

॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥

BHAGAVAD GEETA – 11

*The Yoga of the
Cosmic Vision*

“THE SANDEEPANY EXPERIENCE”

TEXT

28.11

Reflections by
SWAMI GURUBHAKTANANDA



Sandeepany's Vedanta Course

List of All the Course Texts in Chronological Sequence:

Text No.	TITLE OF TEXT	Text No.	TITLE OF TEXT
1	<i>Sadhana Panchakam</i>	24	<i>Hanuman Chalisa</i>
2	<i>Tattwa Bodha</i>	25	<i>Vakya Vritti</i>
3	<i>Atma Bodha</i>	26	<i>Advaita Makaranda</i>
4	<i>Bhaja Govindam</i>	27	<i>Kaivalya Upanishad</i>
5	<i>Manisha Panchakam</i>	28.11	<i>Bhagavad Geeta (Discourse 11)</i>
6	<i>Forgive Me</i>	29	<i>Mundaka Upanishad</i>
7	<i>Upadesha Sara</i>	30	<i>Amritabindu Upanishad</i>
8	<i>Prashna Upanishad</i>	31	<i>Mukunda Mala (Bhakti Text)</i>
9	<i>Dhanyashtakam</i>	32	<i>Tapovan Shatkam</i>
10	<i>Bodha Sara</i>	33	<i>The Mahavakyas, Panchadasi 5</i>
11	<i>Viveka Choodamani</i>	34	<i>Aitareya Upanishad</i>
12	<i>Jnana Sara</i>	35	<i>Narada Bhakti Sutras</i>
13	<i>Drig-Drishya Viveka</i>	36	<i>Taittiriya Upanishad</i>
14	<i>"Tat Twam Asi" – Chand Up 6</i>	37	<i>Jivan Sutrani (Tips for Happy Living)</i>
15	<i>Dhyana Swaroopam</i>	38	<i>Kena Upanishad</i>
16	<i>"Bhoomaiva Sukham" Chand Up 7</i>	39	<i>Aparoksha Anubhuti (Meditation)</i>
17	<i>Manah Shodhanam</i>	40	<i>108 Names of Pujya Gurudev</i>
18	<i>"Nataka Deepa" – Panchadasi 10</i>	41	<i>Mandukya Upanishad</i>
19	<i>Isavasya Upanishad</i>	42	<i>Dakshinamurty Ashtakam</i>
20	<i>Katha Upanishad</i>	43	<i>Shad Darshanaah</i>
21	<i>"Sara Sangrah" – Yoga Vasishtha</i>	44	<i>Brahma Sootras</i>
22	<i>Vedanta Sara</i>	45	<i>Jivanmuktananda Lahari</i>
23	<i>Mahabharata + Geeta Dhyanam</i>	46	<i>Chinmaya Pledge</i>

A NOTE ABOUT SANDEEPANY

Sandeepany Sadhanalaya is an institution run by the Chinmaya Mission in Powai, Mumbai, teaching a 2-year Vedanta Course. It has a very balanced daily programme of basic Samskrit, Vedic chanting, Vedanta study, Bhagavatam, Ramacharitmanas, Bhajans, meditation, sports and fitness exercises, team-building outings, games and drama, celebration of all Hindu festivals, weekly Gayatri Havan and Guru Paduka Pooja, and Karma Yoga activities.

This series is an effort to promote the learning of Vedanta; it does not replace the Course, but hopes to inspire young people to spend two years of their life for an experience that is sure to make a far-reaching spiritual impact on their personal lives. Sandeepany is an all-round spiritual course that gives proper direction to the youth and to those approaching retirement. Hinduism is in dire need of a band of systematically trained teachers or Acharyas who can serve this Eternal Religion.

– The Author, February 2019, Shivaratri Day

Om Namah Shivaaya!

Text
28.11



विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगः

THE BHAGAVAD GEETA – 11

“Yoga of the Cosmic Vision”

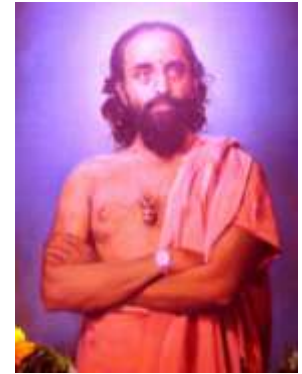
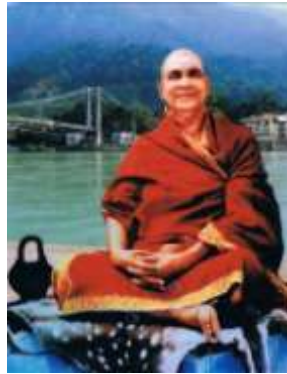
Sri Veda Vyasaji

Reflections

by Swami Gurubhaktananda

on the 8 Lectures delivered by *Swami Advayanandaji*
Acharyaji, 15th Batch Vedanta Course
at Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, Powai, Mumbai

25th June – 02nd July, 2013



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Personal Dedication

1. To my Parents, Smt Sharadaben & Sri Ratilalbhai Kapitan

who inspired me to study in life, to stick to the path of Dharma and pursue the highest ideals; and swamped me with their abundant Love;

2. To Pujya Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj

the President of the Divine Life Society of Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India, who constantly encouraged and supported this effort;

3. To Pujya Sri Swami Tejomayanandaji (Guruji)

for his boundless vision and inspiration to create a vibrant organisation;

4. To Sri Swami Advayanandaji and Sri Swami Sharadanandaji

my Acharyaji and Upa-Acharyaji at Sandeepany, who imparted their bountiful knowledge and wisdom with rare selfless Divine Love, just as the Rishis of yore would wish to see them do.

BHAGAVAD GEETA – 11

“Yoga of the Cosmic Vision”

॥ श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ॥

अथैकादशोऽध्यायः

विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगः

THE BHAGAVAD GEETA

Discourse – 11 (55 Verses)

“The VISION of the Cosmic Vision”

INTRODUCTION

THE THOUGHTS OF Chapter 10 continue into Chapter 11. The Vibhutis of the Lord have been heard; now it remains for them *to be seen*. That experimental proof is given in this Chapter.

It was John Keats who wrote: “A thing of beauty is a joy forever!”

The Vibhutis of the Lord are all beauties – “glorious, brilliant and powerful” – and manifest a small part of His glory. It is His presence in everything that makes them beautiful, so beautiful that we cannot help exclaiming, “My God!” as we listen to each of them.

Even if we see an ant carrying a rice grain ten times its own weight, it reminds us of the Lord’s glory, and we immediately salute the Lord for the marvels He has created.

If such is the case when seeing Him in everything, what would it be like to see *everything in Him*! That is what the Lord gifts Arjuna with in this Chapter – out of sheer love for him.

And in doing so, the Lord has set ablaze the hearts of millions of devotees thereafter to aspire for the same loving gift from Him, the gift of the Cosmic Vision! How many have succeeded we may never know, but we do know that the Lord never refuses a heart that approaches Him wet with the tears of pure devotion.



BHAGAVAD GEETA – 11
“The Yoga of the Cosmic Vision”

CONTENTS

	Introduction to Chapter 11	1
	11.1 ARJUNA’S DARING REQUEST	(Verses 1 – 4) 04
Verse 1:	<i>The First Six Chapters Summarised</i>	4
Verse 2:	<i>The Next Four Chapters Summarised</i>	5
3 & 4:	<i>Arjuna’s Daring Request</i>	5
	11.2 THE LORD’S “VISHWA-ROOPA”	(Verses 5 – 8) 07
Verse 5:	<i>The Cosmic Form is Shown at Once</i>	7
Verse 6:	<i>The Lord’s Enthusiastic Response</i>	8
Verse 7:	<i>The Cosmic Tour Within the Lord’s Body</i>	9
Verse 8:	<i>Arjuna Bestowed with the Divine Eye</i>	10
	11.3 SANJAYA’S REPORT TO THE KING	(Verses 9 – 14) 12
Verse 9:	<i>Sanjaya Replays the “Vishwa-Roopa” Darshan</i>	12
10, 11 & 12:	<i>Descriptions of the “Vishwa-Roopa”</i>	13
Verse 13:	<i>The Whole Universe in the Lord’s Body</i>	14
Verse 14:	<i>Arjuna’s Account is Introduced</i>	15
	11.4 ARJUNA’S REACTION	(Verses 15 – 25) 16
Verse 15:	<i>The Static “Vishwa-Roopa” – 1</i>	16
Verse 16:	<i>The Static “Vishwa-Roopa”– 2</i>	17
Verse 17:	<i>The Popular “Vishnu-Roopa” – 1</i>	18
Verse 18:	<i>The Popular “Vishnu-Roopa” – 2</i>	19
Verse 19:	<i>The Dynamic “Vishwa-Roopa”</i>	19
Verse 20:	<i>Transforming to Fearful</i>	20
Verse 21:	<i>Transforming to Supplicating</i>	21
Verse 22:	<i>Transforming to Wonderment & Awe</i>	22
Verse 23:	<i>Transforming to Immense & Terrifying</i>	22
Verse 24:	<i>Transforming to Fiery & Terrifying</i>	23
Verse 25:	<i>“Withdraw this Terrifying Form!”</i>	24
	11.5 THE OUTCOME OF KURUKSHETRA	(Verses 26 – 31) 25
26 & 27:	<i>The Casualties & the Fate Awaiting Them</i>	25
Verse 28:	<i>As Rivers Enter the Ocean</i>	27

Verse 29:	<i>As Moths Entering Glowing Fire</i>	27
Verse 30:	<i>"You Find Them To Be Delicious!"</i>	28
Verse 31:	<i>"Who Are You & What Is Your Purpose?"</i>	29
11.6	THE LORD EXPLAINS HIS PURPOSE	(Verses 32 – 34) 31
Verse 32:	<i>The Cosmic Purpose of the Avatara</i>	31
Verse 33:	<i>"Just be My Instrument"</i>	32
Verse 34:	<i>"Arjuna, Your Victory is Certain"</i>	32
11.7	ARJUNA'S DANCE OF SALUTATIONS	(Verses 35 – 40) 34
Verse 35:	<i>Sanjaya Announces the "New King"!</i>	34
Verse 36:	<i>Arjuna – Three Types of Responses</i>	35
Verse 37:	<i>Brahman – the Vedantic Name of the "Lord"</i>	36
Verse 38:	<i>The Lord is Worthy of this Honour</i>	37
Verse 39:	<i>Salutations Again and Again!</i>	37
Verse 40:	<i>The Dance of Salutations!</i>	38
11.8	ARJUNA SEEKS FORGIVENESS	(Verses 41 – 46) 40
Verse 41:	<i>"Forgive My Familiarity With You"</i>	40
Verse 42:	<i>"Forgive My Light Fun With You"</i>	40
Verse 43:	<i>"Forgive Me For Erring Discipleship"</i>	41
Verse 44:	<i>"Forgive Me For All My Excesses"</i>	41
Verse 45:	<i>"Praseeda – Have Mercy Upon Me"</i>	43
Verse 46:	<i>"Bring Back the Vishnu-Roopa"</i>	43
11.9	WITHDRAWAL OF THE COSMIC FORM	(Verses 47 – 51) 45
Verse 47:	<i>The Lord Glorifies His "Vishwa-Roopa"</i>	45
Verse 48:	<i>The Rarity of the "Vishwa-Roopa"</i>	46
Verse 49:	<i>"Be Not Afraid of Such a Terrible Form"</i>	47
Verse 50:	<i>The "Vishnu-Roopa" Resumed</i>	47
Verse 51:	<i>The "Manusha-Roopa" Resumed</i>	48
11.10	BHAKTI YOGA IS THE MEANS	(Verses 52– 55) 50
Verse 52:	<i>"Vishwa-Roopa" – Even the Gods Desire It!</i>	50
Verse 53:	<i>Necessary but Insufficient Means</i>	52
Verse 54:	<i>The Sufficient Means</i>	52
Verse 55:	<i>The Path of Bhakti Yoga</i>	52



11.1 ARJUNA'S DARING REQUEST

(Verses 1-4, 4 No.)

Verse 1: *The First Six Chapters Summarised*

अर्जुन उवाच ।

मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।

यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम

॥ ११-१॥

arjuna uvāca |

madanugrahāya paramam guhyamadhyātmasamjñitam |

yattvayōktaṁ vacastēna mōhō:'yaṁ vigatō mama

॥ 11-1॥

	<i>Arjuna uvaacha:</i>	<i>Arjuna said:</i>
1	<i>Mad-anugrahaaya paramam,</i>	<i>Out of <u>compassion</u> towards me, the highest</i>
2	<i>guhyam adhyaatma-samjnitam;</i>	<i>secret concerning the Self</i>
3	<i>yat tvayaa uktam vachah tena,</i>	<i>has been spoken by You; by that word</i>
4	<i>mohah ayam vigatah mama.</i>	<i>this <u>delusion</u> of mine is gone.</i>

The highest secret concerning the Self is with reference to what has been taught to Arjuna in the first six chapters of the Geeta. In these six chapters, the 'Twam Pada' is summarized. In this single verse, Arjuna makes a first sweep that covers his response to the knowledge he received in these chapters:

1 i) Gratitude for the Compassion the Lord has showered upon him.

2-3 ii) Gratitude to Sri Krishna for having imparted the greatest Spiritual Secret of all – the knowledge of the Self.

4 iii) Gratitude to the Lord for having removed his paralyzing Delusion.

Arjuna is giving some vital feedback to his Beloved Master. The teaching has not been in vain. Arjuna is a changed person since the teaching began 9 chapters ago. He was a picture of **Delusion** and **Confusion**; this led to him being despondent, grief-stricken, powerless and helpless. That is now a thing of the past. He has a new sense of purpose in life. He has resolved to take up the path of Karma Yoga in earnest.

In this way Arjuna is telling Sri Krishna, "Your teaching is very powerful, indeed. It has not been in vain. I can honestly say it has helped me to come out of my Delusion."

In spite of this help he had already received, something still lingered in his heart. He was not fully satisfied. He had not *experienced* anything of the Truth that Sri Krishna had explained till then about his personal spiritual path. He nurtured a further doubt that he expressed in Chapters 8 and 9. The doubt was cleared to some extent . . .

Verse 2: *The Next Four Chapters Summarised*

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।

त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम्

॥ ११-२॥

bhavāpyayau hi bhūtānām śrutau vistaraśō mayā |

tvattaḥ kamalapatrākṣa māhātmyamapi cāvyayam

॥ 11-2॥

1	<i>Bhavaap-yayau hi bhootaanaam,</i>	<i>The origin and dissolution of all beings, verily,</i>
2	<i>shrutau vistarashah mayaa;</i>	<i>has been heard in <u>detail</u> by me</i>
3	<i>tvattah kamala patra aksha,</i>	<i>from You, O Lotus-eyed Krishna,</i>
4	<i>maahaatmyam api cha avyayam.</i>	<i>and also your inexhaustible greatness.</i>

In this second sweep, Arjuna summarises the next four chapters which aimed to remove the second phase of doubt that lingered in his mind. In the last four Chapters, Sri Krishna answered these to a large extent. He focussed on His Higher Nature, spoke of His Imperishable Nature, and ended with glittering account of His glories which are like “clusters of gems on a necklace”.

In Chapters 7-10, the ‘Tat Pada’ was summarized, highlights of which are:

1-3 Verse 7.6: “Know that all beings have evolved from this twofold Prakriti, and that I am the source of the entire creation, and into Me again it dissolves.”

Verse 7.12: “Whatever entities there are, know them all to be born from Me alone. In reality, I am not in them but they are in Me.”

Verse 9.10: “Under My aegis Nature brings forth the whole creation, consisting of both sentient and insentient beings. It is due to this cause that the wheel of Samsara is goes around.”

Verse 10.8: “I am the Source of all creation and everything in the world moves because of Me; knowing thus, the wise, full of devotion, constantly worship Me.”

Verse 10.10: “On those ever united through meditation on Me and worshipping Me with love, I confer that Yoga of wisdom by which they come to Me.”

4 To top it all, Arjuna heard 71 of the finest examples of the Lord’s glories in creation, including Himself as No.1 among them. Lord Krishna literally became Arjuna’s tour-guide: From the snakes of Patala Loka to Adi Sesha in Brahmaloaka; from Gandharva Loka to Pitru Loka; from Swarga Loka to Bhu Loka (the earth), the Lord took Arjuna on a whirlwind tour of the fourteen worlds of Brahmanda, our universe!

Up to the end of Chapter 10, Arjuna has heard all about how to see his Beloved Lord in every part of Creation. That marked only a theoretical high point in his knowledge of the universe. More is yet to come and Arjuna’s appetite has been whetted for it. The stage is set for Arjuna to make a bold request for the most awesome of all human experiences . . .

Verse 3 & 4: *Arjuna’s Daring Request*

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।

द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम

॥ ११-३॥

ēvamētadyathāṭṭha tvamātmānaṁ paramēśvara |
draṣṭumicchāmi tē rūpamaśvaram puruṣōttama

|| 11-3||

1	<i>Evam etat yathaa aattha twam,</i>	As You have thus <u>described</u>
2	<i>aatmaanam parameshwara;</i>	Yourself, O Supreme Lord,
3	<i>drashtum icchaami te rupam,</i>	I wish to behold Your Form
4	<i>aishwaram purushottama.</i>	Divine , O Purushottama!

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम्

|| ११-४||

manyasē yadi tacchakyam mayā draṣṭumiti prabhō |

yōgēśvara tatō mē tvam darśayātmānamavyayam

|| 11-4||

5	<i>Manyase yadi tat shakyam,</i>	If <u>You think</u> that it is possible
6	<i>mayaa drashtum iti prabho;</i>	for me to see It, O Lord,
7	<i>yogeshwara tatah me tvam,</i>	then, O Lord of Yoga, do You <u>please</u>
8	<i>darshaya aatmaanam avyayam.</i>	show to me Your Imperishable Form.

An immediate observation is this: In each of the two verses, Arjuna addresses the Lord twice. This indicates the importance of the verses – the verses which make a most daring request to the Lord; the request for the **Cosmic Vision**.

1-8 These two verses seem to tell us that Arjuna is uncertain about his own eligibility for such a request; and he is also uncertain whether the Lord will grant such a request.

Arjuna’s earlier request for details of the Vibhūtis took up seven verses. Here, for a request that is even more precious and rare than that, only two verses are used. It seems a hasty, unplanned, inadequate effort for such a profound vision. Is it just an after-thought that motivates Arjuna? Is it a half-hearted request?

Only the Lord can decide on such matters. It is not given to human minds to assess such matters. The Lord sees the heart of Arjuna. If there is sincerity in it, even one word, “*Show!*” will be enough!

From the human angle, one may ask, “Is Arjuna trying to test the Lord – to see if He really does have the power to grant him the Cosmic Vision?” Mortal brains may think along these lines, but not that of a devotee, a child of God who hides nothing, who comes with so much openness. Arjuna’s approach is childlike: “I am not insisting, O Lord of Lords. It is only if You feel I deserve it. I will be very grateful if You can oblige, O Lord. I am already convinced of Your greatness. You need not show me any miracles to convince me.”



11.2 THE LORD'S "VISHWA-ROOPA"

(Verses 5-8, 4 No.)

THE LORD IS EQUALLY in a hurry to show His Cosmic Form – where is the need for formality in such matters?

Completely satisfied with what He sees in Arjuna's sincere desire from the heart, made so unassumingly, the Lord at once decides that Arjuna is "eligible". The Lord does not look at the external formalities of a request. Be it in 7 verses or be it in just 2, the Lord sees the sincerity behind it.

There is something crystal-clear and transparent about Arjuna that the Lord can see as his outstanding trait. Arjuna hides nothing from his teacher. He tells what is in his heart.

Verse 5 *The Cosmic Form is Shown at Once*

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।

पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।

नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च

॥ ११-५॥

śrībhagavānuvāca |

paśya mē pārtha rūpāṇi śataśō:'tha sahasraśaḥ |

nānāvīdhāni divyāni nānāvārṇākṛtīni ca

|| 11-5||

	<i>Shree Bhagavaan uvaacha:</i>	<i>The Blessed Lord said:</i>
1	<i>Pashya me partha roopaani,</i>	<i>Behold, O Partha, My forms,</i>
2	<i>shatashah atha sahasrashah;</i>	<i>by the <u>hundreds and thousands,</u></i>
3	<i>naanaa vidhaani divyaani,</i>	<i>of different <u>sorts,</u> all divine,</i>
4	<i>naanaa varna aakriteeni cha.</i>	<i>and of various <u>colours and shapes.</u></i>

The Lord leaps to the occasion and says, "Yes, My beloved son, you are indeed worthy of such a Vision and I am going to show It to you now itself."

1 Pashya: "See!" The Lord's very first word is "See, Arjuna, behold the Vision! See, see for yourself who I really am!" There is not a minute to waste; look at the Lord's haste!

In the ensuing 4 verses, the Lord uses the word 'Pashya' five times. Indeed, He overwhelms Arjuna by His enthusiastic response. Can there be anything but enthusiasm in a matter as vital as beholding the Cosmic Vision? Certainly one would not feel the same as when one is watching the release of a highly acclaimed film. The entire mental frame of mind is the very opposite. Yet, even Sri Vyasaji is not unaware of the sense of the dramatic in the way he describes what is taking place on the battlefield that moment.

2-4 The initial description of the Cosmic Form has all the trappings of a dramatic scene in a modern city at night – large numbers are the first thing noted, variety of all sorts

1-2 The Lord takes Arjuna at once into His Boardroom, and introduces the Officers in charge of His whole Creation. The ones who run the show on His behalf are shown first – all the twelve **Adityas**, the eight **Vasus**, the eleven **Rudras**, the two **Ashwinis**, and the forty-nine **Maruts**. They work under **Prajapati**, and have **Indra** as their King. The whole cabinet is introduced to Arjuna.

3-4 The Lord Himself seems to be getting carried away – or is that a creation of Sage Vyasa to draw out the dramatic first, realising that it is human beings who are going to read this report after all! It has to hold their slender attention first and foremost.

Sage Vyasa knows how important first impressions are, and is making maximum use of all literary devices to make that impression indelible in our minds. Once again, do we perhaps get a feeling of a description, not of the Cosmic Form, but of a Cosmic Circus?

Well, there is no *time* to dwell on matters like that. The Lord’s description presses on with breathtaking fury . . . and we cannot afford to miss out on any detail. We just have to go along with the show, and think later!

Verse 7: *The Cosmic Tour Within the Lord’s Body*

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।
 मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद् द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ ११-७॥
 ihaikastham jagatkṛtsnam paśyādya sacarācaram |
 mama dēhē guḍākēśa yaccānyad draṣṭumicchasi ॥ 11-7॥

1	<i>Iha ekastham jagat kritsnam,</i>	<i>The whole <u>Universe</u> centred here in One –</i>
2	<i>pashya adya sachara acharam;</i>	<i>behold now the <u>moving</u> and the <u>unmoving</u> –</i>
3	<i>mama dehe gudaakesha,</i>	<i>in <u>My Body</u>, O Gudakesha,</i>
4	<i>yat cha anyat drashtumicchasi.</i>	<i>and whatever else you desire to see.</i>

1 In Chapter 10, the Lord took Arjuna on a tour of the Cosmos physically going to all the best places. Now, the same tour is done with all those places residing within His own luminous Body, the one that is standing besides Arjuna in flesh and blood. In the former tour, Krishna was showing Arjuna the gold that is in all the ornaments of Creation. Now, in this Cosmic Vision, He is asking Arjuna to behold all the ornaments in the gold which He is. The latter is a far more difficult task than the former.

To repeat this, we can say the “*One in the many*” was described in Chapter 10; now we are seeing the “*Many in the One*”.

Some Vedantic Points to Ponder Over

2-3 Gudakesha: “*one who has conquered Tamas*”. Tamas? In the midst of such a blitz tour of the Cosmic Vision, even if there was any Tamas, it would have got swept away in the first second, owing to the speed with which the Vision is proceeding.

Point 1: It could well be that Arjuna is seeing this Vision within himself, in his own inner Consciousness, wherefrom the Lord has kindly removed all the distractions and wherein He has enthroned Himself. Arjuna’s Consciousness has become the pure gold, and is taking the form of all the ornaments seen earlier. It’s a point worth considering.

nothing. It is like sitting in front of a TV with only the audio input plugged, and the video input unconnected! Arjuna is left wondering what on earth is Sri Krishna so excited about.

3-4 The Divine Eye is given to Arjuna at last. It is not another *physical* eye over and above the two physical eyes. There are numerous people who are mystified by this Third Eye, and give it attributes of the physical eye. This is the “eye of intuition” by which a person is able to behold subtle things beyond the scope of the physical eyes.

Pujya Gurudev presents a beautiful analogy at this point. He says: “To read a poem only knowledge of the alphabet is necessary; but to understand it, needs a master-mind that has been well soaked in the subtle beauties of poetry. Similarly, to see the ‘One in the Many’ is the work of a *heart* soaked with faith, but to see the ‘Many in the One’ we need, besides the heart, an educated intellect that has learnt to see for itself the logic of the philosophers.”

Now that Arjuna has the correct Eye, the Vision only just begins for him! Is the Lord going to press the “Replay” button and show the whole thing again in ‘slow motion’? We may dearly wish that He does do so for our benefit if not for Arjuna’s.

Actually, the Lord had made provision for this at the very beginning of the Geeta – it was provided for in the form of Sanjaya . . .



11.3 SANJAYA'S REPORT TO THE KING

(Verses 9-14, 6 No.)

THE SCENE NOW SHIFTS to Hastinapura, in the palace of King Dhritarashtra. In the next six verses Sanjaya reports to the King what has just happened on the battlefield. These words tell us that Sanjaya was able to behold the Vision which Arjuna missed. Sanjaya was granted the boon to know “everything that takes place, on the battlefield and in the minds of the warriors”. Sanjaya becomes our “Replay” button!

In his report to the King of the amazing scene he has just witnessed, Sanjaya uses it as one more opportunity to persuade the King to withdraw his troops from the battlefield honourably – but he remains unsuccessful yet again. It all falls on deaf ears, just as it fell on a “Third-Eye”-less Arjuna a few minutes earlier. Poor Dhritarashtra, not only does he have no third-eye, but he also does not have the first two! Neither does he have the fourth eye, the “eye of discrimination”, to see the good intention in Sanjaya’s words that beckon him indirectly to call off the war.

Verse 9: *Sanjaya Replays the “Vishwa-Roopa” Darshan*

सञ्जय उवाच ।

एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।

दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम्

॥ ११-९॥

sañjaya uvāca |

ēvamuktvā tatō rājanmahāyōgēśvarō hariḥ |

darśayāmāsa pāarthāya paramam rūpamaiśvaram

|| 11-9||

	<i>Sanjaya uvaacha:</i>	<i>Sanjaya said:</i>
1	<i>Evam uktvaa tatah raajan,</i>	<i>Having thus <u>spoken</u>, O King,</i>
2	<i>mahaa-yogeshwarah harih;</i>	<i>the great Lord of Yoga, Sri Hari,</i>
3	<i>darshayaamaasa paarthaaya,</i>	<i>showed to <u>Arjuna</u></i>
4	<i>paramam roopam aishwaram.</i>	<i>His Supreme-most Form, glorious and auspicious.</i>

The King of Hastinapura, upon whom even at this stage solely rests the power to call off the battle, now receives the report from his special correspondent, Sri Sanjaya.

We remember that Sanjaya knew intuitively what was right and what was wrong in state matters, i.e. he had the “eye of discrimination”. He had strong leanings towards the Pandavas in this battle. His words even in Chapter 1 carried the hint to the King that he should withdraw and save the entire race from certain catastrophe, and the Kauravas from certain defeat.

Now, having seen the Cosmic Form by the special Grace of the Lord, which was shown to an unequipped Arjuna, he has seen what is to be the outcome of the battle, and is

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।

यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः

॥ ११-१२॥

divi sūryasahasrasya bhavēdyugapadutthitā |

yadi bhāḥ sadṛśī sā syādbhāsastasya mahātmanah

॥ 11-12॥

9	<i>Divi soorya sahasrasya,</i>	<i>If in the sky a thousand Suns</i>
10	<i>bhavet yugapat utthitaa;</i>	<i>were to blaze forth all at once,</i>
11	<i>yadi bhah sadrishee saa syaat,</i>	<i>that <u>brilliance</u> would be like the</i>
12	<i>bhaasah tasya mahaatmanah.</i>	<i>splendour of that Mighty Being!</i>

The term '**Vishwa-Roopa**', used to describe this Form of the Lord, is explained at the very end of the Chapter.

1-8 Sanjaya's description is very strongly oriented towards what one 'sees'. The other senses play no part in it, except for the small reference to "anointing with divine unguents". Everything seems to be all about Form only. Acharyaji noted this bias towards form. A Vision will certainly have Form in it, but it will not be exclusively about Form.

A Vision is symbolic, it carries with it a message that adds meaning to life, it is pregnant with hope, of aspirations, of a Goal, of something more than just form. Sanjaya perhaps realises that the King will have no interest in these other aspects, and 'form' is all that will make an impact on him. He maximises the description of the Form of Lord Vishnu.

9-12 Sanjaya tries his best to get something of the feeling of seeing such a Darshan across to the blind King. He picks a most awesome simile to describe Lord Vishnu's form – the simile of a thousand suns all rising in the sky together! Little does he realise that however much he praises Lord Krishna, it is going to have no impact on the King, since Sri Krishna is not seen as a threat. Praise of Sri Krishna is futile as far as the King is concerned.

Besides, Sanjaya is reporting to one who is blind. If a blind person does not know what one sun is like, how is he going to imagine a thousand of them? If he has not seen one sunrise, how is he to imagine a thousand suns rising?

The only value of Sanjaya's simile of the sun would lie in its irony. The King is living in a dark world of self-centred attachment to his sons, with little thought towards the larger community which will suffer the most due to the war. To him who is enveloped in pitch darkness, will it make any difference if that darkness is multiplied a thousand times?

Sanjaya eventually gives up his effort. He presents one more verse on the Cosmic Form, and then leaves the rest to be described in Arjuna's words.

Verse 13: *The Whole Universe in the Lord's Body*

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।

अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा

॥ ११-१३॥

tatraikasthaṁ jagatkṛtsnaṁ pravibhaktamanēkadhā |

apaśyaddēvadēvasya śarīrē pāṇḍavastadā

॥ 11-13॥

1	<i>tatra ekastham jagat kritsnam,</i>	<i>Resting there in One, the whole Universe,</i>
2	<i>pravibhaktam anekadhaa;</i>	<i>divided into all its <u>infinite parts,</u></i>
3,4	<i>apashyat (paandavah tadaa, (order of shareere deva devasya). (words changed</i>	<i>was then <u>beheld</u> by the Son of Pandu in the One Body of the God of gods!</i>

The “**Vishwa-Roopa**” is a vision in which the entire Universe appears within the framework of the Lord’s Body. As the details emerge, we shall see its spiritual meaning.

1 Sanjaya’s report summarises the Lord’s own description prior to giving Arjuna the “Third Eye”. The replay has been successfully covered.

2 The division into parts mentioned in the commentary of verse 7 arises from here.

3-4 Sanjaya’s impression is that Arjuna is beholding the Form from the outside. Surely, Arjuna would also be within that Form? Perhaps Sanjaya is taking the limitations of the King into account.

Verse 14: *Arjuna’s Account is Introduced*

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनञ्जयः ।

प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत

॥ ११-१४॥

tataḥ sa vismayāviṣṭo hr̥ṣṭarōmā dhanañjayaḥ |

praṇamya śirasā dēvaṁ kṛtāñjalirabhāṣata

|| 11-14||

1	<i>Tatah sah vismaya-aavishtah,</i>	<i>Then, filled with <u>wonder</u>, he</i>
2	<i>hrishta-romaa dhananjaya;</i>	<i>Dhananjaya (Arjuna), with <u>hair standing on end</u>,</i>
3	<i>pranamy shirasaa devam,</i>	<i><u>bowed down</u> his head to the Lord Divine</i>
4	<i>kritaanjalih abhaashata.</i>	<i>and, with <u>joined palms</u>, spoke (these words):</i>

1-4 Arjuna is described here by Sanjaya as a picture of submission before the wondrous Vision. There is undoubtedly another dimension in the Cosmic Form which has touched Arjuna. Arjuna’s “wonder” and “hair standing on end” suggest something beyond what only Form would produce.

We sense that Sanjaya is aware that there is another side to the Cosmic Form than just its physical depiction. However, if he expressed it, the King may doubt it. That is another reason why Sanjaya chooses to quote Arjuna’s words directly.

Sri Krishna & Arjuna in Rapport

When Sri Krishna first spoke (verses 5-8) introducing the Cosmic Vision, He had used the word **Pashya** “See, see!” five times in those four verses. In the next section, we see Arjuna’s reaction to this Vision. Arjuna matches that by using the word **Pashyami** “I am seeing! I am seeing!” five times in his first five verses. There is a perfect rapport between the Guru and the disciple.

Eagerness to reveal is met with an equal eagerness to receive.

11.4 ARJUNA'S REACTION

(Verses 15-25, 11 No.)

HOW THE COSMIC VISION UNRAVELS

The Cosmic Vision, as described by Arjuna in this section, passes through four distinctly identifiable phases:

PHASE 1: The Static “Vishwa-Roopa”: (Verses 15-16) This is the Cosmic Vision, showing the Lord as the *Cosmic Person*. The whole cosmos, including all Deities, is seen within the Lord’s Body. Everything described is shown in a static state.

PHASE 2: The Popular “Vishnu-Roopa”: (Verses 17-18) The Lord takes His four-armed form, known as the Chaturbhuja, that devotees in India are so familiar with as Lord Vishnu. This is the form used by most devotees to worship the Lord.

PHASE 3: The Dynamic “Vishwa-Roopa”: (Verse 19) This is as the above devotional form, but a significant dynamic aspect is introduced to it in the second line. It is no longer static.

PHASE 4: The Transforming “Vishwa-Roopa”: (Verses 20-25) In six verses, the “Vishwa-Roopa” rapidly transforms through the following stages: dynamic, fearful, terrible, supplicating, striking wonder and awe, immense, terrifying, fiery and discomfoting.

That brings us to the point when Arjuna asks the Lord to withdraw it (verse 25).

PHASE 1: THE STATIC COSMIC FORM

Verse 15: *The Static “Vishwa-Roopa” – 1*

अर्जुन उवाच ।
पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे
सर्वास्तथा भूतविशेषसङ्घान् ।
ब्रह्माणमीशं कमलासनस्थ-
मृषींश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान्

॥ ११-१५॥

arjuna uvāca |
paśyāmi dēvāṁstava dēva dēhē
sarvāṁstathā bhūtaviśēṣasaṅghān |
brahmāṇamīśaṁ kamalāsanastha-
mṛṣīmśca sarvānuragāṁśca divyān

॥ 11-15॥

	<i>Arjuna uvaacha:</i>	<i>Arjuna said:</i>
1	<i>Pashyaami devaan tava deva dehe,</i>	<i>I see all the gods, O God, in Your Body,</i>
2	<i>sarvaan tathaa bhoota vishesha sanghaan;</i>	<i>as well as <u>hosts of beings</u> of various classes;</i>
3	<i>brahmaanam eesham kamala aasana stham</i>	<i><u>Brahma</u>, the Lord of Creation, is there seated on a lotus,</i>
4	<i>risheen cha sarvaan uragaan cha divyaan.</i>	<i>and all the <u>Rishis</u> are present as well as the <u>celestial serpents</u>.</i>

Verse 16: The Static "Vishwa-Roopa" – 2

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं
पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।
नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं
पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप

॥ ११-१६॥

anēkabāhūdaravaktranētram
paśyāmi tvāṁ sarvatō:'nantarūpam |
nāntam na madhyam na punastavādim
paśyāmi viśvēśvara viśvarūpa

॥ 11-16॥

5	<i>Aneka-baahoo- udara vaktra-netram,</i>	<i>Possessed of <u>numerous</u> arms, bellies, mouths and eyes;</i>
6	<i>pashyaami twam sarvatah ananta-roopam;</i>	<i>I see You all around as having infinite forms;</i>
7	<i>na antam na madhyam na punah tava aadim,</i>	<i>Without <u>end</u>, without a <u>middle</u> and also without a <u>beginning</u>;</i>
8	<i>pashyaami vishveshwara vishwa-roopa.</i>	<i>I behold Thee, O Lord of the Universe, in the form of a Cosmic Person!</i>

1-8 This is Phase 1 of the Cosmic Form shown by the Lord. The static "Vishwa-Roopa" is also the pleasant aspect of the Cosmic Form. As yet, there is nothing frightening about it that Arjuna would need to turn away from. It has philosophic interpretations which convey the nature of the Supreme Reality. These have been touched on earlier.

The description of this form as it happened, prior to the "Divine Eye" being given to Arjuna, has also been covered already. A picture of it has been given earlier. This form is not suitable for worship or Puja by devotees, and so it is not so commonly seen in photographs.

PHASE 2: THE POPULAR “VISHNU-ROOPA”

Verse 17: *The Popular “Vishnu-Roopa” - 1*

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च
 तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।
 पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ताद्
 दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम्

॥ ११-१७॥

kirīṭinaṁ gadināṁ cakriṇaṁ ca
 tējōrāśiṁ sarvatō dīptimantam |
 paśyāmi tvāṁ durnirīkṣyaṁ samantād
 dīptānalārkyadyutimapramēyam

॥ 11-17॥

1	<i>Kireetinam gadinam chakrinam cha,</i>	<i>As holding a <u>diadem</u> (a conch), wielding a <u>mace</u>, and holding aloft a <u>disc</u>;</i>
2	<i>tejoraashim sarvatah deeptimantam;</i>	<i>as a mass of brilliance glowing all around</i>
3	<i>pashyaami twaam durnir- eekshyam samantaat,</i>	<i>do I behold Thee. Very difficult to look at from all sides,</i>
4	<i>deapta-anala-arka dyutim aprameyam.</i>	<i>with the radiance of fire and the sun ablaze art Thou, and <u>immeasurable</u>.</i>



Verse 18: The Popular “Vishnu-Roopa” - 2

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं
त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता
सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे

tvamakṣaram paramaṁ vēditavyaṁ
tvamasya viśvasya paraṁ nidhānam |
tvamavyayaḥ śāśvatadharmagōptā
sanātanastvaṁ puruṣo matō mē

॥ ११-१८॥

॥ 11-18॥

5	<i>Twam aksharam paramam veditavyam,</i>	<i>Immutable art Thou, the Supreme One to be known;</i>
6	<i>twam asya vishwasya param nidhaanam;</i>	<i>Of this universe, You are the most perfect <u>repository</u>;</i>
7	<i>twam avyayah shaashvata dharma goptaa,</i>	<i>You are the <u>Imperishable</u>, the protector of the <u>Eternal Religion</u>;</i>
8	<i>sanaatana twam purushah matah me.</i>	<i>You are the Eternal Person. This is my conviction.</i>

1 Three of the four arms of the Lord hold these three items; the fourth arm is raised in blessing towards the devotee worshipping the Lord.

2-4 This is the form that was described by Sanjaya as having the brilliance of a thousand suns.

5-8 From this point, the Divine Personality of the Lord is described. The Lord actually represents the Reality, named Brahman in the Upanishads. The most common characteristic of Brahman is His unchanging nature, His constancy. He is Supreme because He supports everything that is created. He is indestructible and eternal. These are other characteristics.

PHASE 3: THE DYNAMIC “VISHNU-ROOPA”

Verse 19: The Dynamic “Vishwa-Roopa”

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्य-
मनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।
पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रं
स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम्

anādimadhyāntamanantavīrya-
manantabāhum śāsisūryanētram |
paśyāmi tvāṁ dīptahutāśavaktraṁ
svatējasā viśvamidaṁ tapantam

॥ ११-१९॥

॥ 11-19॥

1	<i>Anaadi-madhya-antam-ananta-veeryam</i>	<i>As without beginning, middle and end, possessing infinite valour;</i>
2	<i>ananta-baahum shashi-soorya-netram;</i>	<i>having innumerable <u>arms</u>, having the moon and the sun as <u>Your eyes</u> –</i>
3	<i>pashyaami twaam deeptha-hutaasha-vaktram,</i>	<i>thus do I see You. With a mouth emitting blazing fire,</i>
4	<i>swa-tejasaa vishwam-idam tapantam.</i>	<i>generated by Your <u>own brilliance</u>, You are the driving force of this whole Universe.</i>

1-2 The depiction returns to the former Vishwa-Roopa form. Without beginning, without middle and without end – this is the signature of the Vishwa-Roopa form; the moment “innumerable arms” is mentioned, it is a sign that the form is “Vishwa-Roopa”; The Vishnu-Roopa always has only four arms.

3-4 However, there is something different about the Form from this point onward. A *dynamic* aspect has been added to it. It is no longer a still picture. The Form is “emitting” blazing fire. The Form is the “driving force” of this whole universe! These are new to the Form we have known so far. More of this is seen in the next Phase.

PHASE 4: THE TRANSFORMING “VISHNU-ROOPA”

Verse 20: Transforming to Fearful

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि
व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वाः ।
दृष्ट्वाद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं
लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन्

॥ ११-२०॥

dyāvāpṛthivyōridamantaram hi
vyāptam tvayaikēna diśāśca sarvāḥ |
dṛṣṭvādbhutam rūpamugram tavēdam
lōkatrayam pravyathitam mahātman

|| 11-20||

1	<i>Dyaavaa-prithivyah idam antaram hi,</i>	<i>The heaven and the earth and indeed the intermediate space between</i>
2	<i>vyaaptam tvayaa ekena dishah cha sarvaa;</i>	<i>is <u>pervaded</u> by You alone, as are all the <u>directions</u>.</i>
3	<i>drishtvaa adbhutam roopam-ugram tava idam,</i>	<i>By seeing this strange, fearful form of Yours,</i>
4	<i>loka-trayam prav-yathitam mahaantam.</i>	<i>the <u>three worlds</u> are struck with fear, O exalted One!</i>

The dynamism seen in the last verse transforms into a **fearful form**.

3-4 The fear is not in the Form, but is a reaction in Arjuna, who is still in the phenomenal plane of existence, where fear is the most common experience that confirms Duality. Only in Non-duality is there no fear. Absolute fearlessness is the proof of being in the Non-dual state.

Verse 21: Transforming to Supplicating

अमी हि त्वां सुरसङ्घा विशन्ति
 केचिद्भ्रीताः प्राञ्जलयो गृणन्ति ।
 स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसङ्घाः
 स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः पुष्कलाभिः

॥ ११-२१॥

amī hi tvām surasaṅghā viśanti
 kēcidbhītāḥ prāñjalayō grṇanti |
 svastītyuktvā maharṣisiddhasaṅghāḥ
 stuvanti tvām stutibhiḥ puṣkalābhiḥ

॥ 11-21॥

1	<i>Amee hi tvaam surasangaah vishanti,</i>	<i>Verily, into You these hosts of Devas enter;</i>
2	<i>kechit bheetaah praanjalayah grinanti;</i>	<i>struck with fear, some supplicate You with joined palms.</i>
3	<i>swasti iti uktvaa maharshi siddha sanghaah,</i>	<i>"May it be well!" thus saying, groups of great sages and perfect beings</i>
4	<i>stuvanti tvaam stutibhih pushkalaabhih.</i>	<i>offer their praises to You through their <u>sublime hymns</u>.</i>

The next step in the transformation process of the Cosmic Form is a direct result of the fearfulness induced in the above verse. When fear is aroused, two distinct responses arise in the human heart.

1-2 The first is that the person bends before that which he is afraid of. Since he cannot conquer the cause of fear, he supplicates to the fear. He surrenders to it; he becomes subservient to it. This response is aimed to fend off the wrath of that which is feared, so that one may gain its favour. It is quite a common response from people.

3-4 The usual way of surrendering is to sing the praises of the superior power. That is what we see in this line.

Courtesans in the courts of rulers are employed for the sole purpose of singing the glories of the ruler. In such a case, the motive is purely some worldly gain. If the ruler is taken as a Divine Being, then the motive can be to increase one's devotion to the higher power. This can be spiritually beneficial to the one who surrenders.

Verse 22: Transforming to Wonderment & Awe

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या
विश्वेऽश्विनौ मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।

गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसङ्घा
वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे

॥ ११-२२॥

rudrādityā vasavō yē ca sādhyā

viśvē:'śvinau marutaścōṣmapāśca |

gandharvayakṣāsurasiddhasaṅghā

vīkṣantē tvāṁ vismitāścaiva sarvē

॥ 11-22॥

1	<i>Rudra-aadityaah vasavah ye cha saadhyah,</i>	<i>The Rudras, the Aadityas, the Vasus and those who are the Sadhyas;</i>
2	<i>vishve ashwinau marutah cha ushmapaah;</i>	<i>The Vishva-Devas, the two Ashwinis, the Maruts and the Ushmapas;</i>
3	<i>gandharva-yaksha-asura- siddha sanghaah,</i>	<i>The Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras and Siddhas (the perfected beings) –</i>
4	<i>veekshante tvaam vismitaah cha eva sarve.</i>	<i>they gaze wonderstruck at You, every single one of them being filled with awe.</i>

1-4 Here is an example of how even the Deities become submissive in the Presence of their superior, the Lord Himself. Sri Krishna stands as the highest Authority. All other Deities bow down to Him out of reverence and to acknowledge His greatness over them.

This greatly to the attitude of devotion in human devotees, as they see the Lord being worshipped even by the other functionary Deities.

The Deities are dependent on the Reality, but Reality is independent of them. Those who are dependent are always awe-struck by their superiors. This applies even to Gods.

Verse 23: Transforming to Immense & Terrifying

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं
महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम् ।

बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं
दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम्

॥ ११-२३॥

rūpaṁ mahattē bahuvaktranētram

mahābāhō bahubāhūrupādam |

bahūdaraṁ bahudaṁṣṭrākarālaṁ

dr̥ṣṭvā lōkāḥ pravryathitāstathāham

॥ 11-23॥

1	<i>Roopam mahat te bahu-vaktra-netram,</i>	Your immense Form (the “Vishwa Roopa”) with <u>numerous</u> mouths and eyes;
2	<i>mahaa-baaho bahu-baahooru-paadam;</i>	O mighty-armed One, having <u>numerous</u> arms, thighs and feet;
3	<i>bahu-udaram bahu-damshtraa karaalam,</i>	having <u>numerous</u> stomachs, and <u>numerous</u> fearful-looking teeth;
4	<i>drishtvaa lokaah pravyathitaah tathaa aham.</i>	seeing this, the <u>dwellers</u> of the worlds are terrified , and so <u>am I</u> .

The previous verse showed how the Deities respond to their superior. In this verse we see how mortals on earth respond to the Lord of all Deities.

1-4 The majority among the mortals become terrified in the presence of the Lord. The impure at heart are unable to bear the Purity of the Lord, and become terrified of Him.

Verse 24: *Transforming to Fiery & Terrifying*

नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं
व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।
दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा
धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च विष्णो
nabhaṣpṛśaṁ dīptamanēkavarṇaṁ
vyāttānanam dīptaviśālanētram |
dṛṣṭvā hi tvāṁ pravyathitāntarātma
dhṛtiṁ na vindāmi śamaṁ ca viṣṇo

॥ ११-२४॥
|| 11-24||

1	<i>Nabha-sprisham deeptam-aneka varnam,</i>	Touching <u>heaven</u> , <u>blazing</u> with many colours;
2	<i>vyaattaananam deepa-vishaala-netram;</i>	open-mouthed, and with <u>fiery</u> , wide eyes;
3	<i>drishtvaa hi tvaam pravyathitaah antaraatmaa,</i>	verily, seeing this Your form, I am terrified at heart;
4	<i>dhritim na vindaami shamam cha vishno.</i>	and I find neither any <u>courage</u> nor any <u>peace</u> , O Lord Vishnu.

1-4 Arjuna was not a sinful person who would fall into the above category of people. Yet, even he, who was so devoted to the Lord, became terrified as the Vision transformed more into its terrifying aspects. The fear has increased to a degree which takes away the courage of even a seasoned warrior such as Arjuna.

If the brave Arjuna can be so affected, what would it do to ordinary folk! There is a great lesson that looms up as we see the Vision transforming itself and becoming more intensely fearsome.

Verse 25: “Withdraw this Terrifying Form!”

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि
दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।
दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास

॥ ११-२५॥

damṣṭrākarālāni ca tē mukhāni
dṛṣṭvaiva kālānalasannibhāni |
diśō na jānē na labhē ca śarma
prasīda dēvēśa jagannivāsa

॥ 11-25॥

1	<i>Damshtraa-karaalaani- cha te mukhaani.</i>	<i>The terrible looking <u>teeth</u> sticking out from Your mouths;</i>
2	<i>drishtvaa eva kaala anala sannibhaani.</i>	<i>just seeing this is enough to remind me of the time of the Great Dissolution by Fire!</i>
3	<i>dishah na jaane na labhe cha sharma.</i>	<i>I have lost all <u>sense of direction</u> and find no <u>comfort</u>.</i>
4	<i>praseeda devesha jagat-nivaasa.</i>	<i><u>Be gracious</u> enough (to withdraw this Form), O God of gods, O Abode of the Universe!</i>

1-2 This entire section so far may be seen as an “Endurance Test” that Arjuna is being put through to determine the limit of his forbearance. Sri Krishna goes on turning up the knob of discomfort as high as he needs to until Arjuna finally cannot take any more and yields. In Arjuna’s case, the last straw is the fearful-looking teeth hanging out of the Lord’s mouth. He cannot bear to see anything worse than that.

3-4 Arjuna limit of endurance has been reached. He throws up his hands!
However, it does not end here; something even more unexpected is yet to follow.



11.5 THE OUTCOME OF KURUKSHETRA

(Verses 26-31, 6 No.)

IN VERSE 7 THE LORD had granted a boon to Arjuna to ask for anything he wished to see. There was no specific request from Arjuna. The Lord then gave Arjuna the “Divine Eye”. Now Sri Krishna decides that He will give a second ‘boon’ unasked – He will show Arjuna the outcome of the Mahabharata War as part of the Cosmic Vision.

This may be thought of as an extension of **Phase 4**, the Transforming “Vishwa-Roopa” Form. It is a further transformation from the general picture to a specific occasion – the Mahabharata War. Or, it may be better thought of as **Phase 5**, an Application of the Vishwa-Roopa, illustrating a capacity of the Lord unknown to ordinary human beings.

These six verses have an element of “fortune-telling”; the outcome of the Great War is shown. To us mortals, this may appear as a prediction, but as far as the Lord is concerned, it is a certainty. Sri Krishna shows Arjuna that the result of the war which is about to take place has already been decided – the Kauravas will be routed and victory will be to the Pandavas.

It is not the result that strikes Arjuna; Arjuna himself would have had sufficient faith in his ability to rout the armies single-handedly. He had already done that before. What takes him by surprise is that this outcome should be seen by him as part of the Cosmic Form experience which he had asked for, and which he anticipated to be of an inspirational kind.

It turns out to be something he least expected . . .

AN APPLICATION OF THE COSMIC FORM

Verse 26 & 27: *The Casualties & the Fate Awaiting Them*

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः
सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसङ्घैः ।
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ
सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः

॥ ११-२६॥

amī ca tvāṁ dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ
sarvē sahaivāvanipālasaṅghaiḥ |
bhīṣmō drōṇaḥ sūtaputrastathāsau
sahāsmadīyairapi yōdhamukhyaiḥ

॥ 11-26॥

1	<i>Amee cha tvaam dhritaraashtrasya putraah,</i>	Into You these <u>sons of Dhritarashtra;</u>
2	<i>sarve saha eva avanipaala sanghah;</i>	as well as all the hosts of the <u>Rulers of the earth;</u>
3	<i>bheeshmah dronah soota-putrah tathaa asau,</i>	including <u>Bhishma, Drona</u> as well as this low-born son (namely, <u>Karna</u>);
4	<i>saha asmadeeyaih api yodha-mukhyaih.</i>	together with some of <u>our own</u> prominent Army Generals also . . .

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति
दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु
सन्दृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः

॥ ११-२७॥

vaktrāṇi tē tvaramāṇā viśanti
daṁṣṭrākarālāni bhayānakāni |
kēcidvilagnā daśanāntarēṣu
sandṛśyantē cūrṇitairuttamāṅgaiḥ

॥ 11-27॥

5	<i>Vaktraani te tvaramaanaa vishanti,</i>	into Your mouths they all <u>enter as if in a great hurry;</u>
6	<i>damshtraa-karaalaani bhayaanakaani;</i>	(into Your mouths) filled with <u>terrible</u> teeth, <u>fearful</u> to behold;
7	<i>kechit vilagnaah dashana-antarashu,</i>	(on entering) some are sticking in the <u>gaps</u> between Your teeth;
8	<i>sam-drishyante churnitaih uttama angaih.</i>	and some are found with their heads <u>crushed</u> into powder!

The scene is as gory and unpalatable as it can get. The transformation described in the above section is now illustrated with what is doomed to happen soon on the battlefield. It sounds awful, but the Lord somehow has the hope that it will be reassuring to Arjuna! Is this gory scene really going to be reassuring to him?

1-4 Arjuna is not just listing out the Kauravas here but actually seeing the fate that is in store for them. The whole hordes of the Kaurava armies leaving no one out, and even some from his own armies, are all casualties of this War. What is their fate?

5-8 They are seen rushing madly, wildly, even *eagerly*, into the terrible mouths of the Lord, helplessly being pushed by Fate to their gruesome death. They are as if eager to go to their impending death. Fearsome sharp teeth await their entry, ready to crush them into 'powder'; it would be more correct to say crushed into a *chutney* than into a powder!

Verse 28: As Rivers Enter the Ocean

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः
समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।

तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा

विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति

॥ ११-२८॥

yathā nadīnāṃ bahavō:'mbuvēgāḥ

samudramēvābhimukhā dravanti |

tathā tavāmī naralōkavīrā

viśanti vaktrāṇyabhivijvalanti

|| 11-28||

1	<i>Yathaa nadeenaam bahavah ambu vegaah,</i>	<i>Just as numerous Rivers with their <u>torrents</u> of water currents,</i>
2	<i>samudram eva abhimukhaa dravanti;</i>	<i>heading in the seawards direction alone, flow towards and <u>into the sea</u> (of their own accord);</i>
3	<i>tathaa tava amee nara-loka-veeraah,</i>	<i>so also into You, do these men – <u>heroes</u> all amongst the world of men –</i>
4	<i>vishanti vaktraani abhivijvalanti.</i>	<i>enter <u>into Your mouths</u>, that spell a flaming <u>death</u> to them all!</i>

As though the actual scene witnessed may not be convincing enough, Arjuna tries to find something that can compare to the scene.

1-4 His simile is perfect. It shows the helplessness of the victims to perfection. It shows the certainty of the death to perfection. It shows that everything is pre-ordained to perfection. There is no escape from the situation – that, too, is shown to perfection.

Had Sage Vyasa lived in our modern times, and in India, he may have opted for the following simile:

In India, at all railway stations, it makes quite a sight to see hordes of passengers boarding and getting off trains. There are no such things as queues. The sight is unimaginable, a feast to the tourist. Everyone seems to be struggling, but really no one needs to make any effort to board or to get off. It just happens by itself, being in the midst of the thick crowd. You just have to stand on the platform, and soon you find yourself in the train – or *vice versa*! Arjuna is witnessing something like that, with the Lord's mouths being the train doorways!

Verse 29: As Moths Entering Glowing Fire

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा
विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।

तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोकास्-

तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः

॥ ११-२९॥

yathā pradīptaṁ jvalanaṁ pataṅgā
 vísanti nāśāya samṛddhavēgāḥ |
 tathaiva nāśāya vísanti lōkās-
 tavāpi vaktrāṇi samṛddhavēgāḥ

|| 11-29||

1	<i>Yathaa pradeeptam jwalanam patangaa,</i>	<i>Just as into a glowing fire, Moths</i>
2	<i>vishanti naashaaya samriddha-vegaah;</i>	<i>rush with speed to their own destruction;</i>
3	<i>tathaa eva naashaaya vishanti lokaah,</i>	<i>so also to their doom rush these creatures</i>
4	<i>tava api vaktraani samriddha-vegaah.</i>	<i>with great speed into Your mouths.</i>

Arjuna is not satisfied with just one simile. The second is “perfection perfected”!

There is a subtle difference suggested in this simile which is an improvement on the previous one. In the ‘Rivers’ simile, the torrents were helplessly pushed forward by an external factor – the surrounding currents.

1-4 In the ‘Moths’ simile, the force is not coming from an external source, but is an internal factor, coming from within themselves. The moths are impelled by their own attachment to light. With men, too, the force is their own **Karma**, an internal cause.

Verse 30: “*You Find Them To Be Delicious!*”

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ताल्-
 लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।
 तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं
 भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो

|| ११-३०||

lēlihyasē grasamānaḥ samantāl-
 lōkānsamagrānvadanairjvaladbhiḥ |
 tējōbhirāpūrya jagatsamagraṁ
 bhāsastavōgrāḥ pratapanti viṣṇō

|| 11-30||

1	<i>Lelihyase grasamaanah samantaat,</i>	<i>While devouring them, You lick Your lips on every side,</i>
2	<i>lokaan samagraan vadanaih jwaladbhih;</i>	<i>relishing every single creature with Your flaming flickering lips.</i>
3	<i>tejobhiih aapoorya jagat samagram,</i>	<i>You fill with heat the whole world;</i>
4	<i>bhaasah tava ugraah pratapanti vishno.</i>	<i>O Vishnu, Your fierce rays are scorching.</i>

The poet in Vyasa seems to have overtaken him. The catalyst for it is the amazing scene of self-destruction that is being witnessed. After the initial repulsive feeling produced by the sight, the Sage now sees the the same drama in a lighter vein. He cannot help expressing the opposite feeling with a tinge of humour.

1-2 Sri Vyasaji imagines the flames of fire emitted from the Lord’s mouths to be tongues hanging out from His lips, flickering in and out in rapid succession. They remind him of a man licking his lips after eating something that is really delicious!

Placing himself in the Lord’s shoes, he tries to imagine how much He is enjoying this feast, that is coming to Him without His call, without any effort, without any preparation. It is like a free Bhandara to the Lord. Every person entering His mouth is a special dish all its own. It has a unique flavour that He relishes! No two dishes are the same; each person has his own “delicious masala of Karma” mixed into his dish.

3-4 When someone is eating a spicy curry, his whole forehead and scalp starts to perspire. It is not an uncomfortable perspiration. The person actually enjoys it; it is a sign of enjoyment. The Lord, too, is here depicted as sweating, producing an intense heat from his body, while devouring his spicy meal!

Sri Vyasaji has let loose his whole imagination and seems to have fitted well into the Lord’s shoes.

Verse 31: “Who Are You & What Is Your Purpose?”

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो
नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं
न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम्

॥ ११-३१॥

ākhyāhi mē kō bhavānugrarūpō
namō:'stu tē dēvavara prasīda |
vijñātumicchāmi bhavantamādyam
na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttim

|| 11-31||

1	<i>Aakhyaahi me kah bhavaan ugra-roopah,</i>	<i>Tell me who You are, so fierce in form?</i>
2	<i>namah astu te devavara praseeda;</i>	<i>Salutations to You, O gracious God.</i>
3	<i>vijnaatum icchaami bhavantam aadyam,</i>	<i>I wish to know You, the Primal One.</i>
4	<i>na hi prajaanaami tava pravrittim.</i>	<i>I know not indeed Your purpose.</i>

Here is a verse that is significant to the thought-flow of this Chapter. After seeing the destruction of the Kauravas, and also the great Bheeshma as well as his own Acharya, Dronacharyaji, Arjuna is perplexed as to what Sri Krishna is really wanting to teach him by showing him these gruesome scenes which have yet to take place. Arjuna wants to know Sri Krishna a bit more, and the purpose for which He has taken birth.

1 Arjuna has experienced a facet of Sri Krishna for which he was totally unprepared. The One who was described as beauty, gentleness, all-love and compassion has just been seen in its opposite form as **Ghora** “terrible”, **Ugra-Roopa** “fierce in form”, **Grasamaana** “devouring”, **Lelihyase** “blood-thirsty”. What could be the explanation? It is a shift in his mind which he is trying to reconcile but fails hopelessly.

2 Arjuna is grateful to the Lord for having given him this vast experience, so rare to receive. However, that gratitude is not unmixed by a train of doubts that it has opened up, which are now troubling him.

3-4 His urgent appeal to the Lord is to ask Him to *define* Himself. “Who are You? I do not understand what I am seeing. I am overwhelmed by fear after seeing these frightful scenes in the Cosmic Vision. Also, what is Your real purpose? That is not quite clear to me.”



KRISHNA CHARGES TOWARDS BHISHMA

So determined was Krishna to execute His task of establishing righteousness, that when Arjuna refused to kill Bhishma in the war, He Himself rushed towards Bhishma with the Sudarshan Chakra in His hand, with an ashamed Arjuna trying to stop Him.

Krishna was willing to break His vow of not taking part in the war, just to fulfil the purpose of His birth.

11.6 THE LORD EXPLAINS HIS PURPOSE

(Verses 32-34, 3 No.)

Verse 32: *The Cosmic Purpose of the Avatara*

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो
लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।
ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे
येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु योधाः

॥ ११-३२॥

śrībhagavānuvāca |
kālo:'smi lōkakṣayakṛtpravṛddhō
lōkānsamāhartumiha pravṛttaḥ |
ṛtē:'pi tvām na bhaviṣyanti sarvē
yē:'vasthitāḥ pratyanīkēṣu yōdhāḥ

|| 11-32||

	<i>Shree Bhagavaan uvaacha:</i>	<i>The Blessed Lord said:</i>
1	<i>Kaalah asmi loka-kshaya-krit-pravridhah,</i>	<i>I am the mighty world-destroying Time,</i>
2	<i>lokaan samaahartum iha pravrittah;</i>	<i>now engaged in destroying the <u>worlds</u>.</i>
3	<i>rite api tvaam na bhavishyanti sarve,</i>	<i>Even without you, none shall <u>survive</u></i>
4	<i>ye avasthitaah prati-aneekeshu yodhaah.</i>	<i>of the warriors arrayed in hostile armies.</i>

There is a swing towards unrighteousness which has upset the cosmic balance, and the Lord's most important purpose is to set that balance right.

1-2 In achieving this purpose which is of cosmic proportions, the Lord goes about His task with total detachment. What needs to be done must be done. The evil-minded, power-hungry, wicked people *have* to be destroyed so that righteousness may reign once more.

In this matter, feelings of “human compassion” do not enter; from the Lord's perspective, the virtue of compassion is not being violated by this destruction, but is indeed being expressed. Justice is being done, and that is an act of compassion.

3-4 The Lord views matters in a detached manner. Even without Arjuna's participation, this result is certain. Sri Krishna is teaching Arjuna to remain fully balanced mentally. The same error that occurred in Chapter 1 should not be repeated. Delusion should not be allowed to sway the course of Justice.

This is the cosmic purpose for which the Lord has taken the Avatara. Nothing will stop Him from executing this task. This is a task ordained by cosmic forces.

Verse 33: “Just be My Instrument”

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व
जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्ष्व राज्यं समृद्धम् ।
मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव
निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन्

॥ ११-३३॥

tasmāttvamuttiṣṭha yaśō labhasva
jītvā śatrūn bhunṅṣva rājyaṁ samṛddham |
mayaivaitē nihatāḥ pūrvamēva
nimittamātraṁ bhava savyasācin

॥ 11-33॥

1	<i>Tasmaat tvam uttishtha yashah labhaswa,</i>	<i>Therefore, stand up and <u>obtain fame</u>.</i>
2	<i>jitvaa shatroom bhunshwa raajyam samriddham</i>	Conquer the enemies <i>and enjoy the <u>flourishing kingdom</u>.</i>
3	<i>mayaa eva ete nihitaa poorvam eva,</i>	<i>Verily, I have already slain them;</i>
4	<i>nimitta-maatram bhava savya-saachin.</i>	<i>be you <u>a mere instrument</u>, O left-handed one.</i>

The purpose of showing Arjuna the Vision of the Kauravas being defeated is now made clear. Since, the defeat of the Kauravas is a certainty, it means Arjuna’s participation in the war is now only a formality.

1-2 For Arjuna to get up and fight is now only a matter that affects his own fame as a warrior. The destruction of the Kauravas has already been done by Sri Krishna. It is a perfect opportunity for Arjuna to ride on the crest of the wave of Destiny. Fame and kingship await him; he is destined for them.

3-4 The Lord has placed him in a situation where he need be only an instrument of the killing, not the killer. Arjuna acts with the knowledge of what lies ahead. He is in a way ‘cheating’ on the spirit of Karma Yoga. A true Karma Yogi is called to act even without knowing what the result is going to be. That is the test of a true Karma Yogi.

Verse 34: “Arjuna, Your Victory is Certain”

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च
कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान् ।
मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा
युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे सपत्नान्

॥ ११-३४॥

drōṇaṁ ca bhīṣmaṁ ca jayadrathaṁ ca
karṇaṁ tathānyānapi yōdhavīrān |
mayā hatāṁstvaṁ jahi mā vyathiṣṭhā
yudhyasva jētāsi raṇē sapatnān

॥ 11-34॥

1	<i>Dronam cha bheeshma cha jayadratham cha,</i>	<i>Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha and</i>
2	<i>Karnam tathaa anyaan api yodha veeraan;</i>	<i>Karna, and other brave warriors</i>
3	<i>mayaa hataan twam jahi maa vyathishthaah,</i>	<i>have already been slain by Me – you just have to kill without being distressed with fear.</i>
4	<i>yudhyaswa jetaasi rane sapatnaan.</i>	<i>Fight, and conquer your enemies in battle.</i>

1-2 The four most ‘invincible’ warriors of the Kauravas are named. They are declared to have been already killed. It means Arjuna’s way to glory is now clear of all obstacles.

3-4 The individual path of Arjuna and the cosmic Path of Krishna are in total harmony with each other. There is no contradiction between them. This is the lesson the Lord is driving home to an Arjuna shaken out of delusion. The delusion that overwhelmed him in Chapter 1 is being rooted out in clinical fashion through the Cosmic Vision. Sri Krishna does not want a recurrence of it in Arjuna. The operation that began painfully in Chapter 2 is now being finished painlessly. The Divine Surgeon is about to close the stitches and quit the operating theatre, having successfully concluded the surgery.



11.7 ARJUNA'S DANCE OF SALUTATIONS

(Verses 35-40, 6 No.)

THE LORD'S COMFORTING, yet straightforward words; His clinical approach in accomplishing His mission on earth; His reassurance to Arjuna to do his duty on the battlefield – all these make a deep impression on Arjuna. This is what Arjuna was wanting.

We remind ourselves that the above words are being relayed to King Dhritarashtra. An interesting exercise would be to contrast Arjuna's response to that of Dhritarashtra. How would the King have reacted to this news?

For a brief moment we go back to the palace in Hastinapur where Sanjaya has just reported the above news to the King. Sanjaya is about to add some spice to the happenings by saying that Arjuna has been "crowned" as the Ruler of Kurukshetra. It is very hard to imagine what could be going on under the crown worn by Dhritarashtra!

Verse 35: Sanjaya Announces the "New King"!

सञ्जय उवाच ।
एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य
कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।
नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं
सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य

॥ ११-३५॥

sañjaya uvāca |
ētacchrutvā vacanaṁ kēśavasya
kṛtāñjalirvēpamānaḥ kirīṭi |
namaskṛtvā bhūya ēvāha kṛṣṇaṁ
sagadgadam bhītabhītaḥ praṇamya

॥ 11-35॥

	<i>Sanjaya uvaacha:</i>	<i>Sanjaya said:</i>
1	<i>Etat shrutvaa vachanam keshavasya,</i>	<i>Having heard that speech of Keshava, Arjuna, the</i>
2	<i>kritaanjalih vepamaanah kireeti;</i>	<i>'Crowned' one, with palms joined and trembling,</i>
3	<i>namas-kritvaa bhooyah eva aaha krishnam,</i>	<i>prostrated and addressed Krishna in a voice</i>
4	<i>sagad-gadam bheeta bheetah pranamya.</i>	<i>choked with emotion, and bowing down:</i>

1-2 Sanjaya's report seems designed to rub salt into the wounds of Dhritarashtra, especially when he addresses Arjuna as "*the Crowned one*".

More important than that, however, is the speech of Keshava to Arjuna. That is the bottom-line that the Lord is working towards. It is His divine mandate, and none has the

power to challenge it. It's a strange situation for Arjuna – one half of his job is done; the other half is yet to be done. Arjuna stands in the midst of two “futures”, one known only to him through divine means, and the other yet to unfold and unknown to all others!

3-4 Arjuna's mental state is hard to pin-point. Sure, there is the assurance, but the heaviness of the responsibility chokes him with emotion. He cannot help lowering his head in humility at the feet of the Lord, his Master and Supreme-in-Command!

Verse 36: *Arjuna – Three Types of Responses*

अर्जुन उवाच ।
स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या
जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।
रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति
सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसङ्घाः

॥ ११-३६॥

arjuna uvāca |
sthānē hṛṣīkēśa tava prakīrtyā
jagatprahṛṣyatyanurajyatē ca |
rakṣāmsi bhītāni diśō dravanti
sarvē namasyanti ca siddhasaṅghāḥ

|| 11-36||

	<i>Arjuna uvaacha:</i>	<i>Arjuna said:</i>
1	<i>Sthaane hrishEEKESha tava prakeertyaa,</i>	<i>It is but meet (fitting, just right), O Hrishikesha, that in Your praise</i>
2	<i>jagat prahrishyati anurajyate cha;</i>	<i>the world (the good-minded) takes great delight and rejoices;</i>
3	<i>rakshaamsi bheetaani dishah dravanti,</i>	<i>that Rakshasas (the evil-minded) filled with fear fly to all quarters;</i>
4	<i>sarve namasyanti cha siddha-sanghaah.</i>	<i>and to Thee do they all bow down – the hosts of Siddhas (the devout and the upright).</i>

1 Arjuna stands at the brink of a historical moment. In front, he has the Lord whom he is addressing; behind him is the rest of humanity whom he is destined to lead into a new world of Righteousness, by means which once appeared to him as unrighteous.

Arjuna, a leader-to-be among men, speaks on behalf of three sections of mankind:

2 i) The Good-minded: These will be delighted to know what is about to happen; they will be happy that they can now live in peace without being troubled by hostile rulers.

3 ii) The Evil-minded: This section will be filled with fear. Their time has come to an end. No longer will they have the power at their command to exert unrighteous rule by means of force and dominance over wealth. No longer will they be able to enjoy whatever they pleased. They will not be welcome in the new kingdom about to be born. They will seek to ‘flee’ to lands unknown.

4 ii) The Devout & the Sinless: Neither of the above two apply to those who are devoted to the Lord. To them it is enough that they can worship the Lord without any disturbance. They will 'bow down' to the Lord in gratitude, and with firm resolve to stick to the rule of Righteousness.

Verse 37: *Brahman – the Vedantic Name of the “Lord”*

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन्
गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।

अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास

त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत्

॥ ११-३७॥

kasmācca tē na namēranmahātman

garīyasē brahmaṇō:'pyādikartre |

ananta dēvēśa jagannivāsa

tvamakṣaram sadasattatparam yat

॥ 11-37॥

1	<i>Kasmaat cha te na nameran mahaatman,</i>	<i>And why should they not bow down to Thee, O Great-souled One?</i>
2	<i>gareeyase brahmanah api aadi kartre;</i>	<i>For even of the great Brahmaji, Thou art the <u>Primal Cause</u>;</i>
3	<i>ananta deveśa jagan-nivaasa,</i>	<i>O infinite Being, O Lord of Lords, O Abode of the Universe!</i>
4	<i>twam aksharam sat-asat tat param yat.</i>	<i>You are the <u>Imperishable Reality</u>, that is beyond the <u>manifest</u> and the <u>unmanifest</u>.</i>

1 The adoration of the Lord is not founded on receiving the Lord's gift of kingship. It goes much deeper than that. Here we have a verse which traces the roots of Arjuna's adoration to nothing short of the Ultimate Reality. That is where Arjuna places Lord Sri Krishna.

2 Brahmaji comes next in the hierarchy after Brahman. Brahman, is the Absolute Supreme. Since He alone existed before Creation, it is fair to say that He is the Causeless Cause of Creation – the Primal Cause. But that is from our viewpoint. Brahman Himself does not see it as that. To Brahman, He simply is. There is nothing else besides Him that ever exists.

3 Brahman is also called the Abode of the Universe, because in Him everything finds a support, a dwelling. He envelops all that exists in Creation.

4 That Support does not change or perish when everything else supported by Him changes and perishes. Sat and Asat both have two meanings in Vedanta. They can mean the Real and the Unreal; or, as in this case, the manifest gross world, and the unmanifest subtle world. Beyond them both is Brahman, known as the Purushottama in Chapter 15.

Verse 38: The Lord is Worthy of this Honour

त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराणस्-
त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम
त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप

॥ ११-३८॥

tvamādidēvaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇas-
tvamasya viśvasya paraṁ nidhānam |
vēttāsi vēdyam ca paraṁ ca dhāma
tvayā tataṁ viśvamanantarūpa

॥ 11-38॥

1	<i>Twam aadi devah purushah puraanah,</i>	<i>You are the Primal God, the ancient Purusha (Brahman);</i>
2	<i>twam asya vishwasya param nidhaanam;</i>	<i>Of this universe, You are the supreme <u>Refuge</u>;</i>
3	<i>vettaa asi vedyam cha param cha dhaama</i>	<i>You are the <u>knower</u> and thing to be <u>known</u>, and the Supreme (Highest) <u>Abode</u>;</i>
4	<i>tvayaa tatam vishwam ananta roopa.</i>	<i>By Thee is the universe <u>pervaded</u>, O Being of Infinite Form.</i>

More facets of the description of Brahman are covered. All of them arise from the fact that Brahman is the Ultimate Reality, all-inclusive and the one without a second.

1 He is at the apex of the Cosmic hierarchy – hence, the Primal God. Since He can never undergo any change, He cannot have birth or death. That means His existence is beginningless; and that means He is the most ancient.

2 When the universe dissolves, it dissolves into Brahman. Hence, Brahman is referred to as the supreme Refuge. Brahman Himself is indissoluble.

3 One aspect of Brahman is Consciousness, defined as that which is the true knower in all beings. He is not a knower with respect to a particular individual, but is the Absolute knower, which is as good as saying that He is Knowledge itself, or is that which is to be known. Knowing Brahman, nothing else remains to be known.

4 Being the Abode of all has already been explained. However, in order to be the abode of all, Brahman has necessarily got to be “all-pervading”. And if He is all-pervading, then He also has to be Infinite. Thus every quality by which Brahman may be described stems from the fact that Brahman alone exists; He is Existence Absolute.

Verse 39: Salutations Again and Again!

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः
प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः
पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते

॥ ११-३९॥

vāyuryamō:'gnirvaruṇaḥ śasāṅkaḥ
 prajāpatistvaṃ prapitāmahaśca |
 namō namastē:'stu sahasrakṛtvah
 punaśca bhūyō:'pi namō namastē

|| 11-39||

1	<i>Vaayuh yamah agnih varunah shashaankah,</i>	You are Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna and the Moon;
2	<i>prajaapatih twam pra-pitaamahah cha;</i>	You are <u>Prajapati</u> , and the great-grandfather of all;
3	<i>namah namah te astu sahasra-kritvah,</i>	¹ Salutations, ² salutations unto Thee a thousand times!
4	<i>punah cha bhooyah api namah namah te.</i>	and again and even again ³ salutations and ⁴ salutations to Thee!

1 The greatness of the Supreme Lord is expressed once again in relation to all the Deities who govern the world. The Supreme is seen in all the Deities as their essential Being. Thus He is in Vayu, Yama, etc.

2 How is the Supreme the great-grandfather? The father is he from whom all the five elements are born. That would be Hiranyagarbha. The grandfather would then be He from whom Hiranyagarbha is born, i.e. Ishwara, the Lord of Creation. And finally, the great-grandfather would be he from whom Ishwara is born, i.e. Brahman Himself.

3-4 The salutation to the Lord is repeated again and again. This can be taken as salutations being done stage by stage, first to the Lord at the gross level, then at the subtle level, then at the causal level and finally at the Causeless level of Brahman (4 times).

Verse 40: The Dance of Salutations!

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते
 नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।
 अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं
 सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः

|| ११-४०||

namaḥ purastādatha pṛṣṭhatastē
 namō:'stu tē sarvata ēva sarva |
 anantavīryāmitavikramastvaṃ
 sarvaṃ samāpnōṣi tatō:'si sarvaḥ

|| 11-40||

1	<i>Namah purastat atha prishthatah te</i>	<u>Salutations</u> to Thee from the front and from behind also!
2	<i>namah astu te sarvatah eva sarva;</i>	<u>Salutations</u> to Thee from every side, O All!
3	<i>ananta veerya amita vikramah twam,</i>	Infinite in <u>power</u> , and immeasurable in <u>strength</u> (prowess) art Thou,
4	<i>sarvam sam-aapnoshi tatah asi sarvah.</i>	You <u>pervade</u> all; wherefore You are the All .

Arjuna is filled with gratitude to the Lord for two reasons:

i) **His Divine Purpose**: Arjuna did not see the Lord in the light of an Avatara originally, but after hearing about it in verse 32-34 he sees the Lord in a more universal light.

ii) **His Operation on his Own Delusion**: Arjuna realizes that the Lord had admitted him into His operating theatre as a “spiritual patient”, and was rooting out his delusion. Arjuna feels a great sense of gratitude welling up in him for that.

What must he have done to deserve this Grace of the Lord? He cannot help feeling gratitude again and again – and again! As his Guru, Sri Krishna has been totally dedicated to his spiritual progress. There is no other motive behind His graciousness towards him.



11.8 ARJUNA SEEKS FORGIVENESS

(Verses 41-46, 6 No.)

SUDDENLY IT DAWNS on Arjuna that he had taken Sri Krishna as a friend and playmate from childhood. In that relationship, naturally he would have acted casually, playfully, etc, towards Sri Krishna. There would have been times when he had been over-friendly, when he had a heated exchange of words with Him, when he playfully tugged at His hair or *dhoti*, or some other sort of mischievous thing like that.

Arjuna, realising who he had done this to, pleads to be forgiven for all that.

Verse 41: “Forgive My Familiarity With You”

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं
हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं
मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि

॥ ११-४१॥

sakhēti matvā prasabham yaduktam
hē kṛṣṇa hē yādava hē sakhēti |
ajānatā mahimānam tavēdam
mayā pramādātpraṇayēna vāpi

॥ 11-41॥

1	<i>Sakhaa iti matvaa prasabham yat uktam,</i>	<i>Regarding You merely as a friend, whatever I have said <u>presumptuously</u>;</i>
2	<i>he Krishna he yaadava he sakhaa iti;</i>	<i>addressing You by name, clan and as friend,</i>
3	<i>ajaanataa mahimaanam tava idam</i>	<i>not knowing this greatness of Yours;</i>
4	<i>mayaa pramaadaat pranayena vaa api.</i>	<i>acting <u>carelessly</u>, and even with familiarity;</i>

Verse 42: “Forgive My Light Fun With You”

यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि
विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।
एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं
तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम्

॥ ११-४२॥

yaccāvahāsārthamasatkṛtō:'si
vihāraśayyāsanabhōjanēṣu |
ēkō:'thavāpyacyuta tatsamakṣam
tatksāmayē tvāmahamapramēyam

॥ 11-42॥

5	<i>Yat cha avahaa saartham asat kritah asi,</i>	and, for the sake of fun , whatever <u>disrespect</u> I may have shown to You;
6	<i>vihaara-shayyaa- aasana-bhojaneshu;</i>	while at play or while sleeping, while sitting together or during meal-times;
7	<i>ekah athavaa api achyuta tat samaksham,</i>	when alone with You or, O Achyuta, in the company of others;
8	<i>tat kshaamaye twaam aham aprameyam.</i>	that You should <u>please forgive</u> , I implore You, O Immeasurable One.

Verse 43: “Forgive Me for Erring Discipleship”

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य
त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो
लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव

pitāsi lōkasya carācarasya
tvamasya pūjyaśca gururgarīyān |
na tvatsamō:'styabhyadhikāḥ kutō:'nyō
lōkatrayē:'pyapratimaprabhāva

॥ ११-४३॥

॥ 11-43॥

9	<i>Pitaa asi lokasya chara-acharasya,</i>	You are the Father of this <u>whole world</u> , of everything both moving and unmoving;
10	<i>twam asya poojyah cha guruh gareeyaan;</i>	You are worthy to be adored; You are the greatest Guru .
11	<i>na tvat samah asti abhiadhikah kutah anyah,</i>	There exists none who is <u>equal</u> to You; and none can there be <u>superior</u> to You
12	<i>loka-traye api apratima prabhaava.</i>	in all the three worlds, O Being of <u>unequalled power!</u>

Verse 44: “Forgive Me For All My Excesses”

तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं
प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः
प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम्

tasmātpraṇamya praṇidhāya kāyaṁ
prasādayē tvāmahamīśamīḍyam |
pitēva putrasya sakhēva sakhyuḥ
priyaḥ priyāyārhasi dēva sōḍhum

॥ ११-४४॥

॥ 11-44॥

13	<i>Tasmaat pranamya pranidhaaya kaayam,</i>	<i>Therefore, bowing down, prostrating my body,</i>
14	<i>prasaadaye twaam aham eesham eedyam;</i>	<i>I crave Your forgiveness, O adorable Lord.</i>
15	<i>pitaa iva putrasya sakhaa eva sakhyuh,</i>	<i>As a father forgives his <u>son</u>, as a friend forgives his <u>friend</u>,</i>
16	<i>priyah priyaayaah arhasi deva sodhum.</i>	<i>as a lover forgives his <u>beloved</u>, even so do Thou forgive me, O God!</i>

The Context of Arjuna's "Appeal for Forgiveness"

1-8 Arjuna did not know Sri Krishna's greatness when he acted in the above manner.

The greatness is, indeed, all Sri Krishna's. He, the Lord, did not expect others to know Him and recognise His greatness. He wanted everyone to be comfortable in His Presence. He accepted all these acts from Arjuna in humility and friendship. Therein lay His greatness.

Arjuna's appeal for forgiveness is not for any wrong that he did. He did no 'wrong'. He did all these things in good spirit. There is, therefore, nothing that he needs to be forgiven for. The whole point about asking for "Forgiveness" is the sudden recognition of the Lord's greatness. That recognition requires Arjuna to behave with more respect and humility with Sri Krishna. Thus far he was not required to behave any differently than he had.

Where Greatness Lies

9-12 While on the topic of taking undue advantage of the Guru's presence, Acharyaji pointed out the two characteristics of a great Teacher. They are Brahmanishtha and Shrotriya, i.e. being established in Brahman, and being well equipped to explain the Srutis.

He explained that expertise to explain the Srutis was only possible for one who was a Brahmanishtha. So being Brahmanishtha was the greater qualification. However, without the Srutis he would not have become a Brahmanishtha, and the argument may be reversed! Both are of equal importance. For either reason, the Guru is worthy of the highest respect.

The Guru's true greatness lies in the selflessness of his love for the disciple, and his ardent desire to see his disciple liberate himself and enjoy the highest Bliss! This, too, is possible only when Brahmanishtha and Shrotriya is present. So we are in a loop trying to find the greatness of the Guru!

Indeed, if we have to ask a disciple the same question, he will say, "It lies in everything little thing that he does – that is where my Guru's greatness lies!"

13-16 Now it dawns on Arjuna that had he known the greatness of Sri Krishna earlier, he would not have behaved that way with Him. That thought is an embarrassment to him in his own mind. His appeal for forgiveness now is, thus, only an effort on his part to reconcile to *himself* his past behaviour with the new behaviour.

The past behaviour was *natural* and in keeping with his limited knowledge of Sri Krishna then. His behaviour henceforth will also be just as *natural* and in keeping with the new knowledge he has acquired of the very same Person. This change is what these verses are all about. They are not really about 'forgiveness' at all, for there never has been any wrong to be forgiven.

Acharyaji expressed this situation beautifully: **“Small people are quick to feel insulted even when honoured. Only the great ones feel honoured even when insulted.”**

Verse 45: “Praseeda – Have Mercy Upon Me”

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा
भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं
प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास

॥ ११-४५॥

adṛṣṭapūrvam hṛṣitō:'smi dṛṣṭvā
bhayēna ca pravyathitaṁ manō mē |
tadēva mē darśaya dēva rūpaṁ
prasīda dēvēśa jagannivāsa

॥ 11-45॥

1	<i>Adrishta poorvam hrishitah asmi drishtvaa,</i>	What was <u>never seen</u> before, I am delighted to have <u>now seen</u> ;
2	<i>bhayena cha pravyathitam manah me;</i>	and yet with fear, my mind is <u>distressed</u> ;
3	<i>tat eva me darshaya deva roopam,</i>	Show me only that (previous) Divine Form (“ Vishnu Roopa ”) of Yours.
4	<i>praseeda deva eesha jagat nivaasa.</i>	Have <u>mercy</u> , O Lord of gods, O Abode of the universe.

1-3 Having asked the Lord for forgiveness, Arjuna now tries for the third time to get Sri Krishna to revert to His pleasanter “**Vishnu-Roopa**” form, the Form as the God of all Gods, called here as the Deva Roopa.

4 Praseeda: “have mercy”. Arjuna had used this word in verse 25, just before Sri Krishna began showing him the prediction of the Mahabharata War. Then he used it again in verse 31, when that prediction was completed. And now he uses it a third and last time, this time as though saying “That is enough, Sri Krishna! Please, do have some mercy upon me!”

Verse 46: “Bring Back the Vishnu-Roopa”

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्तं
इच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन
सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते

॥ ११-४६॥

kirīṭinaṁ gadinam cakrahastam
icchāmi tvāṁ draṣṭumahaṁ tathaiva |
tēnaiva rūpēṇa caturbhujēna
sahasrabāhō bhava viśvamūrtē

॥ 11-46॥

1	<i>Kireetinam gadinam chakra hastam,</i>	<i>Crowned, bearing a mace, with discus in hand,</i>
2	<i>icchaami twaam drashtum aham tathaa eva;</i>	<i>thus do I desire to see You, as before,</i>
3	<i>tena eva roopena chaturbhujena,</i>	<i>in Your former form only, with four arms,</i>
4	<i>sahasra baaho bhava vishwa moorte.</i>	<i>O Thousand-armed, O universal Form.</i>

1 Kireetinam: “crowned”. We recall that in verse 35, Sanjaya cheekily used the same word for Arjuna, as though telling Dhritarashtra that Arjuna has already been crowned as King of Hastinapura. It is Lord Krishna whom it refers to in the “**Vishnu-Roopa**” form.

2-3 Chaturbhujena: “with four arms”. This description makes a direct reference to the Vishnu-Roopa form, the form in which the Lord is depicted as a Deity for worship.

4 Vishwa Moorte: “Vishwa-Roopa” form; Arjuna is still seeing the Vishwa-Roopa. Hence, he addresses this form which is characterised as having a ‘*thousand arms*’.



11.9 WITHDRAWAL OF THE COSMIC FORM

(Verses 47-51, 5 No.)

THIS PORTION BRINGS TO an end the Cosmic Vision shown to Arjuna. Arjuna asks to be relieved of the terrifying “*Vishwa-Roopa*” of the Lord, and wishes to go back to the Deva-Roopa or “*Vishnu-Roopa*”, i.e. Lord Vishnu as the four-armed Deity (Chaturbhuja Roopa). The Lord obliges, but not immediately.

He first glorifies the “*Vishwa-Roopa*” form. Then He goes through two stages. In the first stage, he takes the “*Vishnu-Roopa*” to oblige Arjuna; and in the second stage, He returns to the “*Manusha-Roopa*”, which is His normal human form as Arjuna knew Him since childhood days. We see that the Lord takes three different forms in all.

Verse 47: *The Lord Glorifies His “Vishwa-Roopa”*

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनेदं
रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात् ।
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं
यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम्

॥ ११-४७॥

śrībhagavānuvāca |
mayā prasannēna tavārjunēdaṁ
rūpaṁ paraṁ darśitamātmayōgāt |
tējōmayam viśvamanantamādyam
yanmē tvadanyēna na dṛṣṭapūrvam

॥ 11-47॥

	<i>Shree Bhagavan uvaacha:</i>	<i>The Blessed Lord said:</i>
1	<i>mayaa prasannena tava arjuna idam,</i>	<i>By My graciousness to you, O Arjuna, has this</i>
2	<i>roopam param darshitam aatma yogaat;</i>	<i>Supreme Form (the “Vishwa Roopa”) been shown by My own Yogic power;</i>
3	<i>tejomayam vishwam anantam aadyam,</i>	<i>full of splendour, universal, infinite, primeval;</i>
4	<i>yat me tvat anyena na drishta poorvam.</i>	<i>Other than by you from Me, it has never before been seen.</i>

This is a key verse in this chapter. There are **four features** about the Vishwa-Roopa form which Sri Krishna wishes to convey to Arjuna before dropping it. They are:

- 2** i) Never has anyone else shown it other than Sri Krishna, the Lord Himself;
- 4** ii) Never has it been seen before by anyone other than Arjuna.

This is something quite unique. It makes the Cosmic Form historical, a one-off event, never to be repeated. What does this teach us? We are given something to ponder over: The Cosmic Form is not something that takes place in Time! It cannot be shown by anyone, nor can it be seen by anyone! It is not some kind of a created Vision.

1 iii) By the Grace of Krishna, Arjuna was tuned into It.

3 iv) It ever exists. It is always present; It is the ever-present Reality Itself!

This much alone can be said about it . . . till we tune into it ourselves!

Verse 48: *The Rarity of the “Vishwa-Roopa”*

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानैर्-

न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।

एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके

द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर

॥ ११-४८॥

na vēdayajñādhyaayanairna dānair-

na ca kriyābhirna tapōbhirugraiḥ |

ēvaṁrūpaḥ śakya ahaṁ nṛlōkē

draṣṭuṁ tvadanyēna kurupravīra

|| 11-48||

1	<i>Na veda-yajna- adhyayanaih na daanaih,</i>	<i>The Vedas and the Yajnas (sacrifices) – neither by their <u>study</u>, nor by making any number of <u>gifts</u>,</i>
2	<i>na cha kriyaabhih na tapobhih ugraih;</i>	<i>nor by the performance of any <u>rituals</u>, nor by doing severe <u>austerities</u>;</i>
3	<i>evam roopah shakya aham nriloke,</i>	<i>can this Form of Mine – the Cosmic Form – among the <u>world of men</u>,</i>
4	<i>drashtum tvat anyena kuru-praveera.</i>	<i><u>be seen</u> by any other than yourself, O great hero among the Kurus.</i>

The Cosmic Form has just been shown to be no less than the state of Self-realisation or enlightenment. With that as our leading thought, we can deduce the following:

1-2 The Acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity, which elsewhere in the Geeta are said not to be given up even after enlightenment, undoubtedly have a key place among the spiritual practices to realise God. However, their purpose is to purify us of all accumulated Karma. In themselves, they lead us towards but cannot result in God-realisation.

3-4 Realisation requires much more to be done after purification. The Knowledge of the Self has to be thoroughly understood and meditated upon. However, Sri Krishna has made an “exceptional” exception in the case of Arjuna.

Verse 49: “Be Not Afraid of Such a Terrible Form”

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो
दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं
तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य

॥ ११-४९॥

mā tē vyathā mā ca vimūḍhabhāvō
dṛṣṭvā rūpaṁ ghōramīdṛṅmamēdam |
vyapētabhīḥ prītamanāḥ punastvaṁ
tadēva mē rūpamidam prapaśya

॥ 11-49॥

1	<i>Maa te vyathaa maa cha vimoodha-bhaavah,</i>	<i>Do not be <u>afraid</u>, do not be in a state of <u>bewilderment</u></i>
2	<i>drishtvaa roopam ghoram eedrik mama idam;</i>	<i>on seeing a terrible Form (Vishwa Roopa) of Mine such as this;</i>
3	<i>vyapetabheeh preetamanaah</i>	<i>with your fear <u>dispelled</u>, and with a heart <u>gladdened</u>,</i>
4	<i>punah twam, tat eva me roopam idam prapashya.</i>	<i>again that former form (Vishnu Roopa) of Mine, do thou behold once again.</i>

1-2 For the reason given above – that the Vishwa Roopa has been shown to Arjuna as a special manifestation of Grace – Sri Krishna asks Arjuna not to be afraid of what he has seen, however terrible it may appear at this point. It is an experience that Arjuna should be treasuring rather than avoiding.

However, it is a well known fact in spiritual life that if an experience is had prematurely, it will not remain for long. It will soon be lost until the person develops the capacity to bear the experience. That is how Sri Krishna sees the reaction of Arjuna to the Cosmic Form – he does not have the capacity to bear the experience at this stage of growth.

3-4 Having said that, Sri Krishna withdraws the Cosmic Form, and returns to His Deity Form as Lord Vishnu, the Sustainer of the Universe. He considers it unwise to enforce the Vision onto an unprepared Arjuna.

A genuine Guru will also have the same approach. He will not enforce any spiritual discipline onto a disciple who is not ready for it.

Verse 50: The “Vishnu-Roopa” Resumed

सञ्जय उवाच ।
इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा
स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं
भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा

॥ ११-५०॥

sañjaya uvāca |
ityarjunam vāsudēvastathōktvā
svakaṁ rūpaṁ darśayāmāsa bhūyaḥ |
āśvāsayāmāsa ca bhītamēnam
bhūtvā punaḥ saumyavapurmahātmā

|| 11-50||

	<i>Sanjaya uvaacha:</i>	<i>Sanjaya said:</i>
1	<i>Iti arjunam vaasudevah tathaa uktvaa,</i>	<i>Thus to Arjuna, Vasudeva, having spoken the above words,</i>
2	<i>swakam roopam darshayaa-maasa bhooya;</i>	<i>resumed His own Form (“Vishnu-Roopa”) once again.</i>
3	<i>aashwaasayaa-maasa cha bheetam enam.</i>	<i>Thereafter, in order to further console him who was thus terrified,</i>
4	<i>bhootvaa punah saumya-vapuh mahaatmaa.</i>	<i>once again His “friendly” form (Manushya Roopa) did He, the great-souled One, take up.</i>

1-4 The significance here is that if Nirguna Sadhana (Vishwa-Roopa) of fixing one’s mind on the Absolute is too difficult, then the seeker should adopt Saguna Sadhana (Vishnu-Roopa) of using a concrete form – an idol or a picture of the Lord – to help focus his mind.

Verse 51: The “Manusha-Roopa” Resumed

अर्जुन उवाच ।
दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।
इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः

|| ११-५१||

arjuna uvāca |
dṛṣṭvēdaṁ mānuṣaṁ rūpaṁ tava saumyaṁ janārdana |
idānīmasmi saṁvṛttaḥ sacētāḥ prakṛtiṁ gataḥ

|| 11-51||

	<i>Arjuna uvaacha:</i>	<i>Arjuna said:</i>
1	<i>Drishtvaa idam maanusham roopam,</i>	<i>Having seen this Thy human form,</i>
2	<i>tava saumyam janaardana;</i>	<i>gentle in nature, O Janardana,</i>
3	<i>idaaneem asmi samvrittaḥ,</i>	<i>I am now composed,</i>
4	<i>sachetaah prakritim gatah.</i>	<i>and restored to my own nature.</i>

A Summary of this Section

In the 5 verses of this section, we have:

- i) (47-49) by **Lord Krishna**: The Lord gives the significance of the “Vishwa-Roopa”;
- ii) (50) by **Sanjaya**: Sanjaya announces the changeover of the Form,
 - first from “Vishwa-Roopa” to “Vishnu-Roopa”;
 - then from “Vishnu-Roopa” to “Manusha-Roopa”
- iii) (51) by **Arjuna** again: Arjuna is glad to see the “Manusha-Roopa” once again.

1. **Lord Krishna** does not immediately withdraw the “Vishwa-Roopa” Darshan. Instead, He sings its glories. He says that His intention was prompted by Arjuna’s pleasing behaviour. He wanted to show Arjuna that in carrying out His task as an Avatara, He has to have no emotional ties to obstruct Him. This form has not been seen by anyone else so far, and will not be seen by anyone else in future, too.

Arjuna’s request for the Cosmic Form to be withdrawn can be taken as an admission that he is not yet ready for the Karma Sannyasa stage or for Nirguna Bhakti, and has to be content with working hard at the earlier stage of Karma Yoga or Saguna Bhakti.

2. **Sanjaya** does a simple duty of changing the Vision, in two stages – first to the “Vishnu-Roopa”, and then back to the human or “Manusha-Roopa”. A dull and perhaps dejected Dhritarashtra makes no response to what he has been told.

3. **Arjuna** returns to express his satisfaction at seeing the Lord in His gentle, human form once again. He has regained his composure and is his normal self once again. Spiritually, this means he is more comfortable with Saguna Bhakti.

The difference between Nirguna and Saguna Bhakti is where Discourse 12 begins.



11.10 BHAKTI YOGA IS THE MEANS

(Verses 52-55, 4 No.)

THE COSMIC VISION HAS ENDED. In the final four verses of this chapter, we are looking ahead to the next chapter. The theme of Saguna and Nirguna Bhakti has just been introduced at the end of the last section. The Lord now takes the stage and paves the way for the grand finale on Bhakti Yoga in Chapter 12.

As already mentioned earlier, the two Forms other than the Manusha Roopa, namely the **Vishwa-Roopa** and the **Vishnu-Roopa**, are equivalent to Nirguna and Saguna Bhakti respectively. Arjuna is more comfortable with Saguna Bhakti. This is the case for the majority of humanity. The former path is too difficult – “terrifying” – for most devotees.

The Lord takes up this theme in the remaining verses of this chapter, and will go into details in the next chapter, the climax on the subject of Bhakti Yoga.

Verse 52: *“Vishwa-Roopa” – Even the Gods Desire It!*

श्रीभगवानुवाच ।
सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।
देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः ॥ ११-५२॥
śrībhagavānuvāca |
sudurdarśamidaṁ rūpaṁ dṛṣṭavānasi yanmama |
dēvā apyasya rūpasya nityaṁ darśanakāṅkṣiṇaḥ ॥ 11-52॥

	<i>Shree Bhagavan uvaacha:</i>	<i>The Blessed Lord said:</i>
1	<i>Sudur-darsham idam roopam,</i>	<i>Very hard it is to see this Form</i>
2	<i>drishtvaan-asi yat mama;</i>	<i>of Mine, which <u>you have seen</u>;</i>
3	<i>devaah api asya roopasya,</i>	<i>even the Gods are <u>ever desirous</u></i>
4	<i>nityam darshana kaankshinah.</i>	<i>to have a vision of this Form.</i>

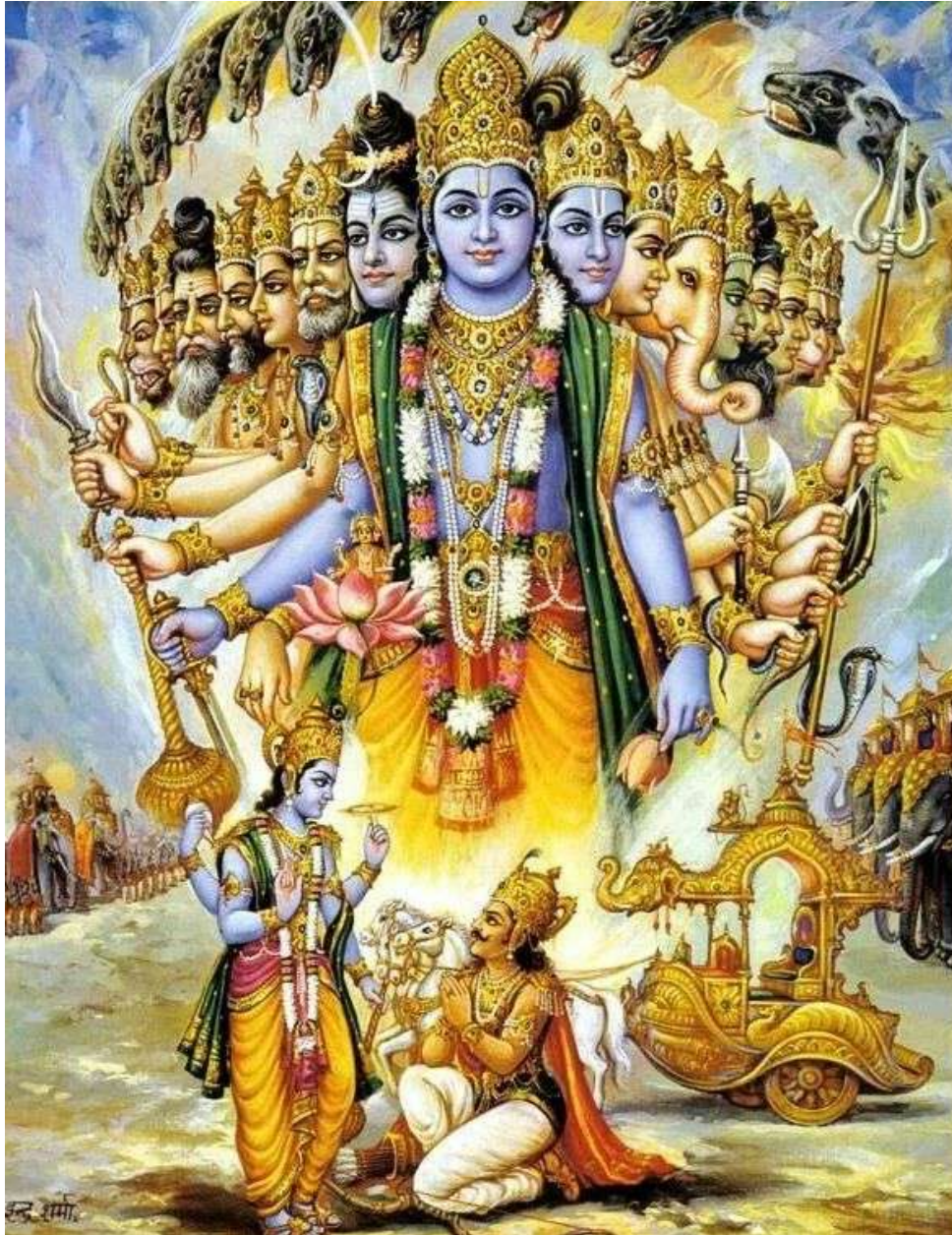
This and the next verse continue from where the Lord left us in verses 47-49. The Lord picks up the thread on the **Vishwa-Roopa** first.

1-2 The Vishwa-Roopa Darshan is very hard for man to attain. That we have already seen in verses 47 and 49. There is an additional point which is now established by the Lord:

3-4 The Vishwa-Roopa Darshan is yearned for even by the Devatas. Lord Vishnu is the Lord of the Devatas, just as He is of His devotees on earth. The Gods also crave to have His Darshan as much as we do. *And it is just as hard for them as it is for us!*

The Hindu view of the numerous Gods and Goddesses is here brought to the fore. The Deities (both Gods and Goddesses) are appointed to their functions by the Lord. They

have some defects in their personalities, but their virtues are dominant. They are not realised sages. They, too, are struggling and yearning for God-vision. By doing their duties well, they, too, hope to get a human birth by which they can evolve further!



LORD VISHNU'S “VISHWA-ROOPA”

Verse 53: Necessary but Insufficient Means

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।
शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ॥ ११-५३॥
nāhaṁ vēdairna tapasā na dānēna na cējyayā |
śakya ēvaṁvidhō draṣṭuṁ dṛṣṭavānasi māṁ yathā ॥ 11-53॥

1	<i>Na aham vedaih na tapasaa,</i>	<i>Neither by the Vedas, nor by austerity,</i>
2	<i>na daanena na cha ijjayaa;</i>	<i>nor by gift, nor by sacrifices;</i>
3	<i>shakya evam vidhah drashtum,</i>	<i>can I be seen like this</i>
4	<i>drishtvaan-asi maam yathaa.</i>	<i>as you have seen Me.</i>

1-2 In a repeat of verse 48, the difficulty of seeing the Vishwa-Roopa is again pointed out. There is nothing wrong or inferior about these spiritual practices. They are necessary Sadhanas for spiritual growth, but insufficient to attain the highest realisation.

3-4 Having said that, Arjuna's case is a rare exception. That is stressed again.

Verse 54: The Sufficient Means

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परन्तप ॥ ११-५४॥
bhaktyā tvananyayā śakya ahamēvaṁvidhō:'rjuna |
jñātuṁ draṣṭuṁ ca tattvēna pravēṣṭuṁ ca parantapa ॥ 11-54॥

1	<i>Bhaktyaa tu ananyayaa shakya,</i>	<i>Indeed, by single-minded devotion can I</i>
2	<i>aham evam vidhah arjuna;</i>	<i>like this, O Arjuna;</i>
3	<i>jnaatum drashtum cha tattwena,</i>	<i>be <u>known</u> and <u>seen</u> in reality, and</i>
4	<i>praveshtum cha parantapa.</i>	<i><u>entered</u> into, O Parantapa!</i>

The only sufficient condition for the Vishwa-Roopa is **direct experience** of it through knowledge of the Self. This condition includes all the other necessary conditions.

1-2 The point made here is that direct experience, the vision of the Cosmic Form, is possible only for one who has pure, single-minded devotion for the Lord. This is what the Lord really wants to bring out at the conclusion of this chapter. We need not expand on this point further here, as it is only meant to introduce us to the next Chapter.

Verse 55: The Path of Bhakti Yoga

मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्भक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।
निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥ ११-५५॥

1	<i>Mat-karma-krit mat-paramah,</i>	Who <u>acts</u> for Me only, who regards <u>Me</u> as Supreme;
2	<i>mad-bhaktah sanga-varjitah;</i>	who is <u>devoted</u> to Me, and free from <u>attachment</u> ;
3	<i>nirvairah sarva-bhooteshu,</i>	who bears <u>no enmity</u> towards any creature;
4	<i>yah sah maam eti paandava.</i>	such a Bhakta (Devotee) <u>attains</u> Me, O Pandava.

Constituents of Bhakti

In this verse, when we are about to begin the Chapter entitled “Bhakti Yoga”, we have a complete summary of what this path is made up of. Acharyaji listed out the five constituents of Bhakti Yoga. These are not steps but ingredients – all of them are needed:

1. Dedicating all one’s activities to the Lord. (**1a**)
2. Keeping the Goal of life as the Lord Himself. (**1b**)
3. Holding the attitude of being a devotee of the Lord. (**2a**)
4. Being free from all attachments – be they physical, mental or intellectual. (**2b**)
5. Having no enmity or hatred towards any other person. (**3**)

4 Such a person is a qualified **Bhakta** or devotee of the Lord, and is eligible for the Path of Bhakti Yoga.

The Name “Vishwa-Roopa” Darshana Yoga

It is educative to look into the Vedantic derivation of the term by which the Chapter is entitled. In Samskrit, the Supreme Consciousness is given various names according to what It is being associated with. The Cosmic hierarchy may be listed as follows:

Serial No.	ASSOCIATED UPADHI (ADJUNCT)	SAMASHTI MACROCOSMIC (Totality)	VYASHTI MICROCOSMIC (Individual)
1	Pure, Unassociated	BRAHMAN	ATMAN
2	Total Creation	ISHWARA	JEEVA
3	At Causal Level	ISHWARA	PRAJNA
4	At Subtle Level	HIRANYAGARBHA	TAIJASA
5	At Gross Level	VIRAT	VISHWA

The name Vishwa-Roopa comes from the association of Consciousness at the Gross, Individual level. Even though the description is of the Totality at Gross level, the fact is that it is being experienced by Arjuna, an individual living as **Vishwa**.

ॐ तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु
ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे
विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगो नामैकादशोऽध्यायः ॥ ११ ॥

ॐ tatsaditi śrīmadbhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu
brahmavidyāyām yōgāśāstrē śrīkṛṣṇārjunasaṁvādē
viśvarūpadarśanayōgō nāmaikādaśo'dhyāyaḥ ॥ 11 ॥

Om Tat Sat!

END OF DISCOURSE 11

“THE YOGA OF THE COSMIC FORM”

