics, the physical body. 49, 51, 52, 59, 60, 62, 73, 74
- Sukha.** Pleasure. 64, 74
- Sukshma sharira.** The dreamlike, illusive body akin to *manasarupa* or 'thought-body'. It is the vesture of the gods, or the Dhyanis and the *Devas*. 16, 49, 51, 52, 59, 60-62, 73, 74
- Sunyam.** The neutral barrier (see *Mahasushupti*). 27
- Sushumna.** The solar ray — the first of the seven rays. Also the name of a spinal nerve which connects the heart with the *Brahmarandhra*, and plays a most important part in *Yoga* practices. 18
- Sushupti (sushupti avastha).** Deep sleep; one of the four aspects of *Pranava*. 59, 60

Sutratma. Literally, the thread of Spirit; the immortal Ego; the Individuality which incarnates in one life after the other, and upon which are strung countless personalities, like beads on a string. The universal life-supporting air, *samashti pran*; universal energy. 49, 51

Svapna (svapna avastha). Dream-state of consciousness. 59, 60

Svarloka (svarga). A heavenly abode, the same as *Indraloka*; the paradise on Mount Meru. 15, 49, 54, 65, 74, 75, 82, 83

Svasvarupa jnanam. Knowledge of the Self. 15

Tajasa. Resplendent centre; the same as the *Adhidaiva* of the *Bhagavad Gita*, the substratum of all *devatas*; clairvoyant consciousness, one of the four states of conscious existence of the Vedantic classification. 17, 49, 60

Tamas. The quality of darkness, 'foulness' and inertia; also of ignorance, as matter is blind; the lowest of the three *gunas* or fundamental qualities. 52, 70

Tanmatras. The types or rudiments of the five elements; the subtle essence of these, devoid of all qualities and identical with the properties of the five basic elements — earth, water, fire, air and ether; i.e., the *tanmatras* are, in one of their aspects, smell, taste, touch, sight and hearing. 48, 58, 64, 73

Tapas. Abstraction; meditation. To perform *tapas* is to sit for contemplation; therefore ascetics are often called *tapasas*. 10, 22, 24, 27, 53

Tatpada. Parabrahm, the goal, which having reached, none return. 72

Tattvas. The abstract principles of existence or categories, physical and metaphysical. Eternally existing 'That'; also the different principles in Nature, in their occult meaning. *Tattva Samasa* is a work of Sankhya philosophy attributed to Kapila himself. 83

THAT. The One Life. 21

Titiksha. Endurance. 65

Turiya. A state of the deepest trance; the fourth state of the

Taraka Raja Yoga, one that corresponds with *Atma*, and on this earth with *dreamless* sleep; a causal condition. 60

Turiya Chaitanya(m). The fourth life-wave, *Daiviprakriti*, which is the real *Atma* (see *Maha Chaitanya*). 60, 86

Turiyavastha. Almost Nirvanic state in *samadhi*, which is itself a beatific state of the contemplative *Yoga* beyond this plane. A condition of the higher Triad, quite distinct (though still inseparable) from the condition of *jagrat* (waking), *svapna* (dreaming) and *sushupti* (dreamless sleep). 60

Udhava. A devotee of Shri Krishna. 46

Upadana. Material cause (as flax is the cause of linen). 70

Upadhi. Basis; the vehicle, carrier or bearer of something less material than itself, as the human body is the *upadhi* of its spirit, ether the *upadhi* of light, etc.; a mould; a defining or limiting substance. 20, 50, 51, 52, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64, 68, 72, 81, 82

Upadrishhta. Disinterested witness. 64

Upanishads. Esoteric doctrines; interpretations of the Vedas by the methods of Vedanta

Uparati. Tolerance. 65

Uttama Adhikarins. The best of four classes of devotees, or claimants to esoteric wisdom; Vedantins come under this category. 65

Uttama Purusha. Supreme Spirit; *Maheshvara*. 77

Vairagya. Indifference or non-attachment to worldly affairs. 86

Vaishvanara. The fire which is within the human body and by which food is digested. 15, 76

Vaishyas. The third of four castes whose natural duties include ploughing, protection of kine and trade. 30, 31

Valli. Literally, creeper; in scriptures, topical compositions denoted as such

Vandanam. Obeisance to the Deity which the devotee sees in everything and everywhere. The sixth of nine stages of devotion (*Nava Vidha Bhakti*). 11

Varna. Colour of the subtler bodies; the four chief castes named by Manu — Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra — are called *Chaturvarna*. 10, 30, 31

Vasana. Impressions. 70

Vasudeva. A name of Krishna, son of Vasudeva. 22, 46, 62

Vayu. Air; the god and sovereign of the air. 75

Vedanta. A mystic system of philosophy which has developed from efforts of generations of sages to interpret the secret meanings of the Upanishads. Shankaracharya, who was the popularizer of the Vedantic system and founder of the Advaita philosophy, is sometimes called the founder of the modern school of the Vedanta. 65, 77

Vedantin. Practitioner and philosopher of Vedanta. 51, 65, 76

Vedas. The 'revelation', the scriptures of the Hindus, from the root *vid*, 'to know' or 'divine knowledge'. They are the most ancient as well as the most sacred of the Sanskrit works. To each hymn of the *Rig Veda* the name of the Seer or Rishi to whom it was revealed is prefixed

Vibhutis. Attributes or manifestations of the Deity. 50, 56, 75, 76

Vidya. Occult Science. 41

Vijnanamaya kosha. The sheath of intellect corresponding to the faculties of the Higher *Manas*. 61

Vikalpa. Rejection; differentiation. 59, 61, 66

Vishada. Despondency; the deeper feeling of deadness arising from the recognition of the unreality of phenomenal existence. 7, 81

Vishva. Objective consciousness, one of four states of conscious existence of the Vedantic classification. 49, 60

Vishvamitra. A *Brahmarishi*; a Vedic Sage (see *Rishi*). 10

Vishvanara. Universal Being. 49

Vivasvat. The 'bright One'; the Sun; the *Hiranyagarbha Brahmā*, the creator of our system. 10

Vritas. (Ritualistic) austerities. 54

Vyasa. Revealer (literally, amplifier) of Mysteries. There were many Vyasas in Aryavarta; one was the compiler and arranger of the Vedas, another, the author of the *Mahabharata*. The latter was the twenty-eighth Vyasa in the order of succession. 7

Yajna. Sacrifice. 33, 36, 38, 52, 55, 70, 71, 78, 83

Yajna Purusha. He to whom *yajna* is performed as a sacrifice; Bhagavan, *Ishvara*. 36, 73, 83

Yoga. (1) One of the six *darshanas* or schools of India; a school of philosophy founded by Patanjali, though the real *Yoga* doctrine, the one that is said to have helped to prepare the world for the preaching of Buddha, is attributed with good reasons to the more ancient sage Yajnavalkya, the writer of the *Shatapatha Brahmana*, *Yajur Veda*, the *Brihad Aranyaka* and other famous works. (2) The practice of meditation as a means of leading to spiritual liberation. Psycho-spiritual powers are obtained thereby, and induced ecstatic states lead to the clear and correct perception of the eternal truths, in both the visible and invisible universe. 7, 10-12, 17, 26, 43, 54, 65, 66, 74, 86

Yoga-fire. The purifying spiritual fire generated by *Yoga*. 15, 16

Yogamaya. The Light of *Ishvara*, *Daiviprakriti*, behind which Bhagavan remains unperceived. 25, 50

Yoga Vasishtha. A treatise on *Yoga*, being the teachings on *Yoga* communicated by Sage Vasishtha to Shri Rama, the seventh Avatar of Vishnu

Yogi (Yogin). (1) One who has full control, owing to his knowledge of SELF and Self, over his bodily, intellectual and mental states, which, unable any longer to interfere with or act upon his higher Ego, leave it free to exist in its original pure and divine state. (2) Also the name of the devotee who practises *Yoga*. 15, 18, 33, 54, 86

Yuga. A thousandth part of a *kalpa*. An age of the world, of which there are four, and the series of which proceed in succession during the manvantaric cycle. Each *yuga* is preceded by a period called in the Puranas *sandhya*, twilight (transition period), and is followed by another period of like duration

called *sandhyansa*, 'portion of twilight'. Each is equal to one-tenth of the *yuga*. The group of four *yugas* is first computed by the *divine* years, or 'years of the gods', each such year being equal to three hundred and sixty years of mortal men. Thus we have, in 'divine' years:

1. <i>Krita</i> or <i>Satya Yuga</i>	4,000	
<i>Sandhya</i>	400	
<i>Sandhyansa</i>	<u>400</u>	4,800
2. <i>Treta Yuga</i>	3000	
<i>Sandhya</i>	300	
<i>Sandhyansa</i>	<u>300</u>	3,600
3. <i>Dwapara Yuga</i>	2000	
<i>Sandhya</i>	200	
<i>Sandhyansa</i>	<u>200</u>	2,400
4. <i>Kali Yuga</i>	1000	
<i>Sandhya</i>	100	
<i>Sandhyansa</i>	<u>100</u>	1,200
	Total	12,000

This rendered in years of mortals equals:

$$4,800 \times 360 = 1,728,000$$

$$3,600 \times 360 = 1,296,000$$

$$2,400 \times 360 = 864,000$$

$$1,200 \times 360 = \underline{432,000}$$

$$\text{Total} \quad 4,320,000$$

The above is called *Mahayuga* or *manvantara*. Two thousand such *Mahayugas*, or a period of 8,640,000,000 years, make a *kalpa*, the latter being only a Day and a Night, or twenty-four hours, of Brahmā. Thus an Age of Brahmā, or one hundred of his *divine* years, must equal 311,040,000,000,000 of our mortal years.

The old Mazdeans or Magi (the modern Parsis) had the same calculation. But their "Sovereign Time of the Long Period" (*Zervan Daregho Hvadata*) lasts 12,000 years, and these are 12,000 *divine* years of a *Mahayuga* as shown above, whereas the *Zervan Akarana* (Limitless Time), mentioned by Zarathustra, is the *Kala*, out of space and time, of *Parabrahm*. 25



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