Benediction

Blessed Self,
Hari Om!

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you to the Bhagavad-gitā Course. Your decision to study the Bhagavad-gitā is commendable for the Bhagavad-gitā is indeed the crest jewel of the spiritual wisdom of India. It epitomes all that is of value which will surely usher in enduring happiness and true success in life. The wisdom that you gain from this Course will endow you with a holistic vision of life and provide the clarity of thinking required for success in every sphere of life – spiritual and secular. It is not without reason that Sage Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa has proclaimed in the Mahābhārata: “gitā sugitā kartavyā kimanyaiḥ śāstravistaraiḥ – The Bhagavad-gitā needs to be mastered, what is the need for so many other scriptures.”

May the grace of the Lord and blessings of Pūjya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji enable you to complete this course successfully. May you all discover the joy of living the Gitā Way of Life.

This Bhagavad-gitā Course is offered as a reverential worship unto the Lotus Feet of the Gitā Acāryas – Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa of yore and Pūjya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji of our times.

With Prem and Om,

Swami Tejomayananda
Piercy, CA, USA

July 15, 2011
Guru-pūrṇimā
Gratitude

Profound gratitude to the author of this Bhagavad-gītā Course, Pūjya Guruji Swami Tejomayanandaji, the Head of the Chinmaya Mission Worldwide. This most wonderful Course is a product of his noble vision, extraordinary insight, great erudition, and vast experience. Seldom do we meet such a great person and saint, who is all these and many more divine virtues, all rolled into one. We, and posterity, shall be ever indebted to Pūjya Guruji Swami Tejomayanandaji.

It is virtually impossible to acknowledge in these few paragraphs the extraordinary contributions that have been made by many, some of whom have preferred to be anonymous. The initial work of typing and preparing the draft was done by the dedicated team of Brni. Darshika Chaitanya, Ācārya, Chinmaya Mission, Trichur, Kerala, Shri R. S. Iyer (Brni. Darshika Chaitanya’s father) and Br. Atharvana Chaitanya, Ācārya, Chinmaya Mission, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. This initial, yet very critical, work itself took about two years – ample proof of their devotion and unstinting labour of love.

Once the initial draft was prepared, a team of expert language editors and dextrous typeset and formatting experts came forward to give aesthetic shape to the study material. Smt. Sandhya Sundar, Chennai, Tamilnadu, a professional editor, initially helped in the editing.

My profound gratefulness will remain always for Smt. Jasjit Mansingh, an author and editor, and a senior member of Chinmaya Mission, Delhi, who took up the daunting task of the entire language editing and worked in tandem on all points concerning this Course. It was when she joined
the team that the editing work gathered speed. With exemplary skill she perfected the language and worked for months ceaselessly and tirelessly. But for her invaluable contribution, ironing out the creases so to speak, this Bhagavad-gitā Course would have lacked polish.

The contributions of Br. Sarthak Chaitanya, Br. Kutastha Chaitanya – both of them Ācāryas of the Vedānta Homestudy Courses at CIF – as well as Srudhi Arvind, Yuva Veer, CIF, are praiseworthy. This three-member team proof-read the entire content of the Course, ensured that all corrections desired by the Editors were rightly incorporated, and worked with great vigour and enormous zeal.

The perfection in the Sanskrit aspects were ably taken care of by Smt. Sarala Kumari N.D. and Smt. (Dr.) Ambika C.P., both of them Research Fellows in the CIF Shodha Sansthan.

The extensive glossary for this Bhagavad-gitā Course has been prepared by Swamini Amitananda, Ācārya, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (CCMT), Mumbai. In this she was ably assisted by Smt. Geetha Vijayan. Smt. Shefali Arvind, a member of Chinmaya Mission, Cochin, Kerala, helped in typing the glossary. Dr. V. Sheeba Sudheer, Deputy Director, CIF Shodha Sansthan, helped in proof-reading, alphabetical arrangement and other tasks pertaining to the glossary.

Preparing 30 questionnaires for all the 30 lessons was no easy task. In this seva, we have had two excellent contributors – Smt. Padmaja Joshi, devotee of the Chinmaya Mission, San Jose, CA, USA and Sri. S. K. Mohan from Chennai, Tamil Nadu, who had completed his Sandeepany Vedānta Course under Pūjya Guruji Swami Tejomayanandaji. His questions in the Reflection section are specially praiseworthy. Sri. Sidhu, PRO, CIF, too joined in to assist in the final proof-reading of the questionnaires.

In the typesetting and formatting work, Radhika M.R., Data Entry Operator, CIF and Renjith V.J., Designer, CIF, both worked tirelessly. But for their patient and exacting work we would not have got the neatness of the pagesetting.
Gratitude

Special appreciation also to Ms. Shamika, CCMT, Mumbai who co-ordinated the entire printing process.

The printing cost of the Bhagavad-gītā Course has been sponsored by Smt. Geetha Raghu and Dr. Raghu, Ācāryas of Chinmaya Mission, Atlanta, USA.

To all of them on behalf of CIF, I express my heartfelt gratitude. In the Lord’s work, the Lord Himself creates the team and works through them. At no point of time did we encounter any difficulty. That itself is ample proof of the Lord’s blessings on this Bhagavad-gītā Course Project undertaken by CIF.

Terā tujh ko arpan.

Swami Advayananda, 15 July 2011
Ācārya, Chinmaya International Foundation Guru-pūrṇimā
We take great pleasure in welcoming you to the Bhagavad-gitā Course. The Course is authoured by His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda, Head of Chinmaya Mission Worldwide.

The salient thoughts of the commentary on Bhagavad-gitā by Ādi Śāṅkarācārya, as well as insights from Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji’s magnum opus The Holy Gītā, the internationally acclaimed practical commentary on the Bhagavad-gitā, are incorporated in these lessons.

As steps on the ladder of spiritual progression the Foundation Vedanta Course provides an introduction to Vedānta, the Advanced Vedanta Course provides clarity on concepts of Vedānta, and the present Bhagavad-gitā Course serves as a manual for practical application of the wisdom of Vedānta in everyday life.

The key thrust of this Bhagavad-gitā Course is to ensure a transformative learning process which will culminate in complete integration of principles and priceless wisdom of the Bhagavad-gitā in one’s personality. The student thus not only studies the Bhagavad-gitā, but will also become empowered and inspired to live the Gītā Way of Life.

All the 18 chapters of the Bhagavad-gitā are covered in a module of 30 lessons. This Course is planned in such a manner that a diligent student can complete the course in a span of 15 months, that is at the rate of two lessons per month. At the end of each lesson you will be required to answer a questionnaire based on that lesson.

You may take a fortnight to study each lesson and submit your answers to these questions. If you fail to submit your answers regularly and on time,
you will be taken off the rolls. Once you have been taken off, if you want to continue the course, you will be required to re-register and start afresh from the first lesson onwards. However, those of you who have genuine reasons for failing to submit the answers on time may intimate the Course Administrator; Your request will certainly be given due consideration. As and when you complete the lessons you will receive further lessons. The glossary of Sanskrit technical terms used in these lessons, as well as the index of the concepts, are being sent to you at the beginning of the course.

The aim of this course is not to just help you study the Gītā, but to enable you to internalise this priceless wisdom and in its light lead the glorious ‘Gītā Way of Life’. With this as the objective we recommend the following method of study:

• Devote at least half an hour daily to study these lessons. Regular study is the key to spiritual knowledge becoming transformative.
• You must devote at least four hours a week on study and reflection.
• Once you are confident that you have understood the contents of the lesson, answer the questionnaire that pertains to that lesson. We expect your answers to be to the point and in your own words. Refrain from referring to the lesson while answering the questions. Answer all the questions in one stretch except the last section that deals with reflection. When you have answered the reflection question send it along with the questionnaire you have already answered.
• Make it a point to revise the earlier lesson before your start studying a new one. Once in six months revise all the lessons you have studied. This will keep you attuned to the thought flow and help you gain fruitful insights.
• As far as doubts are concerned, make a note of them in a separate book. As the concepts unfold in the subsequent lessons, most of your doubts will be automatically cleared. Hence, we discourage learners from writing to us about their doubts as and when they arise. You are however welcome to write/e-mail us to clarify doubts which persist.
• In a separate book jot down the ideas and concepts that truly inspire you. Read this book often and make a conscious attempt to practise these
ideals in day-to-day life. Simply browsing through this book that you have prepared will certainly give you the insight and inspiration to face problems and to meet life as it unfolds.

- You may also discuss, and share with like-minded friends, ideas and insights that truly inspire you and have helped you live life more intelligently. Such discussion is bound to enhance your personal clarity on the subject matter.

- For spiritual knowledge to be truly kindled in us two factors are imperative: (1) purity of mind (heart), and (2) clarity of knowledge (head). In order to cultivate both do the reflection/meditation exercises given in the lesson and questionnaire very sincerely for this is what will crystallise your learning and enable you to live up to your understanding.

If you ensure all these, it is needless to say that this study of the Bhagavad-gītā Course will transform the way you feel, think, and live. We suggest the following books for your further study and reference:

1. *The Holy Gītā*
2. *The Holy Gītā Ready Reference*
3. *The Art of Man Making (Part I and II)*
4. *The Vision of the Gītā*

All these books can be ordered from Chinmaya International Foundation or the local Chinmaya Mission Centres.

All your correspondence with respect to the Bhagavad-gītā Course should carry your registration number and should be addressed to:

Acharya/Administrator
Bhagavad-gītā Course
Chinmaya International Foundation
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Ernakulam Dist., Kerala, India
Ph: +91-484-2749676  Fax: +91-484-2749729  Email: gitacourse@chinfo.org

We wish you the very best in your endeavour and assure you that we are here to help you always.
The Sanskrit language, written in the Devanāgarī script, has nearly twice as many characters in its alphabet as has English. In these lessons, the Devanāgarī characters have been transliterated according to the scheme adopted by the International congress of orientalists at Athens in 1912 and since then generally acknowledged to be the only rational and satisfactory scheme. The following is the key for the transliteration and pronunciation of the Sanskrit alphabet. One ‘sound value’ is given to each letter; f, g, w, x, and z are not used at all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>अ</td>
<td>a like the o in son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>आ</td>
<td>å like the a in far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>इ</td>
<td>i like the i in if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ई</td>
<td>ï like the ee in feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>उ</td>
<td>u like the u in full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ऊ</td>
<td>ü like the oo in pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ऋ</td>
<td>ŋ like the ri in rig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ऌ</td>
<td>ñ like the ri in rig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ऍ</td>
<td>no equivalent in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ए</td>
<td>e like the e in feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ऐ</td>
<td>ai like the y in my</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ओ</td>
<td>o like the o in note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>औ</td>
<td>au like the ou in loud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>क</td>
<td>k like the k in look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ख</td>
<td>kh like the kh in khan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ग</td>
<td>g like the g in gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>घ</td>
<td>gh like the gh in ghost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>च</td>
<td>c like the ch in chuckle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>छ</td>
<td>ch like the ch in treachery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Bhagavad-gītā Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Sound Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ज</td>
<td>j  like the j in jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>झ</td>
<td>jh like the geh in hedgehog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>त</td>
<td>t  like the t in tank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>थ</td>
<td>th like the th in ant hill (approximate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>द</td>
<td>d  like the d in dog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ध</td>
<td>dh like the dd in midday (approximate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>त</td>
<td>t  like the th in thump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>थ</td>
<td>th like the th in Othello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>द</td>
<td>d  like the th in then</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ध</td>
<td>dh like the dh in dhobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>प</td>
<td>p  like the p in put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>फ</td>
<td>ph like the ph in uphill (approximate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ब</td>
<td>b  like the b in bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>भ</td>
<td>bh like the bh in bhangra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Sound Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>न</td>
<td>n  like the ng in sing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>न</td>
<td>n  like the ny in canyon (approximate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>न</td>
<td>n  like the n in under</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>न</td>
<td>n  like the n in nose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>य</td>
<td>y  like the y in yap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>र</td>
<td>r  like the R in Raja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ल</td>
<td>l  like the l in lap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>व</td>
<td>v  like the v in avert (approximate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ष</td>
<td>s  like the sh in shri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ष</td>
<td>s  like the sh in shall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ष</td>
<td>s  like the s in sand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ह</td>
<td>h  like the h in hat (approximate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

: h  a distinct hard aspiration that echoes the vowel which immediately precedes it

- m  the nasal belonging to the preceding vowel, the precise sound of which depends upon the consonants that follow it. Represented by a dot above the alphabet.
1. **Introduction to Bhagavad-gītā**

Many Gitās

The Bhagavad-gitā – The Universal Book of Guidance

The Glory of the Bhagavad-gitā

The Mahābhārata

The Author and Conceiver

The Scribe

What is the Gitā?

  - Gitā as Upaniṣad
  - Gitā as Yoga-sāstra
  - As a religious book (dharma-grantha)
  - As an authoritative source of knowledge (pramāṇa-grantha)
  - As a book of spiritual knowledge (ādhyātmika-jñāna-grantha)
  - As a book of secular knowledge (bhautika-jñāna-grantha)
  - As a book of guidance and unfoldment (mārga-darśaka-grantha)

Special Features of the Gitā

  - The reader can identify with Arjuna, the seeker, in the book
  - This is knowledge given in the battlefield of life
  - This is a unique, divine dialogue to which the reader is exposed
  - This dialogue is transformation technology in action
  - This teaching empowers us to face problems effectively

Facing Life

The Role of the Gitā in our Life
Face life
Build our life
The Place of the Gītā in the Hindu Scriptures
Śruti
Śmṛti
Purāṇa
Itihāsa
Understanding the Gītā
Characteristics of a Good Student
Background of the Mahābhārata War
The Mahābhārata War Within
Bitter or Better
Learning the Gītā

2. Arjuna-viṣāda-yoga
1.1 The Critical Moment
1.2 Arjuna’s Condition
   Thinking
   Holistic Vision
1.3 Arjuna’s Surrender
1.4 Śreyas – Absolute Good
   At the physical level
   At the mental level
   At the intellectual level
   At the spiritual level
1.5 Dharma Discourse by Arjuna
   War causes destruction of family
   Destruction of the family causes destruction of family cultures and values
   Destruction of family cultures increases unrighteousness
   Increase in unrighteousness causes impurity in women
   Impurity in women causes admixture of castes
Course Content

Failure to offer ‘food (piṇḍa) and water’
Fall in family values destroys the community
Destruction of family values brings hell
Misplaced Thoughts
1.6 The Gītā’s Message

3. Sāṅkhya-yoga (Part I)
2.1 Arjuna’s Problem
2.2 Universal Problem and its Solution
2.3 The Essence of the Gītā’s Teachings
2.4 Knowledge Perspective: Jñāna-yoga
   2.4.1 Who is the Being for Whom we Grieve?
      The Pure Being (Ātman)
      The Transmigrating Being (Jīvātmā)
      Basis of Belief in Rebirth
      Scriptural Authority or Śruti-pramāṇa
      Logic or Yukti
      Fallacy of effect without a cause – akṛta-abhyāgama-doṣa
      Fallacy of cause not producing an effect – kṛta-viprānāśa-doṣa
      Experience or Anubhūti
      The Body (Dehātmā) the inevitable?
   2.4.2 Who is It That Grieves?
      Fortitude
2.5 Dharma Perspective
2.6 Worldly Perspective
2.7 Material Perspective
2.8 Practical Perspective
4. **Sāṅkhya-yoga (Part II)**

2.9 **Karma-yoga**
- You alone have a choice in action
- Your choice is only in action, never in the result
- Do not get attached to inaction
- Do not get attached to results
- Your right is only to act
- Most are qualified only for action
  - Motivation Underlying Action
  - Rights and Duties

2.10 Some Special Features of Karma-yoga: The Win–Win Attitude

2.11 ‘Do your Duty’ and ‘Serve All’
- Secret of Large Profits

2.12 Dexterity in Action is Yoga – Yogah Karmasu Kauśalam

2.13 Equanimity is Yoga – Samatvām Yoga Ucyate

2.14 The Goal of Human Life

2.15 A Realised Person
- Eloquent Silence and Silent Eloquence

2.16 Some Characteristics of the Realised Master (Sthita-prajña)
  2.16.1 Ātma-tuṣṭiḥ – Contentment in Self
  2.16.2 Niṣkāmatā – Desirelessness
  2.16.3 Anāsaktiḥ – Total Dispassion
  2.16.4 Indriya-saṁyama – Mastery over the Senses

2.17 Suppression and Sublimation

2.18 The Ladder of Fall
- Brooding causes attachment (dhyāyato viśayān puṁsaḥ saṅgaḥ teṣāpajāyate)
- Attachment gives rise to desire (saṅgāt saṅjāyate kāmah)
- Desires cause agitation and anger (kāmāt krodho’bhijāyate)
- Anger causes delusion (krodhād bhavati sammohah)
- Delusion makes us forget our past knowledge (sammohāt smṛti-vibhramah)
- When past knowledge is forgotten, the intellect is destroyed (smṛti-bhramśād buddhi-nāśah)
Course Content

A destroyed intellect destroys the individual (buddhināśāt prāṇāśyati)
Beat, Kill, or Drink!

2.19 Preventing our Fall
2.20 Being Peaceful
   Ego – ahaṅkāra
   My-ness – mamatā
   Desire – kāmanā
   Craving – spṛhā

5 Chapter 3, Karma-yoga (Part I)
3.1 The Glory of Questioning
   3.1.1 What is a Question?
   3.1.2 Types of Questions
   3.1.3 Universal Questions
   3.1.4 Why me?
   3.1.5 My Choice: Jñāna-yoga or Karma-yoga?
3.2 Action, Inaction, Actionlessness
   3.2.1 Genesis of Action
   3.2.2 Action and Inaction
   3.2.3 Actionlessness
3.3 Not Doing is your Undoing
   3.3.1 Daydreaming
3.4 What is Right Action?
3.5 Characteristics of Duties
   Duties come unasked
   Ignorance is no excuse
   Duties are thankless
   Duties have no special rewards
   Duties and responsibilities increase with age and stature
3.6 What is the Right Attitude?
   Dedicated to the Higher
3.6.1 Attitude of Dedication
Receiving Tips!
3.6.2 Attitude of Cheerful Acceptance
3.6.3 Attitude of Obedience
3.6.4 Attitude of Gratitude
   Bhūta-yajña
   Deva-yajña
   Pitr-yajña
   Nr̄-yajña
   Rṣi-yajña
3.6.5 Attitude of Continuous Giving
   Party in Vaikuṇṭha
3.6.6 Attitude of Giving and Giving Up
3.6.7 Attitude of Detachment

6. **Karma-yoga (Part II)**
3.7 Characteristics of a Realised Master – Full and Filled Life
   We will gain something by doing them
   We will lose something by not doing them
   We are dependent or attached to the action, thing, being, or result
3.8 Are You an Ideal?
   When to Advise?
3.9 The Greatest Ideal
   As the supreme Truth
   As the Lord
   As an Incarnation
   As a great Person
3.10 Universal Question: How should a Leader Guide Others?
   Be clear about the goal – the welfare of all (loka-saṅgraha)
   Be established in the path – karma-yoga
   Do not unsettle others
Mingle with others
Empower

3.11 Characteristics of a Realised Master – Death of the Doer
   The Witness

3.12 Secret of Success
   Law of Conservation
   Secret of Dedication

3.13 Universal Questions
   3.13.1 Why do People Do what they Do?
   3.13.2 What is Nature and How is it Formed?
   3.12.3 Can we Change our Nature?
   Can You Kick a HABIT?

3.14 Arjuna’s Universal Question: Why do People Commit Sins?
   3.14.1 What is Sin and Merit (pāpa and puṇya)?
   3.14.2 The Enemy Within
   3.14.3 Know the Enemy
   3.14.4 Deal with the Enemy

7. Jñāna-karma-sannyāsa-yoga (Part I)

4.1 The Glory of Spiritual Knowledge
   Spiritual Knowledge is Eternal
   Spiritual Knowledge is Universal
   Spiritual Knowledge is Time-tested
   The First Guru
   Great Lineage

4.2 Divine Birth (Divya-janma)

4.3 Incarnation (Avatāra)
   4.3.1 What is an Incarnation?
   4.3.2 Is Incarnation Possible?
   4.3.3 Why does He Incarnate
   4.3.4 What is Dharma and Adharma?
Integration of the individual
Integration in the family, community, nation, and world

4.3.5 What does God do when He Incarnates
- Protects the Good
- Destroys the Bad
- Establishes Dharma

4.3.6 Why should we Worship His Incarnations? Why not the Lord Himself?

4.3.7 How can the Incarnations of the Past Help us in the Present?

4.3.8 Which is the Best Form to Worship

4.3.9 The Ephemeral versus the Lasting

4.3.10 Divine Actions (Divya-karma)

4.4 The Caste System (Vāṇa-vyavasthā)

4.4.1 Basis of Categorisation
- Guṇa categorisation
  - Brāhmaṇa
  - Kṣatriya
  - Vaiśya
  - Śūdra

4.4.2 Karma Categorisation
- Brāhmaṇa
- Kṣatriya
- Vaiśya
- Śūdra

4.4.3 Relation between Guṇa and Karma

4.4.4 The Common Dharma

4.4.5 Is Vāṇa Based on Birth?

4.4.6 Who Created the Vāṇa System?

4.4.7 Misuse of the Vāṇa System

4.5 To Do or Not to Do
8. Jñāna-karma-sannyāsa-yoga (Part II)

4.6 Characteristics of a Realised Master
   4.6.1 Intelligent Action
      Action and inaction
      Action-less Self and instruments of action
      Competition (spardhä), jealousy, (īrśā) and envy (matsara)
   4.6.2 Brahma-karma

4.7 Practice Makes One Perfect
   4.7.1 Spiritual Practices
      Daiva-yajña
      Brahma-yajña
      Indriya-yajña
      Samyama-yajña
      Dravya-yajña
      Tapo-yajña
      Yoga-yajña
      Svādhyāya-yajña
      Jñāna-yajña
      Vrata-yajña
      Prāṇāyāma-yajña
      Āhāra-yajña
      Yajña-prasāda
   4.7.2 Best Practice: The Glory of Self-knowledge

4.8 Guru: The Direct Means to Self-knowledge
   4.8.1 Falling Prostrate (Pranipāta)
   4.8.2 Serving the Guru (Sevā)
   4.8.3 Asking Questions (Paripraśna)
   4.8.4 Faith (Śraddhā)
   4.8.5 Readiness to Act (Tatpara)
   4.8.6 Self-control (Samyatendriya)

4.9 The Roadblocks to Self-knowledge
4.9.1 The Ignorant (Ajña)
4.9.2 The Faithless (Aśraddhadhāna)
4.9.3 The One who Doubts (Saṃśayātmā)

4.10 Clarion Call of the Lord

9. *Karma-sannyāsa-yoga*

5.1 Arjuna’s Question: To Do or Not to Do
   5.1.1 Arjuna’s Questions Translated into Commonly Asked Questions
5.2 For You, for the Majority, Doing is Better!
   5.2.1 Choosing between Opposites
   5.2.2 Opposite Paths, Common Goal
   5.2.3 Common Questions Answered
5.3 The Two Levels of Renunciation of Actions
   5.3.1 The Preparatory Level
   5.3.2 The Highest Level
5.4 Karma Yoga Revised
   What did you Gain?
   5.4.1 The Karma Bridge
       Passive Sentence Construction
5.5 The Nature of the Self with Respect to Action
   5.5.1 The Nature of Things
5.6 The Characteristics of the Realised Master
   5.6.1 Neither Doing nor Prompting
   5.6.2 Holistic Vision
   5.6.3 Blemishless (Flawless) Vision
   5.6.4 Vision of Oneness
   5.6.5 World Conquerors
5.7 Happiness versus Pleasure
   Passion and Realisation
5.8 Towards World Conquest
   5.8.1 Desire and Anger
Course Content

5.8.2 Desire and Anger Management
   Alertness
5.8.3 Result
5.9 A Peace Message

10. Dhyāna Yoga (Part I)
6.1 Meditation – Style or Lifestyle?
6.2 The Role and Glory of Karma-yoga Re-emphasised
6.3 The Universal Message of Gitā
   6.3.1 ‘Raise Yourself by Yourself. Do not Allow Yourself to Fall’
   6.3.2 How can we Rise in Life?
   6.3.3 Mind - Friend or Enemy?
6.4 Meditation (Dhyāna) and its Practice (Dhyāna-abhyāsa)
6.5 Who is the Meditator (Dhyātā)?
6.6 The Object of Meditation (Dhyeyā)
6.7 The Purpose of Meditation
6.8 Lifestyle Conducive to Meditation or Tips for Happy Living
   Appropriate Food (Yukta-āhāra)
   Appropriate Sleep (Yukta-svapna-avabodha)
   Appropriate Entertainment (Yukta-vihāra)
   Appropriate Work (Yukta-ceṣṭā)
6.9 Meditation – The External Preparation
   Place (Deṣa)
   Alone (Ekāki)
   Uncluttered (Aparigraha)
   Seat (Āsana)
   Posture (Āsana)
   Sense Organs
6.10 Meditation – The Inner Preparation
   No Expectation (Nirāṣī)
   No Hoarding (Aparigraha)
Calm Mind (Praśāntātmā)
Fearless (Vigatabhī)
Renounce other Identities (Brahmacāri-vrata)
God-minded (Mat-citta)
Supreme Respect (Mat-para)
Regularity (Satatam)
Determination (Niścaya)
Enthusiasm (Anirvinñacetās)

6.11 Resolutions to be Taken at the Practice of Meditation

11. Dhyāna-yoga (Part II)

6.12 How to Meditate?
   6.12.1 Withdrawing the Mind
         When called from outside
         When prompted from within
   6.12.2 Absorption in the Self

6.13 Self-realisation
6.14 The Role of the Intellect in Realisation
6.15 Obstacles in Meditation
   6.15.1 Laya (Sleep)
   6.15.2 Vikṣepa (Agitations)
6.16 One more Definition of Meditation
   Viyoga is yoga – separation is union
   Saṁyoga-viyoga is yoga – dissociation from the lower is association with the higher (yoga)
   Duḥkha-saṁyoga-viyoga is yoga – dissociation from union with sorrow is union with God

6.17 The Result of Meditation
   6.17.1 Supreme Peace (Paramāṁ Śāntim)
   6.17.2 Total Satisfaction
   6.17.3 Eternal Bliss
6.17.4 Infinite Gain
6.17.5 Unperturbed State
6.18 Vision of a Realised Master
6.19 Characteristics of a Realised Master
   6.19.1 Circumstances
   6.19.2 Inert Objects
       Right Evaluation
       Right Importance
       Human Beings
6.20 Universal Question: Can the Mind be Controlled?
       Cañcalam – extremely restless
       Pramāthi – turbulent
       Balavat – very strong
       Drḍham – unyielding
       Nigraha suduṣkaram – uncontrollable
6.21 Mind the Mind
6.22 Causes for Mind’s Restlessness
       Identification
       Justification
       Condemnation
       Escapism
6.23 Remedy for Mind’s Restlessness
6.24 FAQ - Why do Good People Suffer?
6.25 A Meditator’s Anxiety

12. Jñāna-vijñāna-yoga (Part I)
7.1 The Art of Listening
7.2 Finding Knowledge and Wisdom
       Ourselves (jīva)
       The world (jagat)
       The nature of God (Īśvara)
7.3 The Rarest of Rare
   7.3.1 Why are the Majority not Interested in Scriptural Knowledge?
   7.3.2 Why do Some Rare Ones Seek God or Spiritual Knowledge?
   7.3.3 Why does the Rare One Alone Attain God?

Blessed are We

7.4 The Cause of Creation

7.5 God in Creation
   7.5.1 God is Great
   7.5.2 Divine Might and Desire

7.6 Bondage and Liberation
   7.6.1 God’s Great Power – Māyā
   7.6.2 God – the Saviour
       He Commands His Māyā
   7.6.3 Knowledge – the Dispeller

13. Jñāna-vijñāna-yoga (Part II)

7.7 The Devotees of God
   Ārta
   Arthārthī
   Jijñāsu
   Jñāni
   7.7.1 Ārta and Arthārthī are Devotees too
   7.7.2 Can a Realised Master be Called a Devotee?

7.8 Lifetime’s Award
   7.8.1 How Long does it Take to Know God?
   7.8.2 Divine Vision – The Award

7.9 Worshipping Finite Gods

7.10 Considering God Finite

7.11 God’s Great Māyā

7.12 Can God ever be Known?

7.13 Concluding Connection
14. *Akṣara-brahma-yoga*

8.1 What is Brahman?
8.2 What is Adhyātma?
8.3 What is Karma?
8.4 What are Adhibhūta, Adhidaiva, and Adhiyajña?
8.5 Karma Theory
8.6 Rebirth Theory
8.7 Death-time Experience
8.8 Remembering God All the Time
8.9 Final Meditation
  8.9.1 Path of Knowledge
  8.9.2 Path of Hatha-yoga
  8.9.3 The Path of Devotion
8.10 The Realms of Experience
  Earthly Realm
  Heavenly Realm
8.11 Creation – Dissolution Cycle
8.12 Permanent Abode (Paramaṁ Dhāma)
8.13 Types of Liberation
  Jīvan-mukti – Liberation whilst Living
  Videha-mukti – Liberation after Death
  Krama-mukti – Sequential Liberation
8.14 The Heavenly Routes
8.15 Management Tips from the Gītā
  Vedas – Books of Knowledge
  Tapas – Austerities
  Yajña – Rituals
  Dāna – Charity
8.16 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Reminder
15 Rājavidyā-rājaguhyā-yoga (Part I)

9.1 The Glory of Self-knowledge

Rāja-vidyā
Rāja-guhyam
Pratyakṣa-avagamam
Dharmyam
Susukham kartum
Avyayam

9.2 God and Creation – The Relation-less Relationship

9.3 God and the Creation–Dissolution Cycle

Nitya-sṛṣṭi-pralaya – Daily Creation – Dissolution
Naimittika-sṛṣṭi-pralaya – Partial or Occasional Creation – Dissolution
Prākṛta-sṛṣṭi-pralaya – Total Creation and Dissolution
Ātyantika-pralaya – Final Dissolution

9.3.1 Who actually creates the world?

9.4 How does God Create the World?

9.5 Not Knowing God

9.5.1 Symptoms of Delusion

Moghāçā – Living in False Hopes
Mogha-karma – Doing Wasteful Activity
Mogha-jñāna – Useless Knowledge
Vicetas – Wrong Thinking

9.6 Knowing God

9.7 How do the Good Worship God?

9.7.1 Kīrtana
9.7.2 Namaskāra – Prostrations
9.7.3 Jñāna-yajña

9.8 Attitudes of Worship

Ekatvena
Prthaktvena
Bahudhā Viśvato Mukham
9.9 God is All
   Where No One Is!
   Divine Photographer

16. Rājavidyā-rājaguhya-yoga (Part II)
9.10 Return Ticket to Heaven
9.11 Living in Bliss
   Not for God!
   My Contract with God
   He Takes Care
   Being Connected to Him
9.12 Worshipping the Finite
   Where Lies True Satisfaction?
9.13 Worshipping the Infinite
9.14 Is God Partial?
9.15 Can I Improve? Am I Qualified to Know God?
9.16 Uniqueness of the Path of Devotion
   9.16.1 Resolving Confusion
9.17 Management Tips from Gītā
9.18 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Concluding Assurance

17. Vibhūti-yoga
10.1 The Teacher–Student Relationship
10.2 Vibhūti and Yoga
10.3 Divine Tour of Creation – Vibhūti-yoga
10.4 Śrī Kṛṣṇa – The Divine Tour Guide
10.5 Devotees – The Blessed Tourists
10.6 Arjuna – The Blessed Tourist
10.7 Special Divine Tour of Creation
   10.7.1 Some Glories from Nature
The Brilliant and the Soothing – Sun and Moon
The Shoreless Ocean
The Shaded Grandeur – Aśvattha
The Snow-capped Spectacle – Himalayas
10.7.2 Some Glories from the Vedas and Purāṇas
The Celestial Royalty – Indra
The Divine General – Skanda
The Infallible Arsenal – Vajra
The Musical Scripture – Sāma-veda
The Famous Metrical Gāyatrī
10.7.3 Some Glorious Incarnations
The Long-strided Vāmana
Attraction and Love Incarnate, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa
10.7.4 Some Glories as Devotees and Sages
The Audacious Astrologer – Bhṛgu
The Celestial Missionary – Nārada
The Incomparable Hero – Arjuna
The Omniscient Sage – Vyāsa
10.7.5 Some Glories Experienced by Man
Most Precious Life
The Incredible Mind
The Fruitful Discussion – Vāda
The Ultimate Knowledge – Adhyātma-vidyā
Timeless Time
The Easiest Spiritual Practice – Japa
The Feminine Beauties
  Everlasting fame and wealth – Kīrti and Śrī
  Gracious speech – Vāk
  Lasting memory – Smṛti
  Meaningful retention – Medhā
  Indefatigable patience – Dhṛti
  Forever forgiving – Kṣamā
The Superhuman Effort – Vyavasāya
The Punishing Stick – Daṇḍa
The First Alphabet ‘A’
The Fascinating Gamble – Dyūta
The Winning Strategy – Nīti

10.8 The Concluding Words of the Divine Tour Guide

18. Viśvarūpa-darśana-yoga
11.1 Bird’s Eye View
11.2 Arjuna’s Special Request
11.3 Divine Vision
   11.3.1 What is Divine Vision?
   11.3.2 Who else had this Divine Vision?
11.4 Divine Cosmic Vision
11.5 Wonderstruck Arjuna
11.6 Some Features of the Divine Cosmic Vision
   Radiance
   Countless
   Beginningless and Endless
   Immeasurable
   Holistic
11.7 The Fear-struck Arjuna
   11.7.1 Arjuna’s Question
11.8 Lessons of Life from the Death-show
   Prayer
   The Lord Loves His Squirrels
11.9 The Reverence-struck Arjuna
   Arjuna’s Prayer
   All is as it should be
   The great, no wonder, salute Thee
   Again and again I prostrate to Thee
For all mistakes, do forgive me
You are the One and Only for the world and me
Your auspicious (four-handed) form, now I wish to see

11.10 The Priceless Vision
11.11 Love Begets Love

12.1 Subject Matter of the Chapter
12.2 Arjuna’s Universal Question
12.3 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Answer
12.4 The Altar of Devotion
   12.4.1 Nirguṇa Brahman – Attributeless Reality
   12.4.2 Saguṇa Brahman – God with Attributes
       Īśvara – the Lord of the Universe
       Virāṭ – the Cosmic Form
       Avatāra – Incarnations
12.5 What is Devotion?
   All Absorbing Love for God – (Mayi Āveṣya Manaḥ)
   Total Steadfastness (Nitya-yukta)
   Unflinching Faith (Parayā śraddhayā)
   Faith and Love
12.6 Nirguṇa-upāsanā – Meditation on the Attribute-less God
12.7 Nature of Self
12.8 Saguṇa and Nirguṇa-upāsanā
   Strong Detachment
12.9 How does God Uplift His Devotees?
12.10 The Crux of the Teaching

20. Bhakti-yoga (Part II)
12.11 Means of Devotion
Course Content

Practice makes Perfect
Doing without Doing
Your Ego
Enjoying without Worrying
Renouncing Attachment to Results

12.12 Practising and Renouncing – the Right Way
Mechanical Practice
Practice with Understanding
Understanding and Meditating
Meditating and Renouncing
Meditate Without Worry
Renunciation and Devotion
Love and Sacrifice

12.13 Some Characteristics of a Perfect Devotee
12.13.1 Loving, not Hating (Adveśṭā Sarvabhūtānām)
12.13.2 Friendly and Kind (Maitraḥ, Karuṇaḥ)
   All His Friend
12.13.3 Revelling in the Welfare of All (Sarvabhūtahite Ratāḥ)
12.13.4 Forgiving (Kṣamī)
   Loving and Forgiving
   I am No One to Forgive
   Forgetting and Forgiving
   Punishment and Forgiveness
   Strength of Forgiveness
12.13.5 Unagitated and Unagitating (Na Udviṭate Lokāḥ, Lokān Na Udviṭate)
   So Be It
12.13.6 Pure and Purifying (Śuci)
12.13.7 Fulfilled and Content (Santuṣṭaḥ Satatam, Santuṣṭo Yena Kenacit)

12.14 Practical Reasons for Cultivating a Devotee’s Characteristics
12.15 God’s Special Devotees

13.1 The Context and Subject

13.2 The Knower and the Known
   13.2.1 Differences between the Knower and the Known
   13.2.2 The Known as Kṣetra
   13.2.3 God as Knower

13.3 Who am I?
   13.3.1 Exploring the Field (kṣetra)
   13.3.2 Exploring the Kṣetrajña

13.4 Knowing, yet not Realising the Knower

13.5 Understanding Values

13.6 Some Essential Values
   13.6.1 No Arrogance, No Ego, No Pretence (Amānītvam, Anahaṅkāra, Adambhitvam)
     Amānītvam – No Arrogance
     Zero
     Are you the Owner or Container?
     Pride Versus Humility
     Anahaṅkāra – No Ego
     Adambhitvam – No Pretence
     Pretending for How Long!
   13.6.2 All Acceptance
   13.6.3 Looking Critically at Life
   13.6.4 Detachment, No Over-attachment
     His Prasāda
   13.6.5 Interested in Solitude and Disinterested in Company of Extrovert People
   13.6.6 Consistent Enrichment
     An Ounce of Practice

13.7 Life without Values
22.  

Kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vibhāga-yoga (Part II)  
13.8 Realising the Knower (Kṣetrajña or Jñeya)  
   13.8.1 Realising the Knower One Becomes Birthless  
   13.8.2 Beyond Sat and Asat  
   13.8.3 Creation Proves the Creator  
      Proving God  
   13.8.4 Uninvolved Nourisher  
   13.8.5 Both Inside and Outside  
   13.8.6 Both Near and Far  
   13.8.7 Illumines All  
   13.8.8 Realising the Oneness  
13.9 Bondage and Transmigration  
13.10 The Liberating Knowledge  
13.11 Divine Grace at Work  
13.12 The Means of Realisation  
   13.12.1 Determination and Meditation  
   13.12.2 Discrimination and Faith  
   13.12.3 Dedication and Devotion  
13.13 The Relation Between the Knower and the Known  
13.14 The One-in-all Vision  
      What is liberation?  
13.15 The Self-destructive Vision  

23.  

Guṇa-traya-vibhāga-yoga  
14.1 Subject: Mind Management  
14.2 Result: Perfection (parām siddhim)  
14.3 The First Step: Know the Mind  
14.4 Prakṛti and Creation  
14.5 The Tri-coloured World  
   14.5.1 Three Qualities of Prakṛti  
      Sattva-guṇa
Rajo-guṇa
Tamo-guṇa

14.5.2 The Working of the Mind
   The Veiling Power (Āvaraṇa-śakti)
   The Projecting Power (Vikṣepa-śakti)
   The Discriminating Power (Viveka-śakti)

14.5.3 The Tri-coloured Bondage
   Sāttvika
   Rājasika
   Tāmasika

14.5.4 The Tri-coloured Senses
   Sāttvika
   Rājasika
   Tāmasika

14.5.5 The Tri-coloured Lifestyles
   Sāttvika
   Rājasika
   Tāmasika

14.5.6 The Tri-coloured Awareness
   Sāttvika
   Rājasika
   Tāmasika

14.5.7 The Tri-coloured Results Hereafter
   Sāttvika
   Rājasika
   Tāmasika

14.6 The Second Step: Tuning the Mind
   14.6.1 By Being Intellectually Alert
   14.6.2 By Analysis
   14.6.3 By an All-round Sattva Diet
   14.6.4 By Observing Others
   14.6.5 Sequentially Conquering the Guṇas
14.6.6 By Spiritual Practices
14.7 The Third Step: Transcending the Mind
   Thou Art the Witness
14.8 Result: Living in Perfection beyond the Mind
14.9 Some Characteristics of a Realised Master (Guṇātita-lakṣaṇa)
   14.9.1 Beyond Internal Moods
   14.9.2 Beyond External Moods
   14.9.3 Seated in Perfection (Svastha)
14.10 Alternate Means – Loving the Lord of All Minds

24. *Puruṣottama-yoga*
15.1 The Subject: The Content of the Entire Gītā Summarised
15.2 The All-in-one Tree
   15.2.1 The Roots Above
   15.2.2 The Branches Below
   15.2.3 The Innumerable Leaves
   15.2.4 The Upcoming Buds
   15.2.5 Teeming with Life
   15.2.6 The Adventitious Roots
   15.2.7 The Ever-changing, Strange Tree
   15.2.8 Axing the Tree
   15.2.9 Route to the Roots
15.3 Who Sees the Roots?
   15.3.1 Free to Attain Freedom
15.3.2 Right Direction
15.4 Who is God?
15.5 His Supreme Abode
15.6 Me and my God
   15.6.1 Part–whole Relationship
      My Closest Relations
   15.6.2 Lasting Relationships
15.7 Journey through Lives
15.8 Traveling Tips
   Minimise possessions
   Travel light
   Pack the best
   Help fellow travellers
   Enjoy the journey
   Learn from the journey
   Learn about the journey
15.9 The Glorious Sights on the Journey of Life
   15.9.1 The Enlightening Glories
   15.9.2 The Supporting Glories
   15.9.3 The Glory Within
      The Famous Food Verse
   15.9.4 The Closest Glory
   15.9.5 The Glorious Mind
   15.9.6 The Glorious Known, Means of Knowing, and Knower
15.10 The Supreme Being (Puruṣottama)
      Sanskrit grammar and Self-knowledge
15.11 The Characteristics of a Realised Master
   15.11.1 Highest Intelligence (Buddhimān)
   15.11.2 Total Fulfilment (Kṛtakṛtyatā)
15.12 The Complete Scripture

25. Daivāsura-sampad-vibhāga-yoga
16.1 The Divine Disposition
16.2 Some Divine Virtues
   16.2.1 Fearlessness (Abhaya)
   16.2.2 Non-injury (Ahiṁsā)
   16.2.3 Truthfulness (Satyam)
16.2.4 Absence of Backbiting (Apaiśunam)
16.2.5 Non-covetousness (Alolupatvam)
16.2.6 Gentleness (Mārdavam)
16.2.7 Modesty (Hṛī)
16.2.8 Stillness and Steadiness (Acāpalam)
16.2.9 Glow (Tejas)

16.3 The Demonic Disposition
   The Decisive Factor
16.4 The Fate of the Divine and the Evil
   16.4.1 Heaven and Hell
16.5 The In-between Disposition
16.6 Bondage and Liberation
16.7 Gateways to Hell
16.8 Overcoming Desire-Anger-Greed
   16.8.1 The Path of Knowledge (Jñāna-yoga)
   16.8.2 The Path of Devotion (Bhakti-yoga)
   16.8.3 The Path of Action (Karma-yoga)
   16.8.4 The Path of Meditation (Dhyāna-yoga)
16.9 The Scriptures – The Mind Management Tool

26. Śraddhā-traya-vibhāga-yoga
17.1 Universal Question of Arjuna
17.2 Inherent Universal Faith
   Why is It So?
   Think!
17.3 The Three Faiths
17.4 The Tri-colored Ideals
17.5 Food for Thought
   Sāttvika
   Rājasika
   Tāmasika
17.6 Management Tips from Gitā
  17.6.1 The Right Yantra (Medium or Instrument)
  17.6.2 The Right Tantra (Methodology)
  17.6.3 The Right Mantra (Vision)
  Motivation

17.7 Prime Activities for All
  Yajñā
  Tapah
  Dāna

17.8 Yajñā – The Three Worships
  17.8.1 Sāttvika
  17.8.2 Rājasika
  17.8.3 Tāmasika

17.9 Tapas – Austerity

17.10 Tapas – The Three Types
  17.10.1 Sāttvika
      Physical
      Verbal
      Mental
  17.10.2 Rājasika
  17.10.3 Tāmasika

17.11 Dāna – Giving for Good
  The Great Renunciation

17.12 Dāna – The Three Types
  17.12.1 Sāttvika
      Kanyā-dāna in Hindu Tradition
      Respecting the Receiver
      Dāna-vīra Karna
      Can I Help You?
  17.12.2 Rājasika
  17.12.3 Tāmasika
Course Content

17.13 The Ultimate Fulfiller
17.14 Faithless and Fruitless
   The Power of Faith

27. Mokṣa-sannyāsa-yoga (Part I)
18.1 The Summarising Finale
18.2 Universal Question of Arjuna
18.3 Tyāga and Sannyāsa
   Niyata-karma
   Niṣiddha-karma
   Kāmya-karma
   Prāyaścitta-karma
   Upāsanā
18.4 Life and Yajña, Dāna, and Tapas
   Ādhaivaikika
   Ādhibhautika
   Ādhyātmika
18.5 Threefold Tyāga
   18.5.1 Sattvika
   18.5.2 Rājasika
   18.5.3 Tāmasika
   18.5.4 The Essence of Tyāga
18.6 Understanding Results
18.7 Understanding Actions
   18.7.1 The Mechanism of Action
      Adhiṣṭhāna
      Kartā
      Karana
      Ceṣṭā
      Daiva
Non-doer and Non-enjoyer

18.7.2 The Prompter of Actions
- The knowledge of the object of pleasure (jñānam)
- The object itself (jñeyam)
- Memory or impression of past enjoyment (parijñātā)

18.7.3 The Success Factors

28. Mokṣa-sannyāsa-yoga (Part II)

18.8 The Success Factor – Vision of Life (Jñāna or Drṣṭi)
- 18.8.1 Sāttvika
- 18.8.2 Rājasika
- 18.8.3 Tāmasika

18.9 The Success Factor – Undertakings (Karma)
- 18.9.1 Sāttvika
- 18.9.2 Rājasika
- 18.9.3 Tāmasika

  Acting without Thinking
  According to Stature

18.10 The Success Factor – Attitude of the Doer (Kartā)
- 18.10.1 Sāttvika
  - Tatpara
  - Anahaṁvādi
  - Equipoised
  - Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda
- 18.10.2 Rājasika
- 18.10.3 Tāmasika

18.11 The Success Factor – Intellect (Buddhi)
- 18.11.1 Sāttvika
- 18.11.2 Rājasika
- 18.11.3 Tāmasika

  Wrong Conclusion
Course Content

18.12 The Success Factor – Fortitude (Dhṛti)
  18.12.1 Sāttvika
  18.12.2 Rājasika
  18.12.3 Tāmasika

18.13 The Success – Happy Ending (Sukha)
  18.13.1 Sāttvika
  18.13.2 Rājasika
  18.13.3 Tāmasika

29. Mokṣa-sannyāsa-yoga (Part III)
  18.14 The Caste System (Varna-vyavasthā) Revisited
    18.14.1 The Birth Factor (Janma)
    18.14.2 The Head Factor
  18.15 The Success Formula
    18.15.1 The Attitude Factor in Success
    18.15.2 The Aptitude Factor in Success
      Sāttvika
      Rājasika
      Tāmasika
  18.16 The Secret of Large Profits
  18.17 Reaching Perfection through Imperfection
  18.18 The State of Perfection
  18.19 Meditation Revised
  18.20 The Ego Factor
  18.21 The Nature Factor
     Nature Dictates!
  18.22 The Grace Factor
  18.23 The Choice Factor

30. Mokṣa-sannyāsa-yoga (Part IV)
  18.24 The Final Teaching
18.24.1 Surrender in Jñāna-yoga – Know God, the Self
18.24.2 Surrender in Bhakti-yoga – Love God, the Ultimate Truth
18.24.3 Surrender in Karma-yoga – Serve God

Message of Gītā

18.25 Statutory Warning
18.26 The Secret and the Sacred Gītā

18.27 Benefits of Gītā – Phala-śruti

Listen to the Gītā
Read the Gītā
Chant the Gītā
Study the Gītā
Write the Gītā
Enact the Gītā
Distribute the Gītā
Teach the Gītā
Gītā at Jail
Gītā and Chinmaya Mission

18.28 Arjuna’s Realisation

18.28.1 Delusion and Grief
18.28.2 Self-knowledge (Ātma-jñāna and Ātma-smṛti)
18.28.3 Surrender

18.29 The Special Correspondent’s Realisation

18.30 The Special Correspondent’s Comment

Lasting Prosperity (Dhruvā Śrī)
Total Victory (Dhruva-vijayaḥ)
Abiding Laws (Dhruvā Nitiḥ)
Ever-shining Glory (Dhruvā Bhūtiḥ)
Mama Dharma
Glossary

A

abhaya – fearless
abheda-dṛṣṭi – vision of oneness or non-duality
abhimāna – pride
abhoktā – non-enjoyer
abhyaśa-yoga – yoga of constant practice
abhūdaya – prosperity
acāpala – absence of fickleness
acintya – that which cannot be thought of
adambhitva – devoid of pretence
adharma – unrighteousness
adhībhūta – the world of elements which constitutes Lord’s perishable nature
adhīdaiva – literally pertaining to the deities. This term is used to indicate the special faculty that presides over the instruments of knowledge and action in living creatures.
adhiṣṭhāna – the substratum
adhīyajña – the Self, which is the one vital factor and principle of life that dominates the entire field of knowledge and action
adhīyatma-cetas – mind that is spiritually inclined
adhīyatma-vidyā – science of the Self
advaita-vedānta – philosophy of non-dualism
agni – fire, can also mean Fire Deity
agni-devatā – Fire Deity
**ahiṁsā** – non-injury, harmlessness, non violence towards all in thought, word, and deed

**airāvata** – celestial elephant

**ajñāna** – ignorance

**akṣara** – imperishable

**akṣara-abhyāsa** – initiation of a child to read and write

**akṣara-mālā** – garland of letters, alphabet

**akṣara-puruṣa** – the imperishable entity, the reflection of Consciousness, the Lord or the Paramātmā as the experiencer. From the individual standpoint it is the jīvātmā.

**akṣauhinī** – battalion

**alpa-drṣṭi** – narrow-mindedness, limited vision

**amānītva** – humility

**amṛta** – immortality, ambrosia, nectar of immortality

**anabhiṣvaṅga** – excessive affection

**anahāṅkāra** – absence of egoism

**ananya-bhakti** – complete and constant devotion, usually for the Lord

**ananyatā** – without the sense of otherness or separateness

**anasūyā** – ‘asūyā’ is finding faults even when a person has good qualities. Not doing so is ‘anasūyā’.

**anirdeśya** – that which cannot be described or indicated

**anirvīṇa** – undesperaring

**aniṣṭha-phala** – undesirable fruit of action

**antarāṅga-sādhana** – advanced spiritual practice

**anukampā** – compassion

**anumāna-pramāṇa** – inference as a means of knowledge

**anumantṛ** – the permitter

**anumita** – inferred

**anupādeya** – that which cannot be taken up

**apaiśuna** – unmalicious tongue
aparā-prakṛti – matter, lower nature
aparigraha – devoid of possessions
aparokṣa – direct
apauruṣeya – that which is not authored either by God or man
apohana – ability to forget
arpaṇa – offering
arpaṇa-buddhi – worshipful attitude
arthārthī – the seeker of wealth
asīpada – literally it means the verb ‘is’. It is the third term of the sacred Vedic statement (mahāvākya) “Tat tvam asi – That thou art.” In this context, it connotes the unity of the witness with Brahman, the ultimate Reality.
asthira – unsteady
asuras – those in whom tāmasika qualities are predominant
asvastha – literally means ‘unwell’. Also means, not rooted in the Self and being identified with the body, mind, intellect.
āśāśvata – impermanent, ephemeral, transient
āśraddhadāna – one who lacks faith
āśvamedha-yajña – horse-sacrifice of the Vaidika times
āśvattha – holy fig tree
aṣṭadhā-prakṛti – eightfold nature
avatāra – incarnation of the Lord
avatāra-rahasya – the mystery of Lord’s incarnation
avidyā – ignorance
avikampa-yoga – unwavering yoga, which actually means that the seeker remains ever unshaken and abiding in the Self
avyabhicārīnī – unwavering, steady
avyakta – unmanifest
avyakta-vāsanā – inherent tendencies which are unmanifest
avyaya – imperishable
avyaya-bīja – imperishable seed
ayukta – one whose mind is disintegrated
ācāra – codes of conduct
ādhībhaútika – pertaining to things, beings, and situations around us
ādhidaívika – pertaining to the devatās (cosmic forces)
ādi-guru – first teacher, the Lord
ādhyátmika – pertaining to our body, mind, and intellect
ājya – clarified butter that is offered in the fire ritual
ānanda – happiness, bliss
ārjava – straightforwardness
ārta – the distressed one
āsana – body postures. The third of the eight limbs of the yoga system.
āstika – believer in the Vedas or God
āscarya – wonder
ātmā – the true Self, the unconditioned pure Consciousness
ātma-jñāna – knowledge of the pure Self
ātma-smṛti – remembrance of one’s own true nature
ātyantika-pralaya – final dissolution
ātyantika-sukha – infinite bliss, ultimate happiness
āvarena-śakti – the veiling power

B
bhakta – devotee of the Lord
bhakti – devotion
bhakti-yoga – path of devotion
bhartṛ – supporter, nourisher
bhāṣya – commentary
bhāva-bheda – difference in attitude
bhāva-samādhi – divine absorption
bheda – means difference, division, dualism, breaking. It is one of the four (sāma, dāna, bheda, daṇḍa) means of success against an enemy. In this context, it means sowing dissension.
bheda-dṛṣṭi – considering the world as different from the supreme Reality
bhogāsakti – attachment to enjoyment of fruits of action
bhogin – one who revels in sense pleasures
Bhrigu – one of the seven sages
bhūta-bhāvana – Creator of beings
bhūteśa – Lord of all beings
brahma-abhyāsa – diligent practise of the thought: “I am Brahman”
brahmacāri-vrata – vow of brahmacarya. Brahmacarya literally means celibacy, or more generally control over the senses. The deeper implication is to engage our mind in the contemplation of the Self, the Supreme Reality. This helps us in withdrawing the mind from external pursuits.
Brahman – supreme Truth, infinite Reality
brahma-loka – the abode of Lord Brahmā, the Creator
brahma-saṁsarpāsa – direct contact with Brahman
Brahma-sūtras – aphorisms composed by Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa. It is a book of analysis which resolves the apparent contradictions found in the Upaniṣads. The other names of the text are Vedānta-sūtra, Śārīraka-sūtra and Bādarāyaṇa-sūtra.
Brahma-vidyā – the knowledge of Brahman. Shows the essential oneness of the supreme Reality and the individual Self
brahmākāra-vṛtti – literally means thought (vṛtti) that has taken the form (ākāra) of Brahman; also called akhaṇḍākāra-vṛtti. Both these terms stand for the firm thought ‘I am Brahman’, which puts an end to ignorance.
brahmānanda – pure bliss of Brahman
brāhmaṇa – one of the four classes into which people are divided in the Hindu society. They are also the class where the intellect and knowledge prevail, such as the teacher, professor and so on.
buddhi – intellect

C
caitanya – Consciousness
candra-loka – world of the moon

candra-vanśa – Lunar dynasty

cañcala – fickle, restless

cēṣṭā – functions of the five organs of action

cetanā – the very life sentiency that differentiates a living being and an inert object

cidābhāsa – reflected Consciousness

cintana – to think about

citta-samādhanā – absorption of mind

D

daīva – the presiding deities or the phenomenal forces; can also mean fate or destiny.
daīvī – divine
daīvī-prakṛti – divine virtues
daīvī-sampatti – literally means divine wealth. It also connotes divine virtues that are a pre-requisite for fuller self-unfoldment.
daṅśīnā – reward given at the end of the rituals to the priest who performs them or to the teacher who instructs a student
daṅśīnāyana – the southern path of the Sun – mid-July to mid-January
daṃbha – hypocrisy
daṇa – charity
daṇava – demonic beings
daṇavīra – a highly charitable person
daṇḍa – stick, punishment
daṇḍrā – a needy person who is considered to be a form of the Lord Himself
daṛśana – vision. The term also indicates the schools of Indian philosophy.
dayā – compassion
dehātma – one who is identified with the body
**Glossary**

*deśa* – place
*deva-ṛṇa* – debt we owe to gods
*devarṣis* – celestial sages
*devatās* – the gods; phenomenal forces
*deva* – denizens of heaven
*dhana-śuddhi* – purity of wealth
*dhārma* – essential nature of an object. This term is also used in the context of righteousness and nobility.

*dhārma-grantha* – religious text
*dharmya* – that which is in accordance with righteousness
*dhāma* – abode of the Lord
*dhātṛ* – the dispenser of fruits of action
*dhāranā* – holding the mind steady on one object of concentration
*dhṛti* – fortitude, patience
*dhruva* – eternal
*dhruvā-bhūti* – everlasting glory
*dhruvā-nīti* – abiding laws
*dhruvā-śrī* – everlasting prosperity
*dhruvā-vijaya* – everlasting victory

*dhyāna* – contemplation. Also termed nididhyāsana. This is the continuous flow of a single thought towards the Supreme, dissociated from thoughts of other objects like the body.

*dhyāna-yogin* – one who practices meditation
*dhyātā* – meditator
*dhyeya* – object of meditation
*dṛḍham* – unyielding
*dīrgha-sūṭrī* – procrastinator
*dīvya-karma* – divine action
*dṛṣṭi* – vision
*duḥkha* – sorrow
duḥkhalaya – abode of sorrows
durāgraḥa – excessive insistence
dvandva – pairs of opposites
dvandvātīta – beyond duality or pairs of opposites
dveṣa – dislike
dhyāna-abhyāsa – practice of meditation
E
ekāki – alone, not depending on anything or anyone
G
gata-saṅga – free of attachments
gati – destination
gauṇa-karma-sannyāsa – preparatory renunciation
gauṇa-kartṛ – secondary doer
gāyatrī – famous poetical metre of the Vedas; one of the famous mantras found in the Vedas
gopī – literally cow-herd girl. More commonly referred to denote the cow-herd girls of Vrindavan who were renowned for their unconditional love for Lord Kṛṣṇa.
grahaṇa – perception of objects; to accept, hold onto, or take
guṇa – literally translated as quality. In the context of Vedānta – it can be more precisely translated as characteristic constituents of māyā. There are three guṇas – sattva, rajas, and tamas.
Guṇātīta – The Man of Realisation who has transcended the three guṇas – sattva, rajas, and tamas.
guru – spiritual master, teacher
guru-śiṣya-parampara – teacher-taught lineage
guṇātīta-lakṣaṇa – characteristics of a Realised Person (one who has transcended the three guṇas)
Glossary

H
haṭha-yogin – one who practices haṭha-yoga – a path of yoga known for its rigorous discipline
havis – oblations
Hiraṇyagarbha – The supreme Consciousness identified with the mind-intellect cosmic subtle body. Śūtrātmā, Prajāpati, Prāṇa, and Brahmā are synonyms of this term.

I
idantayā – experienced as ‘this’, which can be objectified
Indra – king of heaven
iṣṭa-dhyāna – meditation on the form, name, and quality of the personal God
iṣṭa-phala – desired fruit of action
itihāsa – epic. The Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata are the two famous epics.
Īśvara – God
iṣṭa-rūpa-darśana – vision of personal God

J
jagat – world
jagat-pati – Lord of the Universe
jalpa – argument to prove oneself right
japa – repetition of a mantra or the name of the Lord
jijnāsu – seeker of knowledge
jitātman – one who has conquered his mind
jīva-bhāva – notion or sense of being a limited individual
jīvan-mukta – the person liberated even while living
jīvan-mukti – final Liberation
jīvātman – the limited individual, the bound Self, reflection of Pure Consciousness
jñāna – knowledge
jñāna-hetu – cause of knowledge
jnāna-mudrā – meditation posture
jnāna-yoga – path of knowledge
jnānī – man of knowledge or wisdom
Jñāneshvarī – commentary on the Bhagavad-gītā by Sant Jñāneśvar of Maharashtra, India
jnēya – that which is to be known
jvalanātmaka-vṛtti – those thoughts (vṛtti) which burn within, like hatred, jealousy and so on.
jyoti – light

K
kali – The fourth age of the world consisting of 432,000 years characterised by strife and unrighteousness.
kalpa – A day of Brahmā or 1000 yugas being a period of 432 million years and measuring the duration of the world.
kanyā-dāna – giving away the daughter in marriage
karaṇa – instrument
karma – action
karma-adhyakṣa – he who presides over all actions
karma-āsakti – attachment to action
karma-phala-dātā – bestower of fruits of action
karma-sannyāsa – renunciation of action
karma-śakti – power of action
karma-yoga – path of action
kartavya – duty
kartṛ – the individual who performs action
kartṛ-bhāva – the notion of doership
kathā – literally means story, the stories of the Lord
kavi – seer, poet
kāma – desire
kāmya-karma – selfish, desire-oriented action
Glossary

kīrtana – singing the Lord’s glory
kīrti – fame, glory of the Lord
krama-mukti – sequential liberation
kṛṣṇa-pakṣa – dark fortnight of the waning moon
kṛtakṛtyatā – total fulfilment
kṛti-hetu – cause of action
kratu – fire ritual, worship
kṣamā – forgiveness
kṣānti – forgiveness
kṣara-puruṣa – the perishing entity, the Lord as the world of matter
kṣatriya – one of the four classes of the society. They are the ruling class – manager, administrator, politicians and so on.
kṣaya – decay, loss, destruction
kṣetra – field of matter
kṣetrajña – subject which enjoys the activities of the instruments of perception and the world perceived by them. He is the knower of the field of action.
kuladharma – family culture and values
kulakṣaya – destruction of family
kumbhaka – one of the steps of prāṇāyāma. It is holding the breath without inhalation or exhalation
kuśa – a particular kind of grass that does not become damp
kūṭastha – the unchangeable

L
laya – sleep, dissolution, quietening, absorption
lilā – sport of the Lord
loka-saṅgraha – to lead and guide society on the right path

M
mahā-moha – great delusion
mahā-pralaya – the great dissolution
mahat-brahma – prakṛti, also cosmic mind
mahat-tattva – total mind
mahā-yuga – It consists of the four yugas – Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali. It works out to a total of 4,320,000 years.
malina-sattva – impure sattva, sattva-guṇa with traces of rajas and tamas
manana – deep reflection
manas – mind
manah-sthiti – state of the mind
mano-ratha – day dream
mantra – holy Sanskrit text, a sacred formula used in japa (or the Lord’s name)
mantra-draṣṭṭā – seers, literally those who see the mantras
mānasika-japa – mental repetition of the name of the Lord
mānasika-pūjā – mental worship of the Lord
māhātmya-jñāna – knowledge of the greatness and the glory of the Lord
mārdava – gentleness
māyā – illusion or magic. Used as an appellation for the Lord’s power.
māyā-dāsa – slave of māyā, the jīva (individual)
māyā-pati – Lord of māyā, Īśvara (God)
medhā – intelligence, power to retain the meaning and essence of the subject
mīśra-phala – mixed (a combination of desirable and undesirable) fruits of action
mita – appropriate, as much as needed
mitra – friend
mithyācāra – false conduct
mogha-jñāna – knowledge that is of no true purpose
mogha-karma – wasteful activities
moghāśa – false hopes
moha – delusion
mokṣa – liberation
mṛtyu – death
Glossary

*mukhya-karma-sannyāsa* – highest renunciation
*mukhya-kartṛ* – primary doer
*mukta* – liberated person

N

*naimittika* – due to a particular reason
*naimittika-sṛṣṭi-pralaya* – partial, occasional creation and dissolution
*naiśkarmya* – actionlessness
*naiśkṛtika* – one who creates quarrels, disputes and pursues the adversary to destroy him
*namaskāra* – prostrations to the Lord
*navarasa* – nine sentiments which form an essential part of poetic literature
*nāma-saṅkīrtana* – singing the Lord’s name
*Nārada* – name of the renowned celestial seer
*nāstika* – one who firmly believes that God does not exist or does not believe in the validity of the Vedas
*nididhyāsana* – contemplation. This is the continuous flow of a single thought directed to Brahman, disassociated from thoughts of other objects.
niragni – one who has given up fire rituals, a renunciate
*nirāśli* – one who is free of expectations
*nirāśraya* – free of dependence
*nirdoṣa* – immaculate
*nirguṇa* – without attributes
*nirguṇa-brahman* – attributeless Reality
*nirguṇa-upāsaka* – one who meditates on the attributeless Reality
*nirvaira* – one who does not have animosity towards anyone
*nirvāṇa* – liberation
*nirvāṇa-śānti* – peace experienced by a Liberated Person
*nīṣiddha-karma* – prohibited action
*nīṣkāmata* – one who has given up desires
*nīśreyas* – the ultimate good, Liberation
nīti – ethics
nītya-karma – daily duties
nītya-sṛṣṭi-pralaya – creation and dissolution that happens daily
nītya-trpta – one who is ever content
nītya-yukta – one who is totally steadfast
nivāsa – the abode
nivrtti – actionlessness; renunciation
niyama – disciplines such as cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study of scriptures, and surrender to God. This is the second of the eight limbs of Yoga system.
niyata-karma – daily, obligatory duties as per the injunctions of the scriptures
nṛ-ṛṇa – debt that a householder owes to society

O

om-tat-sat – Om Tat Sat is a sentence of three words and each word denotes an aspect of the supreme Reality. ‘Om’ represents the transcendental and pure Self. ‘Tat’ indicates the changeless substratum, the eternal Truth. ‘Sat’ stands for the principle of Existence.

Ś

śaṅkha – conch
śaraṇa – refuge, resting place, shelter
śarīra – physical body
śāstra – scripture
śāstrārtha – literally means ‘meaning of the scriptures’, discussion upon scriptures
śāstroktta – as explained in the scripture, in accordance to scripture
śiṣya – disciple
śobhana-adhyāsa – illusory notion that some object is nice or beautiful
śrāddha – a ritual meant for expressing gratitude towards ancestors
śreyas – absolute good
śrī – literally means wealth, beauty, and grace. It also means Lakṣmi, Goddess
Glossary

of Wealth.

śruti – that which is heard
śruti – Vedas (literally, that which is heard)
śruti-pramāṇa – Vedas as the means of knowledge
śuci – cleanliness, purity, beauty, and sacredness
śuddha-sattva – pure sattva; sattva guṇa without traces of rajas or tama
śukla-pakṣa – bright fortnight of the waxing moon
śuśrūṣā – loving service
śūdra – one of the four classes of the society. Those who serve the society through manual labour.
śūnya – void

Ś
śoḍaśa-kalā-puruṣa – supreme Reality associated with sixteen facets
śoḍaśa-upacāra-pūjā – worship of the Lord in sixteen sequential steps

S
saguṇa – one with attributes
sahaja-karma – actions in accordance with the aptitude one is born with
sama – equanimous
sama-darśana – vision of oneness
samagra-jñāna – complete knowledge
samarpaṇa – offering
samatā – total equipoise
samādhi – absorption of mind in the Supreme
saniṣkṛta-puruṣa – highly refined person
saniśaya – doubts
saniśayātmā – a doubting person
samuddharaṇam – total upliftment, final release from all bondage
sanīvāda – dialogue
saniṣyoga – union
sannyāsin – renunciate
sanātana – ancient
saṅga – attachment
saṅga-varjita – free of attachments
saṅghāta – the entire assemblage of the three bodies - gross, subtle, and causal
saṅkalpa – fanciful thoughts, firm thought
sarpa-yajña – serpent-sacrifice
sarvatrāga – all-pervading
sat – Existence, the permanent, that which exists in all the three states of time
   – past, present, and future
sat-cit-ānanda – Existence-Consciousness-Bliss
satsaṅga – company of good
satya – truthfulness
satya-vrata – one who always keeps his promise
sādhana – means, spiritual practice
sādhu – good person
sādhutā – goodness, being good even to one who causes harm to us
sākṣīn – witness, Consciousness
sākṣātkaṇa – direct experience (of the Self)
sāma – one of the four means of winning over the enemy. Sāma is good cordial
   advice, appeasement, conciliation.
sāma-veda – is one of the four Vedas
sāmāṇya-kṛpā – general grace of the Lord available for all beings
sāṅkhya – knowledge determined through scriptures, one of the six schools
   of Indian philosophy
sāṅkhya-yoga – path of Self-knowledge determined in the scriptures which
   is a direct means of Realisation
sāttvika – of or pertaining to sattva which is one the three constituents (guṇas)
   of māyā. It expresses as knowledge and serenity.
Glossary

sevā – service
siddhi – extraordinary powers
sinhkā – the demoness who had the power to capture anyone flying above by catching hold of its shadow (ref: Rāmāyaṇa, Sundara-kāṇḍa)
Skanda – the younger son of Lord Śiva and Pārvati; the general of the heavenly army. Also renowned as Kārtikeya and Muruga.
smaraṇa – remembering, recollection
smṛti – remembrance, memory. Also manual of moral codes of Hindu.
sthāna – place
sthita-prajñā – Man of Wisdom established firmly in the knowledge of the Self
sthiti – firm abidance
subuddhi – right thoughts and right attitudes
sudurācāra – most sinful conduct
suḥṛt – well-wisher
sukha-adhyāsa – superimposition of happiness on a given thing
sukhālaya – abode of joy
sukha – joy, happiness
sukha-svarūpa – that which is of the nature of joy
sukha-vṛtti – joy-thought
sūkṣma-viveka – subtle discrimination
surasā – mother of serpents sent by the Gods to test Hanumān as he was crossing the ocean in search of Sitā (ref: Rāmāyaṇa, Sundara-kāṇḍa)
sūtra – aphorism (literally string)
sūtra-bhāṣya – commentary on aphorisms
svādhyāya – self-study of scriptures
sva-adhyāya – self-study; self-introspection
svabhāva – one’s nature
svabhāvika – natural
svacchatā – cleanliness
svadharma – one’s duty or one’s true nature
svarga – heaven
svarga-loka – heaven

T
tapas – austerity
tatpada – literally ‘tat’ means ‘that’ and ‘pada’ means term. It is the first term of the sacred Vedic statement (mahāvākya) “Tat tvam asi – That Thou art”. In this context ‘tat’ (That) connotes the Lord, the infinite Consciousness, the substratum, from which everything emerges, exists, and merges back.
tatpara – one who considers ‘that’ (Lord) alone as the ultimate goal of life; intent on that
tat-parāyaṇa – one who considers ‘that’ (the Lord) as the highest goal
tattva – literally it means the essence, the principle, the non-dual Reality
tāmasika – of or pertaining to tamas. Tamas is one of the three constituents (guṇas) of māyā.
tejas – glow
tīrtha-yātra – visiting holy places
tṛpti – contentment
tulasi – the holy basil plant that is held in veneration by Hindus
tvampada – literally ‘tvam’ means you and ‘pada’ means term. It is the second term of the sacred Vedic statement (mahāvākya) “Tat tvam asi – That Thou art”. In this context it connotes Consciousness (witness) at the individual level, apparently limited by the body, mind, intellect adjuncts.
tyāga – abandonment, giving up

U
uccaiśravas – celestial horse
udāna-vāyu – it is one of the five prāṇas (vital-airs) which controls the various physiological functions. Udāna in particular is the ascending vital-air which is responsible for reverse actions like vomiting and whose major function is the ejection of the soul at the time of death. It has its seat in the throat region.
Glossary

udāsīna – one who is neutral, indifferent
ubhavakara – one who creates
upadṛṣṭā – the silent spectator
Upaniṣad – the philosophical portion of the Vedas
upāsanā – contemplation as a spiritual practice
upāsanā-gati – the state or worlds gained by those who perform specific contemplations
upāya – means
utkārṣakara – that which brings prosperity
utsāha-vardhaka – one who inspires enthusiasm in others
uttama – highest or best
uttama-puruṣa – uttama-puruṣa in Sanskrit denotes the first person of English grammar
uttarāyana – the northern path of the Sun from – mid-Januray to mid-July

V
vaidya – an Ayurvedic doctor
vaikuṇṭha – abode of Lord Viṣṇu
vairāgya – dispassion
vaiśya – one of the four classes into which people are divided in the Hindu society. They represent the business or trading class.
vaiśya-guṇa – the quality of vaiśyas or business class
vaiśya karma – the duty of the vaiśyas or business class
vajra – thunderbolt, the weapon of Indra, the king of the devas
varna-vyavasthā – the caste system. There are altogether four castes – brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras. The classification is based on one’s qualities and actions.
vastra – clothes
vastrālaya – cloth store or a house of garments
Vāmana – one of the incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu
Bhagavad-gītā Course

vāda – discussion, debate, dispute. It can also mean a theory or a doctrine.
vāsanā – inherent and habitual tendencies born of the impressions gained from experiences in this life and past ones
vāyu – Wind God; wind
Vedānta – literally means the end portion of the Vedas. The term is used to denote the philosophy of the Upaniṣads.
Veda – Veda is the revealed knowledge that forms the foundation of Hinduism.
   The term ‘Veda’ usually refers to the four – Rg, Yajus, Sāma, and Atharvāna – which were compiled and sub-divided by Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa.
vedāntakṛt – revealer of scriptures. Also the initiator of the tradition of teachings of scriptures.
vedya – that which is to be known
vibhūti – divine manifestations
vibhūti-darśana – vision of the Lord’s divine manifestations
vicāra – sincere enquiry
vicetas – those who lack discrimination
videha-mukti – final Liberation after giving up the body
vigatabhī – without any fear
vijñāna – direct or complete knowledge, wisdom
vikalpa – alternate, option
vikarma – prohibited action
vikṛta-puruṣa – highly immoral person
vikṣepa – agitations, projections
vikṣepa-śakti – the power of projections
vimatsara – free of envy
viparyaya – false notions
virāṭ – the cosmic form of the Lord
viṣayānanda – pleasures obtained from objects
viṣeṣa-karma – special action
viṣiṣṭhādvaita – qualified non-dualism. It is one of the sub-schools of Vedānta
propounded by Śrī Rāmānujācārya.

**vītaṇḍa** – argument to prove others wrong

**viveka** – discrimination

**viveka-śakti** – the power of discrimination

**viyoga** – separation

**Vṛṣṇi** – the clan to which Lord Kṛṣṇa belonged

**vyāvasāya** – business, superhuman effort, resolve

**Vyāsa** – the exemplary sage who compiled the Vedas, composed the great epic Mahābhārata, 18 Purāṇas and a number of other foundational texts of great importance

**Y**

**yajamāna** – worshipper, on whose behalf and for whose well-being and prosperity the priest performs the ritual

**yajña** – ritualistic fire worship. Also worship of the Lord.

**yajña-bhāva** – worshipful attitude

**yajña-buddhi** – worshipful attitude

**yajña-phala** – result of the ritual

**yama** – control of the inner organs, indicates first of eight limbs of the Yoga system comprising vows of non-injury, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-receiving of gifts; God of Death

**yoga** – the term literally means union (with the Lord). It also means path. In this context of the Gitā Chapter 10 yoga is the Lord’s creative power.

**yoga-śāstra** – scripture that gives practical guidance on how to attain the supreme Truth and live fulfilled lives

**yogin** – one who practices yoga

**yuga** – The span or age of the world according to the Hindus. The yugas are four – Satya or Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali. The duration of each is 1,728,000, 1,296,000, 364,000 and 432,000 years respectively.

**yukta-āhāra** – moderation in the intake of food

**yukta-ceṣṭā** – moderation in exertion

**yukta-svapna-avabodha** – moderation in sleep and wakefulness

**yukta-vihāra** – moderation in recreation
Lesson 1

Introduction to Bhagavad-gītā

A ‘Gītā’ is a song. Songs are most often sung in joy. Yet all joyous songs are not Gītās. A Gītā is a song of spiritual knowledge – a dialogue between the Guru and the śiśya (the teacher and the taught), giving lasting joy to all.

Many Gītās

The word ‘Gītā’ is a common noun. When it is prefixed, it becomes a particular Gītā. There are hundreds of Gītās – songs that are spiritual dialogues between teachers and students, and composed over the ages by Men of Realisation, saints and thinkers.

Some examples of Gītās found in the Hindu scriptures are: the Vidura-gītā in the Mahābhārata, Rāma-gītā in the Rāmāyaṇa, Haṁsa-gītā in the Bhāgavatam and Guru-gītā and Śiva-gītā in the Skanda-purāṇa to name just a few. Some Gītās like the Aṣṭāvakra-gītā and Avadhūta-gītā are independent texts. Even in the present times, great men have composed Gītās, like the Ramaṇa-gītā composed by Ganapati Muni on the teaching of Ramana Maharshi. But most people are not even aware of Gītās other than the Bhagavad-gītā.

The Bhagavad-gītā is a dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, found in the Mahābhārata. Such is its greatness and popularity that the word ‘Gītā’ has become synonymous with it.

The Bhagavad-gītā – The Universal Book of Guidance

The Bhagavad-gītā talks about you and me, and our problems. It answers questions that we often seek answers to: Who am I? How can I be happy? How
do I get rid of anger? How do I remain calm in provocative situations? Why
did God create this world? What is the goal of life and how do I achieve it?

It does not talk about topical issues like child labour or women’s literacy,
which are relevant for a time and a place. It talks about universal issues of
life, relevant at all times, places and circumstances, irrespective of a person’s
gender, caste, creed, colour, religion, nationality, or culture.

The human quest for peace and happiness has not changed from ancient
times, despite the radical changes in our lifestyle. Being universal in nature,
the Bhagavad-gītā applies to all professions and spheres of life. It can become
a ‘Secret to Large Profits’ or an ‘Art of Man-making’.

The Gītā shows us three main paths to the Divine: the Path of Action
(karma-yoga), the Path of Devotion (bhakti-yoga) and the Path of Knowledge
(jñāna-yoga).

The Glory of the Bhagavad-gītā

Bhagavad-gītā, the famous dialogue between Man and God (the brave Pāṇḍava
prince, Arjuna and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa), on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra has caught
the imagination of countless people through the ages. Atheist, theist, saint,
philosopher, scholar, scientist, ruler, and the commoner alike have read,
quoted, debated, researched, commented, reflected, meditated, chanted,
worshipped or sought solace and guidance from it.

It has been translated into all the major languages of the world. Many have
versified it and many more have commented on it in various languages. It
is a treasure trove of wisdom. Merely chanting it too gives joy. It has indeed
transformed the thinking of millions the world over.

Once, after the war, when the Pāṇḍavas were relaxing, Arjuna asked
Śrī Kṛṣṇa to repeat the Bhagavad-gītā. The Lord said that a masterpiece
cannot be repeated. The Gītā had emerged from the Lord while He was in
a state of meditation. The Lord Himself declares: “Gītā me hṛdayam pārtha

1. What Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke afterwards is called Anu-gītā.
– The Gītā, O Arjuna is my very heart.” The Bhagavad-gītā is thus a unique masterpiece – an all-in-one book of knowledge about life and its problems. The Bhagavad-gītā, the nectar of the Mahābhārata, is found at almost the centre of the 18 cantos (parvans). This beautiful Bhagavad-gītā necklace of eighteen sections (chapters) strung with 700 pearls of wisdom (verses) was created by the omniscient Veda Vyāsa. It forms chapters 25 to 42 of the sixth canto called Bhīma-parvan in the great epic Mahābhārata.

-The Mahābhārata

The Mahābhārata is not only very ancient but also the largest epic in the world. Inspired while in meditation, Bhagavān Veda Vyāsa composed its 10,000,000 verses, of which 100,000 verses are extant and were compiled in the form we call Mahābhārata. No wonder it is said that what does not exist in the Mahābhārata does not exist anywhere – that is, the seed of all things, emotions, and concepts, finds a place in Mahābhārata.

Janamejaya, the great-grandson of Arjuna, wished to perform the Sarpa-yajña ritual to avenge the death of his father, Parikṣit. Sage Vaiśampāyana, to whom he went for advice, narrated the entire Mahābhārata to him. The Mahābhārata is an ‘Itihāsa’, loosely translated as history (iti-ha-āsa – thus it happened). It centres around the life of the five incomparable Pāṇḍava princes – Yudhīṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, and hundreds of stories are related in connection with the life of the times. However, it is actually Lord Kṛṣṇa’s story, as He was the very essence of the life of the Pāṇḍavas.

The poem is called Mahābhārata because it is great, vast, and deep. It is also called Jaya (literally victory) as it narrates the ‘victory’ of good (Pāṇḍavas) over evil (Kauravas).
The Author and Conceiver

It is inconceivable to the human mind how and how much the omniscient Veda Vyāsa composed. Besides the Mahābhārata, the 18 Purāṇas (each with thousands of verses) and Brahma-sūtras, he also compiled the four Vedas (each with many thousands of mantras). It is said by sages that all the knowledge in the world is but one fraction of Veda Vyāsa’s infinite knowledge.  

The Scribe

To write the verses as they came to Veda Vyāsa’s mind was a daunting task. Lord Gaṇeṣa agreed to be Sage Vyāsa’s scribe on the condition that he would only write continuously – were he to stop writing, he would not continue. Veda Vyāsa in turn stipulated that Lord Gaṇeṣa should not write anything he did not understand. This proved a happy arrangement for both. Sage Vyāsa interspersed the story with deep philosophic verses, which would make Lord Gaṇeṣa pause to assimilate them and he himself would get a break. Indeed, words that come out of the depth of reflection and meditation have eternal value and become masterpieces.

What is the Gītā?

The Bhagavad-gītā can be considered as both Upaniṣad as well as Yoga-śāstra:

1. Gītā as Upaniṣad: The Upaniṣads expound the knowledge about the absolute Truth and our essential oneness with it. This wonderful knowledge is termed Brahma-vidyā. Since Brahma-vidyā is the main theme of the Gītā too, each of its chapters is also called an Upaniṣad.

2. Gītā as Yoga-śāstra: Gītā is called a Yoga-śāstra because it gives us practical guidance on how to attain the Truth and live fulfilled lives. The word śāstra has two meanings: (a) a scripture that teaches us what is good for us (b) a science that talks about a subject in its totality.

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5. vyāsa-ucciṣṭaṁ jagat sarvam.
6. sāsti, hitam upadiṣṭati iti śāstram.
Works dealing with material sciences are not scriptures, and all scriptures are not sciences. However, *Gitā* is both a scripture and a science. It gives us systematic knowledge about life in its entirety and guides us on how to live the life that we have been given.

‘Yoga’ means to unite with the Higher. Each chapter is named a particular yoga – a means to unite with the Higher. For example, Arjuna’s grief became a trigger for his transformation; hence the first chapter is called *Arjuna-viṣāda-yoga*, or *The Path of Arjuna’s Grief*.

People have looked upon the *Gitā* in different ways:

(1) **As a religious book (dharma-grantha):** For the majority of Hindus and others, the *Gitā* is the most popular Hindu scripture. It is worshipped as a religious book. Most Hindus know that it is a book of spiritual knowledge given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna during the Mahābhārata war. Many Hindus read it regularly as part of their daily religious ritual (pārayāna), but the majority are unaware of its content and depth.

(2) **As an authoritative source of knowledge (pramāṇa-grantha):** Great spiritual teachers (Ācāryas) from ancient times, like Śaṅkarācārya and Rāmānujācārya, have looked upon the *Gitā* as a book of authority that authenticates their school of thought, Advaita-vedānta and Viśiṣṭādvaita respectively. The great freedom fighter Lokamanya Tilak wrote a commentary on the *Gitā* called *Gitā-rahasya* whilst imprisoned by the British, wherein he establishes that the essence of the *Gitā* is in right action.

(3) **As a book of spiritual knowledge (ādhyātmika-jñāna-grantha):** Great saints like Sant Jñāneśvar have spoken and written about the *Gitā* in order to teach its knowledge and educate the masses. Their commentaries, like the *Jñāneśvari*, written in the vernacular, are still read by thousands. Some of the readers of the vernacular versions may never have read the original *Gitā* in Sanskrit. Vinoba Bhave was another freedom fighter who, whilst in
prison, gave talks on the Gitā to the inmates; these were later compiled as the famous Gitāyī. 

(4) As a book of secular knowledge (bhautika-jñāna-grantha): Scientists, social reformers, psychologists and many more have found truths regarding their respective subjects in the words of the Gitā. The famous German scientist, Oppenheimer, is said to have quoted the Gitā describing what he witnessed as the first nuclear test. \(^7\) Elaborate research has been done, and is being done, by many such individuals.

(5) As a book of guidance and unfoldment (mārga-darśaka-grantha): The knowledge of the Gitā has been a source of guidance and solace to the famous and the ordinary alike. Mahatma Gandhi said, “Whenever there is a personal or national problem that I face, I turn to the Gitā for guidance and it has never failed me.” Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda also talked of it as an Art of Man-making and a Manual of Self-unfoldment.

In this Bhagavad-gitā Course, we shall deal with it as a Book of Guidance and Unfoldment.

Special Features of the Gitā

The Gitā, as has been mentioned already, is a practical tome of doing. It, therefore, carries some special features that will help the seeker. We list a few below.

(1) The reader can identify with Arjuna, the seeker, in the book: Students of the Upaniṣads of yore were highly qualified spiritual seekers. They had examined life, understood the futility of worldly pursuits, and sought only spiritual knowledge from their Gurus. Thus the knowledge of the Upaniṣad was for the specialised, trained classes. In contrast, Arjuna, the student in the Gitā, was an

\[ \text{divi śūryasahasṛasya bhavedyugapradūttitā, yadi bhāḥ sadṛṣī sa syādbhāsastasya mahātmānāḥ. (11.12)} \]

If the splendour of a thousand suns were to blaze out at once in the sky, that would be like the splendour of that mighty Being.
ambitious man of action in the midst of worldly problems. He got elated and dejected, felt honoured and insulted, got angry and frustrated, and became confused and confounded as he went through life. The knowledge in the Gītā is, therefore, for the ordinary masses who can identify with the struggles faced by the hero of the Mahābhārata.

(2) This is knowledge given in the battlefield of life: Knowledge of the Upaniṣads as given in the seminaries or hermitages of Masters, on river banks or in deep forests or on Himalayan heights, away from the din of worldly life and pursuits.

Arjuna, on the other hand, was on the battlefield of life – in the midst of the cannons of war, in an environment of stress and tension, amongst people who were selfish, evil and competitive, in situations with life and death consequence, undertaking action that might lead him to success or failure. We can thus identify even with the setting, the battlefield, where the Gītā was expounded, because problems need to be solved as and when they occur. It is thus a practical guidance for the day-to-day problems we face.

(3) This is a unique, divine dialogue to which the reader is exposed: Gītā is a divine song, sung by the Lord Himself. When faced with an impossible situation where all worldly solutions seem inadequate, we turn to the Lord for divine intervention. The ever compassionate Lord listens to our sincere prayer and guides us in life. Also, whenever a sincere seeker questions life, the Lord appears as a Guru to guide him. Thus, the Gītā is a unique dialogue between man and God – a seeker and his Master. It is divine knowledge given by Divinity Incarnate.

(4) This dialogue is transformation technology in action: Only situations come to our lives, never problems. It is we, when we feel physically, psychologically, or outwardly ill-equipped to deal with them, who call difficult situations ‘problems’. When we are capable of facing them, they are not problems. Therefore, it is our inadequacy that causes problems, not the situation.

8. ya svayaṃ padmanābhasya mukhapadmādvinisṛtā.
This teaching empowers us to face problems effectively: Faced with what we term ‘problems’, people respond in the following ways: (i) Escape: Our natural and instinctive reaction is to escape from problems. ‘If I can avoid it, why not?’ Arjuna wanted to run away from the battlefield rather than kill his beloved and revered ones. The cat feels that the whole world (threat) disappears when it closes its eyes! However, situations only worsen when we run away from them. Our non-acceptance only increases our fear. Getting drunk makes the world temporarily rosy, but a hangover added to the existing problem makes things seem worse the next day! (ii) Change: Since we feel that the situation causes the problem, we waste all our energy in trying to change the situation. But the situation itself keeps changing and we find ourselves constantly preoccupied with finding new solutions, all the time feeling inadequate, desperate and tense – as though we were pushed into a pool but not knowing how to swim, ever keep struggling to keep our head above water. (iii) Suffer: Go through the problem cursing and complaining. We blame our fate, God, the world – anyone we possibly can – for the suffering caused to us. Arjuna laments why he, the favourite of his elders, was fated to kill them. Such an attitude only intensifies the suffering, whereas the problem remains unresolved. Those who complain constantly about the heat outside sustain the heat within!

None of these are effective means to face problems. In the Bhagavad-gītā we find that Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not allow Arjuna to escape or complain. He did not change the situation (paristhiti) even though as Lord of the Universe, He could have. Since the problem was created by the mind, Śrī Kṛṣṇa guided Arjuna with the right vision and attitude which transformed his thinking (manah-sthiti). He could now see the situation clearly without tension, reaction and fear, and could take the right action. He performed his duty, and successfully faced the challenge before him. He fought the battle of life and won it.
picture of Arjuna before the teaching (Chapter 1) and after (Chapter 18) is a classic example of inner transformation – from confusion to illumination, ignorance to knowledge, and inaction and dejection to right vision and action.

Facing Life

We should always analyse the situations that come into our lives objectively, impartially, and from all angles so that we can take the right decisions and action. Whenever we have to face a particularly difficult situation, take an important decision, or perform an action which has life and death consequences we should review the situation before taking action.

When Arjuna came to the battlefield, he was calm and confident. He was already aware of formation of battle-lines on both sides. He was clear about the line of action. Yet he decided to review the situation. This was good. He even chose the right position from where he could see both sides clearly.¹⁰

However, when the enormity of the war and its consequences struck him, when the actual moment of truth came, he lost his impartiality and objectivity. How to regain one’s ability to confront life’s tough moments is one of the central teachings of the Gītā.

The Role of the Gītā in our Life

In this world, we are required to do two things:

(1) Face life: Challenges and problems come to all of us in different forms, each day, throughout our lives. Very often we have no choice in what life presents to us. Some of them are predictable, while some situations strike us out of the blue, for example, an accidental death in the family. We generally face all that comes with all the knowledge, strength, and resources at our disposal yet we often find that our resources are inadequate. We find ourselves totally helpless, confused, nervous, bogged down, or overwhelmed and confronting

¹⁰. सेनयोहयोभयं रथम स्थापयं मेस्युत |  
    senayorubhayormadhye ratham sthāpayā meʿcyuta. (1.21)
situations becomes exhausting, weakening, depressing, and agitating. What we need is the right knowledge and attitude to face life with dignity and poise.

(2) **Build our life:** Life is not just about facing situations or managing what we get. We must also build our life, that is, live it in a meaningful, joyful and successful manner. However, a beautiful and inspiring life can only be founded on the bedrock of a complete vision and the right treasury of values. We should also learn how to ‘build with the stones that others throw at us’.

The Gītā provides us with the knowledge, attitude, vision, and values needed to build and live a successful and fulfilled life even as we face situations gracefully and joyfully.

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**The Place of the Gītā in the Hindu Scriptures**

There is a plethora of scriptures available in Hindu Dharma. The basic ones, however, are:

(1) **Śruti:** Śrutis are the four Vedas (*Rk, Yajus, Sāma and Atharva*), considered the fundamental source of all Hindu thought. All scriptures in line with them are considered authentic. This knowledge was realised as mantras by sages (ṛṣis) while in meditation and is, therefore, considered non-human (apauruṣeya). Since the Vedas primarily expound the eternal ultimate Truth (tattva-pradhāna), they are considered eternal (sanātana). And since this knowledge is passed down from teacher to taught, it is called Śruti or heard knowledge.

(2) **Smṛti:** Based on their experiences and Realisation of the Truth, great sages composed scriptures (vaktā-pradhāna) which not only expound the Truth but also teach us how to live a harmonious life and prepare ourselves for the ultimate Truth (ācāra or dharma-nirūpaṇa). *Manu-smṛti* and Gītā are the most famous of the Smṛtis.

(3) **Purāṇa:** This is the knowledge which, though ancient, is ever new and relevant. There are 18 Purāṇas composed by Veda Vyāsa. They illustrate the knowledge of the Śrutis and Smṛtis through stories, examples and dialogues. The
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Purāṇas speak of what might be possible (sambhava-pramāṇa) and, therefore, some of the stories seem strange and improbable, just as what seemed fiction a century back is a fact today. The Bhāgavatam is one of the most famous Purāṇas. (4) Itihāsa: The two famous Itihāsas, Rāmāyaṇa composed by Sage Vālmīki and Mahābhārata composed by Veda Vyāsa, which are epics, centre around the life of Lord Rāma and the five Pāṇḍavas respectively.

The Gītā, although it is part of the Mahābhārata, an Itihāsa, is considered a Smṛti as it teaches us how to live a successful life and reach the highest goal. And even though Gītā is not the fundamental source of Hindu thought, it is considered by many as ‘the’ Hindu Scripture. Some refer to it is ‘the Bible of the Hindus’ and to the Bible as ‘the Gītā of the Christians’. ³³³

Understanding the Gītā

Even a little study of the Gītā can benefit us immensely. A thought from it can become a mantra that guides, consoles, or sees us through difficult times. However, a deep study of it, followed by reflection and contemplation, can transform our vision and establish us firmly on the spiritual path.

The words of the Gītā should be understood in the right context. If not, its message can be misunderstood. For example some say that the Gītā advocates war, ‘fight without fear’ (3.30). Some get confused or see an apparent contradiction. For example, ‘I am the creator (of the Vārṇa system), yet I am the immutable non-creator’ (4.13). Hence the Gītā should be studied under right guidance and in its entirety.

The Gītā itself is the best commentary on itself. An idea mentioned in one place is explained or elaborated in another. For example, the entire Chapter 17 is an elaboration of the statement ‘Be ever steadfast in sattva

11. युध्यस्वास्विगताज्वरः।
yudhyasva vigatajvaraù. (3.30)

12. तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्याकर्तारमवय्याम।
tasya kartāramapi māṃ viddhyakartāramavyayam. (4.13)
– the noble quality’ (2.45), and Chapter 16 elaborates verses 12 and 13 of Chapter 9. Thus cross-referencing, study of and reflection on the Gītā itself will give us insight into its knowledge.

 характеристики хорошего студента

Students come with differing qualities and calibre and each brings a uniqueness to their studies; yet it is also true that students who have the right approach and work hard at their chosen studies are already on the path to success. The student on the spiritual path requires a greater degree of respect for their studies, humility, and hard work for this study is not easy. Given below are some of the characteristics of such a student. Good students

(1) approach the teacher with humility (2.7),
(2) surrender to the teacher (2.7),
(3) they should present themselves and their problems as they are without either underplaying or exaggerating them (2.7),
(4) are eager to learn (2.7, 10.18),
(5) love and respect the teacher (10.12, 10.13),
(6) have tremendous faith in the nobility and ability of the teacher (11.4),

13. नित्यसत्त्वस्य भव ।
नित्यसत्त्वस्य भव ।

14. कार्पय्यदोपहतस्माकः पुष्च्चामि त्वां परमसम्मूच्छेता ।
कार्पय्यदोपहतस्माकः पुष्च्चामि त्वां परमसम्मूच्छेता ।

15. विस्तरैनात्मना योगी विख्यति च जनार्दन ।
विस्तरैनात्मना योगी विख्यति च जनार्दन ।

16. परं प्रभु परं पारं पवित्रं परं भावं ।
परं प्रभु परं पारं पवित्रं परं भावं ।

17. आहुस्तमामुष्यस्य सर्वदेविनानास्तत्स्य ।
आहुस्तमामुष्यस्य सर्वदेविनानास्तत्स्य ।

18. मनुष्यस्य यदि तत्वनन्दन यदम द्वृत्तिं प्रमो ।
मनुष्यस्य यदि तत्वनन्दन यदम द्वृत्तिं प्रमो ।

11.4. मन्यामेव यदि तत्व द्वृत्तिं प्रमो मयाद्रास्तु यदि तत्व द्वृत्तिं प्रमो मयाद्रास्तु

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(7) want to know what is good and right for them, rather than what is pleasant to hear and the easy way out (2.7, 3.2, 19.5.120),

(8) listen attentively and clarify their doubts by intelligent questioning and reflection (4.4),

(9) follow the teachings and transform their vision and life (18.64).

Background of the Mahābhārata War

All Indians know the story of the Mahābhārata, and jokingly refer to major family conflicts as a ‘Mahābhārata’. The hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra – the Kauravas – and the five sons of his brother Pāṇḍu – the Pāṇḍavas – were first cousins belonging to the same Kuru clan. Although they were brought up together in one joint family, right from childhood the Kauravas chose to keep their cousins separate and developed feelings of envy and enmity. Duryodhana, the eldest Kaurava, even plotted to kill the Pāṇḍavas on many occasions. Despite everything that the Kauravas did, the Pāṇḍavas prospered and were loved by all. This further enraged the Kauravas. What started as a family feud took the form of a national war with hundreds of kings and millions of soldiers being involved in direct conflict.

But is the ‘Mahābhārata’ merely a family feud or just a national war? When we examine the life of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, we find that both had their weaknesses. However, the Kauravas, along with their many faults, were also wicked. In spite of their imperfections, the Pāṇḍavas had an inherent goodness. The Kauravas were steadfast in their wickedness and the Pāṇḍavas...
in their goodness. The showdown was finally between the wickedness exemplified by the Kauravas and the good as seen in the Pāṇḍavas; naturally, the good backed by greatness (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) won despite their weaknesses. In addition to their many atrocities, the Kauravas also usurped the kingdom of the Pāṇḍavas by deception, insulted them, and dishonoured their wife in court. Even after the Pāṇḍavas completed their term of exile, their kingdom was not returned to them by the Kauravas as had been agreed. The Pāṇḍavas, on the other hand, did their level best to maintain peace and avoid war. The Kauravas even deceived many kings like Śalya to garner support for their unjust cause. Ultimately, war became inevitable, a matter of principle, a war between a just and an unjust cause. The evil forces in society had to be destroyed to re-establish the rule of righteousness. Hence the Mahābhārata war was not just a family feud or national war, but a war between dharma and adharma – between good and evil.

God always supports the righteous. God was on the Pāṇḍavas’ side, and that made them invincible. Even though their army was much smaller (seven battalions) compared to the Kaurava army (eleven battalions), with the infinite grace and the power of the Lord and the strength of their goodness, they won the war.

The Mahābhārata War Within
Both noble and ignoble thoughts reside in us. They all live together. Usually, evil thoughts outnumber the good. There is a constant conflict between them for supremacy. Evil thoughts have deceptive ways of tricking the good. But goodness has the steadiness and courage to outlast the evil. However, when there is a crisis, or if evil thoughts are on the warpath and have gathered in force, noble thoughts are then left with no choice but to fight it out. Despite weak moments, when we seek guidance, the Lord in the form of our Guru gives us spiritual knowledge which strengthens our virtues and helps us

23. One battalion, termed ‘ākṣauhini’ is a battle formation that consisted of 21,870 chariots (ratha), 21,870 elephants, 65,610 horse-mounted warriors, and 109,350 infantry. (Mahābhārata, Ādi-parvan, 2.15-23).
Lesson 1

overcome our negativities, imperfections and limitations, and we regain inner peace and beatitude.

◊

Bitter or Better

Difficult and sorrowful situations and experiences come to all in life. In the process of experiencing them, some people become bitter, some better, some weaker, some stronger. What YOU become depends on YOU, not on the situation.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra was born blind, Pāṇḍu had leucoderma, and Vidura was born to a maid servant. None of the three brothers, according to the prevalent laws of state, was eligible to the throne of Hastināpura. Pāṇḍu and Vidura had no complaints, whereas Dhṛtarāṣṭra became bitter about his blindness and weaker because of his attachments.

The Pāṇḍavas faced many injustices and difficulties. Twelve years of forest life was tough for the royal princes. Yet all this only made them better and stronger.

◊

Learning the Gītā

Polio shots are taken in infancy to give us immunity all through our lives. The earlier we are empowered to face life, the better off we are. We need to learn, practise, and perfect the art of right living from an early age, not just as we are about to die. Arjuna, it is believed, was sixty years old when he heard the Gītā. He lived for 120 years. He heard the Gītā halfway through his life. A bit late, but at a crucial time for him. Better late than never!

Learn in childhood the verses of the Gītā; in teenage, its word meanings; in youth, its import; and in adulthood – through satsang, study, reflection and practice – to abide in its knowledge.
**QUESTIONNAIRE 1**

*(COVERS LESSON 1, INTRODUCTION TO BHAGAVAD-GĪṬĀ)*

*Answer without referring to the lesson. All sections except Q VIII, Reflect, are to be answered at one stretch.*

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**Duration:** 3 Hours  
**Marks:** 100  

**I. Fill in the Blanks.**  
**Marks 5 (5x1)**

1. The *Bhagavad-gīṭā* is found in the epic _____________.

2. Since Brahma-vidyā is the main theme of the *Gīṭā*, each of its chapter is called an _____________.

3. ____________ is the inspired author and who conceptualized the *Mahābhārata*.

4. The first chapter of *Gīṭā* is called ____________ yoga.

5. The *Bhagavad-gīṭā* is likened to a beautiful necklace of ____________ sections (chapters) strung with 700 pearls of wisdom (verses).

**II. Choose the Correct Answer.**  
**Marks 5 (5x1)**

1. ____________ is the scribe of *Mahābhārata* (Veda Vyāsa, Sañjaya, Lord Gañeśa)

2. The *Bhagavad-gīṭā* is called a ____________, as it gives us practical guidance on how to attain the Truth and live fulfilled lives. (Yoga-śāstra, Brahma-vidyā, Itihāsa)

3. ____________ is that knowledge that though ancient is ever new and relevant. (bhautika-jñāna-grantha, pramāṇa-grantha, Purāṇa)

4. The word ‘Gīṭā’ literally means _____________. (advice, song, joy)
5. ________________ narrated the entire Mahābhārata to Janamejaya, the great-grandson of Arjuna. (Parīksit, Sage Vaiśampāyana, Sañjaya)

III. Match the Following.  
Marks 5 (5x1)

1. Hanisa-gītā - Bhīṣma-parvan  
2. Mahābhārata - Skanda-purāṇa  
3. Four Vedas - great, vast, deep  
4. Bhagavad-gītā - Śruti  
5. Guru-gītā - Bhāgavatam

IV. Answer in Brief (two-line answers).  
Marks 10 (5x2)

1. Why should the Bhagavad-gītā be studied under right guidance and in its entirety?  
2. Which three main paths to the Divine does Gītā show?  
3. On what condition did Lord Gaṇeśa agree to be Sage Vyasa’s scribe?  
4. Why is Mahābhārata also called ‘Jaya’?  
5. Why is it said that ‘what does not exist in Mahābhārata does not exist anywhere’?

V. Write Short Notes (small paragraphs of 3-4 lines each).  
Marks 15 (5x3)

1. Veda Vyāsa’s infinite knowledge  
2. The Mahābhārata war within Purāṇa  
3. Bhagavad-gītā – an authoritative source of knowledge (pramāṇa-grantha)  
4. Śruti

VI. Write Short Answers (5-10 lines).  
Marks 40 (8x5)

1. What are the characteristics of a good student?  
2. Explain the background of the Mahābhārata war.  
3. Why is the Mahābhārata war not just a family feud but a war between dharma (good) and adharma (evil)?  
4. Why is it said that ‘what YOU become depends upon YOU, not on the situation’?
Questionnaire 1

5. Why is the Bhagavad-gītā called ‘the universal book of guidance’?
6. What are the different ways in which people respond to problems?
7. Explain the glory of the Bhagavad-gītā.
8. Why can an ordinary reader easily identify with Arjuna?

VII. Answer in Detail. 
Marks 10 (1x10)
What are the different ways in which the Bhagavad-gītā is looked upon?

VIII. Reflect! 
Marks 10 (1x10)
Throw light on how the Bhagavad-gītā can bring about inner transformation in your life.