

# ESSENCE OF THE BHAGAVAD GEETA

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When one is offered something new, it is human nature to think “What is in it for me?” So when one is advised to read and study the Bhagavad Geeta it is only natural to ask “What benefit do **I** get out of it?” The question therefore is What benefit **does** one get out of studying the Geeta? The Lord Himself answers this question in the various chapters of the Geeta.

What is the message of the Bhagavad Geeta? The message is that man should free himself from the eternal cycle of *Samsara*. The Geeta teaches him how to do this, and how to attain *Mukti* and eternal Bliss.

The 18 chapters of the Geeta can be divided into three sections (*trisaktam*) of six chapters each. Some authorities say that the three sections refer to Karma yoga, *Bhakti* yoga and *Gyana* yoga. Others say the Geeta is a detailed exposition of one of the most sacred and inspired pronouncement of the *Mahavakyas* (Great Utterances) “**Tat Twam Asi**”. Literally translated, it means: “That Thou Art” or in prose form “Thou Art That”. “That” signifies divinity. All *Mahavakyas* proclaim the relationship between God and man. The *Mahavakyam* “**Tat Twam Asi**” is from the Chandogya Upanishad of the Sama Veda.

The first six chapters relate to man - “**TVAM**” (Thou/You) the average human being - his physical and intellectual aspects, how he thinks, and acts and what influences his actions. The second six chapters – “**TAT**” give some idea and indication of the Supreme Being, and the last six chapters – “**ASI**” explain the relation between the mortal human being and the Immortal Supreme Being.

The **first chapter** is an allegorical representation of the constant struggle that goes on in the mind of man – represented as a war between the good Pandavas and the evil Kauravas. Arjuna, the great warrior of immense stature and determination is seen completely devastated and overcome by emotions and personal feelings which have completely destroyed his

reason, logic and discrimination. Deluded by his emotional attachments to his kith and kin, he is at a loss, not knowing what to do.

The **second chapter** is said to be an exhaustive summary of the Geeta in advance. We see a confused and undecided Arjuna surrendering himself to the Lord saying “*yac chreyan syan nischitam bruhi tan me sishyas te’ham shaadhi maam twaam prapannam*. Tell me decisively what is good for me. Instruct me who has taken refuge in you as your disciple.”

- It is only then that the Lord begins His discourse. The lesson here is that, it is only when we are prepared to abandon our ego and give ourselves up totally to the Lord that He will come to our aid.
- Hearing his plea for help, the Lord starts by explaining to Arjuna where his reasoning has gone wrong. He explains to him the difference between the perishable nature of the physical body and the indestructibility of the soul. How the soul discards the body when it has fulfilled its function and moves on to find another. *Bhagawan* illustrates with a beautiful example: “*vaasaamsi jirnaani yatha vihaaya, navaani grhanaati nara’paraani tathaa shariraani vihaaya jirnaany anyaaani samyaati navaani dehi*. As a man casting off old clothes put one new ones, so the soul casting of worn out bodies enters into new ones.”
- The Lord tells us how to accept death. “*jaathasya hi dhruvo mrthyur dhruvam janma mrthasyaca tasmaad aparihaarye ’rthe na tvam sochitum arhasi*. Death is certain, to that which is born and birth is equally certain for that which dies. Being unavoidable and inevitable, you should not grieve.”
- Also, Lord introduces His unique and entirely new philosophy: “*karmany evaa ’adhikaaras te maa phaleshu kadaacana, maa karmaphalahetur bhuur maa te sango ’stv akarmani*. Your right is to work only and not to claim its fruit. Let not the longing for the fruit be the motivating factor for your action. On the other hand do not let this lead you to inaction.”
- The last eighteen verses of this chapter are of profound significance. It describes the man of perfection, the *Sthithaprajnya*. In these verses the Lord explains step by step the fall of man when he succumbs to temptation. It gives us a yardstick to measure ourselves, and also indicates the ultimate goal to be aimed for, to free ourselves from the cycle of *samsara*.

In the **third chapter** Karma Yoga, the Yoga of Action, *Bhagavan* talks of Karma and Karma Yoga. Karma is action. Karma yoga is selfless action.

- He mentions the different types of Karma. No one can remain without action even for a moment; even maintenance of the body would not be possible.
- In this world, all actions, unless they are done as *yajna* or offering to God, become causes of bondage. *Bhagawan* advises: “*tasmaad asaktah satatam kaaryam karma samaachara, asakto hy aacharan karma param aapnoti puurusha*. Therefore, perform action always without attachment. For by working without attachment, man attains the Supreme.” The Lord also explains what dharma is in this context and how one should approach his or her dharma: “*shreyaan svadharmo vigunah, paradharmaat svanushthitaat, svadharme nidhanam shreya paradharmo bhayaavaha*. One’s own dharma or duty even though imperfect is better than that of another however well performed. Even death, if it comes to that, is better in one’s own dharma doing one’s own duty because the dharma of another is full of fear, and can only come to harm.”
- Here Arjuna puts a question to which all of us want an answer: “Why does man, though unwilling, still commit sin?” The Lord replies: “*kaama esa krodha esa rajoguna samudbhava mahaashano mahaapaapmaa viddhy enam iha vairinam*. It is desire, it is anger, rising from *rajoguna*. It is all devouring, totally sinful. Understand this to be the enemy of man.”

The **fourth chapter** is *Gnana Karma Samnyaasa Yoga*. In this chapter the Lord discusses all three: Karma yoga, *samnyaasa* yoga and *gnana* yoga. He reveals to Arjuna His divinity.

- How He appears as the various *avathars*, and the reason for these *avathars*: “*yada yada hi dharmasya, glaanir bhavathi bharatha, abhyutthanam adharmasya, tadaatmaanam srjaamyaham*. Whenever there is a decline of dharma and a rise in *adharm* then I embody myself” – and what is the purpose of these *avathars*? – “*parithraanaaya saadhuunaam vinaashaaya ca dushkritaam, dharma samsthaapanarthaya sambhavaami yuge yuge*. For the protection of the good and the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of dharma I am born age after age.”

- New terms like “action-in-inaction”, “inaction-in-action” are explained.
- *Bhagawan* also says that the fourfold order among men was created by Him, depending on the distribution of *Gunas* and karma in people.
- The Lord enumerates the various *Yajnas* and it is here that we come to understand the famous verse: “*brahmaarpanam brahmahavir, brahmaagnau brahmanaa hutam brahmai’va tena gantavyam brahma karma samaadhinaa*” How every aspect of every offering in every *yajna* is centered in the Lord.
- He also extols the supremacy of the knowledge of the divine to all other knowledge. To obtain this knowledge says the Lord, “*tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevayaa, upadeksyanti te jnaanam, jnaaninas tattva darshinah*. Seek that enlightenment by prostrating, by questioning, and by service; the wise who have realized the truth will instruct you in that knowledge.”

*Samnyaasa* Yoga in **chapter five** discusses Renunciation of Action. Practice of Karma yoga is the first step towards *samnyaas* yoga, says the Lord.

- With enlightenment comes the knowledge, which enables the enlightened one to see the spark of divinity in all. “*vidyaa vinaya sampanne, braahmane gavi hastini shuni cai’va svapaake ca panditaa samadarshinah*. Enlightened men are those who see the same *Atman*, in all – in a *brahmana* who is learned and humble, in a cow, in an elephant, even in a dog, or in a dog eater (outcaste).”
- Those *samnyaasins* who have shed lust and anger, subdued their minds and realized the Self are the ones who enjoy the bliss of Brahman.
- How does such a realized one see the Lord? “*bhoktaaram yajna tapasaam, sarvalokamaheshwaram, suhrdam sarvabhutaanaam, jnaatvaa maam shaantim rcchati*. Having known Me as the Lord of the sacrifices and austerities, as the Ruler of the world and the Friend of all beings, such a realized one attains peace.”

The first section of the Bhagavad Geeta closes with the **sixth chapter** called *Dhyana* Yoga, or *Atmasamyama* Yoga.

- The technique of meditation is taught in detail.
- Each one, says the Lord must strive for himself towards perfection, and cannot depend on others. “*uddhared aatmanaa’tmaanam naa’*

*atmaanam avasaadayet, aatmai'va hy aatmano bandhur aatmai'va ripur aatmana.* Let a man raise himself by his own self. Let him not debase himself, for he is his own friend as well as his own foe”.

- Arjuna, after hearing all this, voices his own misgivings that the techniques of mind control, and meditation are too difficult. He says: “*cancalam hi mana krishna praamathi balavad drdham tasyaa'ham nigraham manye, vayor iva sudushkaram.* The mind is restless, turbulent, strong, unyielding and obstinate. I think it is as hard to control as the wind.” Those doubts must come to every individual who has tried to master mind-control and meditation. The Lord’s answer is for all of us when He says: “*asamshayam mahaabaaho mano durnigraham cala, abhyaasena tu kaunteya, vairagyena ca grhyate.* The mind is without doubt restless and hard to control, but by practice and dispassion or non attachment it can be controlled.”
- Arjuna then asks: “What is the fate of one who does have faith but fails to attain perfection?” Even more assuring is the Lord’s assurance when He says: “*paartha nai've 'ha naa mutra vinaashas tasya vidyate na hi kalyaanakrit kashcid durgatim taatha gacchathi.* Oh, Partha, neither in this world, nor in the next is there destruction for him, for the doer of good never comes to grief.”

Thus ends the first part of the *trisaktam*. The student of the Geeta is made aware of the *Jeevatman* or Soul, and its relation to the physical body. The indestructibility of the soul, its apparent limitations and its relation to the *Paramatman* are explained with simple but irrefutable logic. The devotee is taught that the purpose of life is not merely to pander to the comforts and demands of the physical body, but to recognize the indwelling *Jeevatman* and to prepare that *Jeevatman* to achieve its destined goal of reunion with the *Paramatman*.

The second section of the geeta consists of chapters 7 to 12 and deals with “*Tat*” (of *Tat Tvam Asi*”) meaning “That” signifying the Supreme Being, the Ultimate reality.

In the **seventh chapter**, *Jnana Vijnana Yoga*, *Bhagwan* talks about the two levels of His *Prakriti* or Nature: the *Apara Prakriti* or lower nature consisting of the eight categories, and the *Para Prakriti* or higher nature which is the source of all life and the sustaining force of the universe.

- These two together form the universal womb of all beings. “*mattah parataram na’nyat kimcid asti dhanamjaya mayi sarvam idam protam, suutre maniganaa iva*. There is nothing higher than Me, Oh Dhananjaya. All this is strung on Me as a row of pearls on a string.”
- The Lord begins to give a few examples of His *Vibhutis*.
- He also clarifies a doubt that lingers in the minds of all devotees. To Arjuna’s question “Which form of the Supreme Being should I worship?” The Lord answers: “Whatever form any devotee wishes to worship with faith, I make that faith of his steady.”

The Geeta discusses the subject of death frankly in the **eighth chapter** – the *Akshara Brahma Yoga*.

- The Lord says “Whatever a man thinks of, at the last moment of life, that is what he attains: and whoever leaves the body remembering Me alone, he attains Me.” So the Geeta advises “*tasmaat sarveshu kaaleshu maamanusmara yudhya ca mayy arpita mano-buddhir maam evai’syasy asamshayah*. Therefore, thinking of me at all times fight (the battle of life). One who has dedicated his mind and understanding to Me shall without doubt come to Me.”
- *Bhagavan* also describes the two paths taken by the soul: one the path of light and knowledge and the other the path of darkness and ignorance – one that leads to eternal bliss from which there is no return, and the other where one has to return, to continue in the eternal cycle of life and death.

Raja *Vidhya Raja Guhya Yoga*, the **ninth chapter** is the Yoga of Sovereign Science and Supreme Secret. This chapter is situated more or less in the middle of the Bhagavad Geeta.

- *Bhagawan* here gives some indications of His divine nature. He describes how He pervades the whole universe and how everything rests in Him. “*Ya haa’kaasha sthitho nithyam vaayuh sarvatrago mahaan, athaa sarvaani bhuutaani matstaani ’ty upadhaaraya*. As the mighty wind moving everywhere rests in *akasha* or space so also all beings rest in Me.”
- The process of creation is touched upon. The Lord also gives more examples of His *vibhutis*, in this chapter.
- The Lord gives His famous assurance to His devotees. “*ananyaash cintayanto maam ye janaah paryupaasate, tashaam*

*nitya'bhiyuktaanaam yogakshemam vahaamy aham.* To those who devotedly worship me alone, thinking of no other, I provide gain and security.”

- He also stresses that it is not the intrinsic value of offerings made to Him that He cares about, but the love and devotion with which it is offered, even if it is a leaf, a flower, a fruit or just plain water. To develop this devotion says the Lord, “*yat karoshi yad ashnaasi yaj juhosi dadaasi yat, yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kurusva madarpanam.* Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer in sacrifice, whatever you donate as charity, whatever austerities you practice, do it as an offering to me.”
- One of the most comforting and consoling verses in the Geeta, that gives all of us hope, even if some of us think of ourselves as hopeless sinners, is to be found in this chapter. The Lord says: “*kshipram bhavathi dharmathmaa shashva cchaantim nigacchati, kaunteya, pratijaanihi na me bhakta pranashyati.* Soon he becomes a man of righteousness and obtains lasting peace. O Kaunteya, know for certain that My devotee never perishes.”
- The chapter ends with the Lord telling us how to reach Him. “*manmanaa bhava madbhakto, madyaaji maam namaskuru, maam evai'syasi yuktvai'vam, aatmaanam matparaayanah.* Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice unto Me, bow down to Me. Having thus made yourself steadfast in Me, and considering Me as your supreme goal, you will come to Me.”

**Chapter ten** is *Vibhuti* Yoga. This chapter is more or less self-explanatory. The mention of *vibhutis* started in chapter 7, continues in chapter 9 into chapter 10.

- The Lord starts here by saying “*aham aatmaa gudaakesha sarvabhoothaa shayasthitha, aham aadish ca madhyam ca bhuutaanaam anta eva ca.* I am the Self, seated in the hearts of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all.”
- In answer to Arjuna's request the Lord gives 72 examples in 26 verses – examples from the planets and heavenly bodies, examples from every aspect of creation.
- The number of *vibhutis* is infinite, so the Lord finally says, “*athavaa bahunai 'tena kim jnaatena tavaa 'rjuna; vishtabhyaa 'ham idam krtsnam ekamshena sthitho jagat.* What need is there for this detailed

knowledge, Oh Arjuna, I stand supporting the whole universe with a single fragment of myself.”

**Chapter eleven** – *Viswarupa Darsana* Yoga. In chapter ten, the Lord showed Himself as “One in Many Forms”. In chapter eleven He shows “Many forms in One”. This chapter also is in many aspects self-explanatory.

- In response to Arjuna’s plea, the Lord shows him His *Viswa Rupam*. Impossible to take in at one glance, the vision is amazing and wonderful, at the same time, unimaginable, awe inspiring, and frightening.
- His ego shattered completely, trembling with fear at a sight he has never seen before, Arjuna prostrates before the cosmic vision, saying “*tasmaat pranamya pranidhaaya kaayam prasaadaye tvaam aham isham idyam, pite ’va putrasya sakhe ’va sakhyuh priyah priyaayaa ’rhasi deva sodhum*. Therefore prostrating my body, I beg you to forgive me Oh Adorable Lord. Bear with me, Oh Lord, as a father with a son, as a friend with a friend, as a lover with his beloved.” His words, deeply significant, denote Arjuna’s total and utter surrender.
- *Bhagawan* impresses upon Arjuna, that this Form which he has seen is very difficult to behold, even for the *Devas*, who long to see It. How then can one hope to see the cosmic form? The only way says the Lord, is by pure devotion. “*bhaktyaa tv ananyayaa shakya aham evamvidho ’rjuna, jnaatum drastum ca tattvena praveshtum ca paramtapa*. But by unswerving devotion can this form of Mine be known, seen in reality and entered into, Oh Scorcher of foes.”
- Finally the Lord repeats as He has done many times before, how to attain Him – “*matkarmakrn matparamo madbhakta sangavarjitah, nirvairah sarvabhuteshu yah sa maam eti paandava*. He who does work for Me, looks upon Me as the Supreme, who is My devotee, free from attachment, without hatred for any being, he comes to ME Oh Pandava.”

**Chapter twelve** is *Bhakti* Yoga. Reciting this chapter, as we do, at all our *satsanghs*, not only are the verses familiar to all devotees, but also the meaning of every verse of this gem of a chapter. This short chapter of just twenty verses is considered, probably, as the most important and significant in the Geeta.

- Idol worship and its place in *Sanatana* Dharma is discussed. The Lord explains the different ways by which the devotee can attain Him.
- For the guidance of the *sadhak*, the verses 13 to 19 give all the information, and advice, and teach exactly what he should do to reach the Lord.

The incomparable description of the *Viswa Rupa Darshan (Virat Rupa)* and the beautiful verses of *Bhakti* Yoga in chapters eleven and twelve, conclude the second set of the *trisaktam*. An attempt is made to describe the indescribable, to give form to the formless, and to clothe in finite terms, the infinite, to help the *sadhak* to understand the Absolute reality. The veil of ignorance that prevents man from realizing his true nature, - the divinity of the *Jeevatman* that dwells within him, and the ways by which this veil can be torn down, by practice or *Abhyasa*, and by developing intuitive knowledge or *Gyan* are described. Repeated emphasis is also made of the fact that each *Jeevatman* has to work out its own salvation.

The third section of the geeta consists of the last six chapters. This section elaborates on “*Asi*” - the third word of the *Mahavakya* - “*Tat Twam Asi*”, and explains the relation between the Supreme Being and the individual.

In **chapter thirteen**, we are taught about *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*.

- The physical body is compared to the *Kshetra* or field, and the soul as the life-giving *Kshetrajna*.
- The Lord explains what the *Kshetra* is in detail, describing the twenty-four *Tattvas* or various constituents and their modifications that go to make up the “Field”.
- This is followed by a discussion of the twenty qualities that can modify and “tune up” the mind, the only instrument we have to help us to indicate who and what the *Kshetrajna* or “Knower of the Field” is.
- The main purpose of this chapter is to explain how *Purusha* acts through *Prakriti*, and how between them, all actions and functions take place.

*Gunatraya Vibhaga* Yoga or the yoga of the three *gunas* is the **fourteenth chapter** where the *gunas* are described in detail. In many verses in the Geeta the Lord has mentioned about the various aspects of the *gunas* and

their function. *Gunas* are not properties of a substance but attributes with which the mind functions.

- We are told that the three *gunas*, - *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*, are present in every person, in different proportions and are responsible for the intellectual attitude and physical behavior in each person. This explains why one individual is different from another in character, and behavior.
- No one, says the Geeta is above the influence of the *gunas* and the Lord says that he who transcends the three *gunas* obtains *mukti* and attains freedom for ever from pain, suffering and repeated births and deaths.

*Purushothama* Yoga, the **fifteenth chapter** is the only chapter of twenty verses other than the twelfth.

- Equally profound, in its meaning, it compares *Samsara* to the *Aswatha* tree, with roots above and branches below, and how it has to be cut down by the axe of detachment.
- The goal to be sought for by the *sadhak*, from which, once attained, there is no return, is described as the abode of the Supreme Being.
- In this chapter also the Lord gives a brief glimpse into a few of His manifestations. Two *purushas* of this world, the perishable and the imperishable, are described.
- Distinct, separate and above these two is the Highest Spirit or Self, spoken of as the Supreme *Purusha*, the indestructible Being who pervades and sustains the three worlds.
- The relation between the *Jeevatman* and the *Paramatman* is explained when the Lord says: “*mamai’vaa ’msho jivaloke, jivabhuutha sanaathana*. An eternal portion of Myself (*Paramatman*) having become the *jeevatman*”; and also “*sarvasya ca ’ham hrdisamnishto*. I abide in the hearts of all.”
- In the closing verses the Lord explains why He is called the *Purushottama*.

**Chapter sixteen** deals with the qualities of the divine and *asuric* types. Studying this chapter gives us an opportunity to use it as a yardstick to assess our own divine qualities and *asuric* tendencies.

- It is interesting to note that the Lord enumerates twenty six virtues or divine qualities in the first three verses while fifteen verses are taken up to discuss the numerous *asuric* qualities.
- The Lord traces the downfall of man once more when he says “*trividham narakasye ’dam dvaaram nashanam aatmanah, kaama krodhas tathaa lobhas tasmaad etat trayam tyajet*. The three gates of hell which brings about ruin of man, are lust, anger and greed. Therefore one should abandon these three.”
- The chapter ends with the Lord advising us to adopt the scriptures as our authority in deciding what should and should not be done and to use the scriptures as the guide in our lives.

The **penultimate, seventeenth chapter** – the Yoga of the Three Fold Faith – starts with a question from Arjuna wanting to know what is the state of those who are ignorant of the scriptures but lead a good life and perform their *yajnas* with *sraddha* – is it *sattwa*, *rajas* or *tamas*?

- The Lord describes how *shraddha* manifests in man. People are of three types according to their nature says the Lord, *Sattvic Rajasic* and *Tamasic*.
- He goes into great detail to explain how the three *gunas* influence every thought and action of man, and affect every aspect of his life – his food habits, his religious practices of *yajnas*, and *tapas*, and acts of charity.
- The Lord finishes this chapter saying: “whatever is performed as a sacrifice, charity or austerity, without faith, is considered as “*Asat*” (not good), and is of no use or significance, either here in this life or in the hereafter.

The **last chapter** is a revision of the Geeta. To a request from *Arjuna*, that he desires to know what is *Samnyaasa* and what is *Tyaaga*.

- The Lord gives a detailed explanation of what the two terms mean, the various factors affecting them, and how each factor is in turn further influenced depending on whether it is *Sattvic*, *Rajasic* or *Tamasic*, dealing with every aspect of human nature and behavior. This is followed by a discussion on the four-fold “caste system” and the responsibilities of each.
- He advises how to conduct ourselves in life: “*cetasaa sarva karmaani mayi samnyasya mat-parah, buddhi-yogam upaashritya mac-cittah*

*satatam bhava*. Resign all your actions to me, have Me as your highest goal, practicing the yoga of discrimination, ever fix your mind in Me.” If we do this says *Bhagavan*, by His Grace we will be able to overcome all obstacles. “*maccittah sarva durgani mat-prasadat tarisyasi*.” On the other hand He warns us: “*atha cet tvam ahankaaraan na shroshyasi vinaksyasi*. If from egoism you will not listen to Me, you will perish.” This is not a threat from the Lord, but a statement of fact of what happens to a person if he abandons the Lord, and turns to a life of unbridled desires, lust and greed.

- Two oft quoted verses said to contain the essence of the Geeta are: “*manmanaa bhava madbhakto madyaaji maam namaskuru, maam evai shyasi satyam te pratijaane priyo’si me*. Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, sacrifice to Me, bow down to Me, you shall come to Me alone. I do promise this to you for you are dear to Me.” And: “*Sarvadharmaan parityajya maam ekam sharanam uraja, aham tvaa sarva paapebhyo mokshayishyaami maa shucha*. Abandoning all *dharmas*, take refuge in Me alone. I will liberate thee from all sins, grieve not.”
- Then as if to conclude this discourse the Lord says: “*iti te jnaanam aakhyaatam guhyaad guhyataram mayaa, vimrshyai ’tad ashesena yathe ’cchasi tathaa kuru*. Thus has the wisdom more secret than all secrets been declared to you by Me. Having reflected over it fully, you act as you choose.”
- And finally the Lord asks Arjuna “Has this been heard by you Oh Arjuna, with single pointed mind? Has the delusion born of your ignorance been dispelled Oh Dhananjaya?”
- Arjuna replies, “*nashto mohah smrtir labdhaa tvatprasaadaan mayaa ’cyutha sthitho ’smi gatasamdeha karishye vachanam tava*. My delusion is destroyed. I have gained my memory through Thy Grace, O Achyutha. I am firm and free from doubt. I shall do according to Thy word (command).”

This brings this great and immortal spiritual discourse between God and man to a close. The remaining five verses are Sanjaya’s commentary. Of this the most important is the last verse because it carries a vital message for every human being “*Yatra yogeshvarah krshno yatra paartho dhanurdhara, tatra shri vijayo bhuutir, dhruvaa nitir matir mama*. Wherever is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, wherever is Paartha the wielder of

the bow, there will be prosperity, victory, happiness and sound policy. Such is my conviction.”

All through the Geeta, Krishna the Yogeshvara is represented as the Self or Atman in each of us. This *Atman* or vital core within, is where the entire drama of the events of each life takes place. It is possible for each of us to invoke the Lord within us. Arjuna represents the average human being, the ordinary mortal, with his weaknesses, temptations and fears. When he throws down his bow in dejection, he is confused, and at a total loss not knowing what to do. By the end of the discourse, he stands up, recovered from his delusion, ready with bow in hand to do his duty.

Putting the two together, Krishna the Yogeshvara and Arjuna the Dhanurdhara, the symbolic picture is complete. Man alone without spiritual guidance and understanding is insufficient and inadequate. By invoking the Spirit within, with that Divine guidance, he is ready to face all odds and fight the battle of life. And then nothing can stop him, from achieving anything and everything he wants.

In conclusion, this end of the *trisaktam* dealing with “*AST*” of the *Mahavakya* consists of the detailed explanation of the *Kshetra* and the *Kshetrajna*, the nature of the three *gunas* and realizing that every thought, word and deed is either *Satwik*, *Rajasik* or *Tamasik*, the description of the *Purushottama* yoga and finally the promise of *Bhagawan* in the last chapter, of redemption, if one is prepared to give oneself totally over to Him, establishes the relation between God and Man, between Nara and Narayana.

Thus it is, for each individual to appreciate this relationship, and make the choice between the cycles of birth, death, and rebirth and the eternity of Sat-Chit-Ananda.

**HARI OM TAT SAT**