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# **MESSAGE OF GITA**

Original Hindi Text  
by  
**Dr. Mahesh Vidyalkar**

English Version  
by  
**Prof. Suresh Kumar**

Published by  
**Dharmartha Seva Prakashan**

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C-2/288, Janakpuri, New Delhi - 110058

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Printed by: **Pearl Offset Press Pvt. Ltd.**

5/33, Kriti Nagar Industrial Area

New Delhi - 110015

Ph.: 9899822992, 25159312,

41424700,

## **The Beautiful Message for the Humanity**

The Bhagavadgita is the best medicine for all kinds of mental diseases springing from disappointment, cowardice and attachment. That is why Shri Krishna gave this spiritual tonic to Arjuna who required it at the critical moment of the great war of Mahabharat. This is the only medicine that can remedy the present complaints of the Mother India and the world. The source of Gita lies in the Vedas as well as Upanishads. Shri Krishna was a great Yogi and Rishi. He interpreted the Vedas, the message of God, in a unique and inimitable form. Not only was he a great Jnani but a perfect soul who had transformed the knowledge into action. Thus, he had a great store of experience too.

The gist of the great message of this most valuable book has been rendered by Dr. Mahesh Vidyalkar, a great Vedic scholar.

Shri Som Datt Mahajan, a well known Arya Samaj leader from Janak Puri, was gracious enough to get 25,000 copies of the tiny book published and distributed free of cost among the devotees of Gita through Arya Samaj, C-3 Block, Janak Puri, New Delhi.

He has already got the book translated into English by a great scholar, Prof. Suresh Kumar. Generous as he is, now he has undertaken upon himself the task of getting the present English version published and then getting it distributed among lovers of Gita and thereby spreading His message throughout the world.

From my personal knowledge I can say that Shri Mahajan has great love for Ved Prachar and feels real contentment in



(iii)

propagating the Vedic knowledge and culture not only through getting the Vedic literature published and distributed but also by organising conferences and Yajnas. May God bless him with long life, good health and generous heart to be able to work tirelessly for the cause of Arya Samaj and for the spread of Vedic message and earn Punyam. May God bless all Arya Samaj workers with the same kind of fervour and enthusiasm to work for Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati and to spread Vedic Dharma in the whole world.

With blessings,

**Swamy Satyam**

Dated: 20th Aug. 2004

*Executive President*

Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha

(International Arya League)

Dayanand Bhawan,

3/5 Ramlila Ground

New Delhi-110002

## FOREWORD

It is gratifying to see the English version 'Message of Gita' of the original Hindi 'Saral Gita Gyan' having been brought out for the benefit of predominantly English-using Indian readers at home as also abroad. The Gita is a profound and comprehensive text, not easily intelligible even to the fairly well-educated readership. It is in this book that the topics of life and death, happiness and grief, knowledge and action etc., as enunciated in the Gita, have been dealt with in communicative style, without compromising the authenticity of the content. The truth is that the Gita, having transcended the national boundaries, is now a part of the world heritage ever since it became accessible to the western scholars. The Gita has rightly been acknowledged as an invaluable gift to the entire humanity from Lord Shri Krishna, which has done India proud.

We are living in the 21st century. The advancements in information technology and efficient means of communication and transportation, together with the worldwide trading activity, have turned the world into a global village. The phenomenon has given rise to a new life pattern, marked by continuous mental stress, conflict of interests, materialistic ambitions and the like, causing erosion of spiritual values. The message of Upanishads, Gita and such other spiritual works, upholds these values, which are asset to humanity and guide the people to the goal of ultimate happiness and contentment.

Shri R.L. Gupta, founder Secretary of Arya Samaj, Greater Kailash, New Delhi is a dedicated personality for the cause of Arya Samaj. His son-in-law, Dr. R.P. Gupta, who is a resident of London, while on a visit to India, happened to see 'Saral Gita Gyan' (in Hindi). He suggested that the book should be

published in English for the benefit of non-Hindi knowing public of India and abroad.

Dr. Sukh Dev Soni, President, Arya Samaj, Chicago, USA visited India last year. During the reception held to honour him for his selfless and dedicated services for the promotion of Arya Samaj in USA, he expressed the desire of the religious people of USA that some good books for the propagation of spiritual principles of India in general and Arya Samaj in particular be published in English. This book, Message of Gita written by Dr. Mahesh Vidyalkar and translated by Prof. Suresh Kumar is an attempt in that direction.

Other Non-resident Indians like Shri Girish Khosla, Treasurer, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of America, Dr. Dilip Vedalkar of Arya

Samaj, Chicago, USA, Shri Vir Sain Mukhi of New York Arya Samaj, Shri Amar Nath Girdhar, PRO of Arya Samaj, Middex, UK, Shri Anand Arya, a young scientist of New Jersey, USA, Shri Sanjiv Madan of British Columbia, Canada etc. have also expressed similar desire from time to time. It is hoped that this book will go a long way to serve the purpose.

The original work in the form of 'Saral Gita Gyan' in Hindi was written by Dr. Mahesh Vidyalankar, Senior Reader, Delhi University. The learned scholar, who is always ready to write books to propagate the Vedic thought and principles, is a great asset for Arya Samaj. He has done a lot for the proliferation of Vedic literature. His 'Saral Gita Gyan' has earned a lot of praise from the readers all over India and abroad. 25,000 copies of the book have been distributed free so far.

We feel highly indebted to Prof. (Dr.) Suresh Kumar for agreeing to write English version of this book inspite of his varied pre-occupations. He was one of the teachers of learned author, Dr. Mahesh Vidyalkar in Gurukul Kangri, Hardwar. Later, he served for long as Prof. of Linguistics in Central Institute of Hindi, Agra and retired as Director of that Institute. Even after retirement, he remains very busy in writing books, Research papers and delivering lectures in various Institutes and Universities all over India. He is a brilliant son of a brilliant father, a learned scholar and teacher, Pandit Dharam Dev Vedvachaspati, who retired as Professor of Vedas in 1960 from Gurukul Kangri, Hardwar. Almost every graduate of Gurukul Kangri, Hardwar, like Dr. Mahesh Vidyalkar, sat at his feet to learn Vedas.

It will not be out of place to mention here that Capt. Dev Ratan, President,



(x)

Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, New Delhi, a widely travelled person, has always served as a source of inspiration to me in publishing literature for the propagation of Vedic Philosophy in India and abroad.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge the pains taken by Shri Vijay Batra s/o Late Shri Ram Bhaj Batra, a great Arya Samaj leader, in bringing out this book in the present form.

I hope, this little book will serve the dual purpose of being a simple introduction to the serious study of Gita and a practical handbook of spiritual knowledge. I commend the book and recommend it to the readers wholeheartedly.

**Som Datt Mahajan**

*President*

Dharmartha Seva Prakashan

## **PREFACE**

Shrimad Bhagavad Gita or Bhagavad Gita or simply Gita, comprising about 700 verses, is originally a part of the great Indian epic Mahabharata. It occupies a special place of honour in the Indian intellectual heritage. 'Special' in the sense that though not an independent work and, more significantly, not a religious text itself, it is treated as an independent and a religious text in the tradition. The main reason is the quality and the scope of the content, and also the simple, direct and engaging mode of presentation, resulting in the profound influence being exerted on the thinking and behaviour of vast numbers in the Indian, particularly Hindu society.

The Gita has been considered as the most authentic exposition of Hinduism's core



philosophy. In comprehensiveness and philosophical depth, the Gita is unrivalled in the tradition. It has been looked upon with a sense of awe and variously labelled as 'the divine speech of God himself', 'epitome of the Vedas', 'representative of all the Shastras', 'superior to the river Ganga, mantra Gayatri, and the Lord himself', in our older tradition coming down to the present age. All this may sound less than logical and convincing to the modern mind. But when looked at from the point of view of religion, history, geography, sociology and pragmatics of the Indian cultural heritage, the only conclusion which can be drawn is that the Gita can be compared with the Gita only. A brief elaboration follows.

The Gita is a combination of and a balance between a number of apparently opposing dimensions: it is divine as also secular, people-oriented as well as meditative, conceptual as also functional, culture-specific

and also universal. The above seems to be the reasonable explanation of the fact that the text of the Gita has gone beyond the national boundaries and translated into a number of foreign languages and accepted as a part of the international intellectual heritage.

The scene at home is very encouraging. The Gita is the most commented upon and the many times over translated text in the Indian tradition. While there have been commentaries on the Gita by scholars like Shankaracharya in the olden times, there are social thinkers like Lokamanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Acharya Vinoba Bhave in the modern period, who have commented upon the Gita and offered interpretations which have not much in common between them. While Gandhi found the Gita a testament of truth and non-violence, Tilak saw it as a beacon light for guiding the spirit of

national activism. All this speaks of the versatility of the work whose relevance transcends the barriers of time, place and the culture-specific character of the human society.

The brief discussion leads us to the theme 'Gita in the 21st Century', not for the people at home only but also for the Indian diaspora. As the trend of liberalization-privatisation-globalization is taking root around the world, new realities regarding knowledge and its dissemination along with the choice of the medium of international communication have emerged. The knowledge has now become a universal category and the English language has come to be accepted as the medium of wider communication between the continents. For the educated Indian population at home, English as an indigenized language, comes close to the indigenous languages and as such is as relevant to the classical status of Sanskrit (in which the text of Gita is

composed) for inter-lingual communicative relationship as the other indigenous (Indian) languages. Further, in view of the present day socio-cultural, socio-economic, and socio-educational realities, the need for culture-maintenance is as acutely felt at home as among the Indian expatriates. The realization, thus, justifies such attempts as made in this little book to present the deep knowledge in a 'made easy' form, in a language and style that suits the target audience. The concept is 'the message of the Gita for the people in English language', addressed to the educated Indian readership at home and also the people of Indian origin settled mainly in the English-speaking countries.

This little book is the English version of the original Hindi text 'Sara! Gita Jnan' (Simple Knowledge of Gita) by Dr. Mahesh Vidyalkankar. In view of the warm reception the Hindi text received from the cross-sections

of the Hindi-speaking community at home and partly abroad, it was envisaged that an English version be also brought out for the benefit of those for whom English is the dominant language, regardless of their geographical affiliation. Dr. U.B. Bajaj, my uncle, who combines scholarship with a keen sense of social obligation, asked me to do this job, and this resulted in production of this booklet.

The text is, in content and largely in style, as close to the original Hindi as possible. Since the condition of 'easy to understand in terms of content and style' had already been satisfied, no change was deemed necessary. However, the post-script 'Essence of Gita' as replacement of the original matter and the choice of the title as 'Message of Gita' were considered more appropriate.

Speaking for myself, it has been a satisfying experience for me. I took the work

as an opportunity for meeting a social obligation on my part, besides doing a writing project, this time a translating project, which is my professional commitment and also an area of intellectual interest.

Finally, I thank Shri Som Dutt Mahajan, the energetic and visionary President of Dharmartha Seva Prakashan for undertaking to publish this book, hope that the readers will find the book informative and instructive.

Delhi.

8 August, 2003

SURESH KUMAR



## CONTENTS

1. The Significance of Human Life	1
2. Paramatma : God	5
3. Soul is Immortal	25
4. Our Senses	43
5. The Mind	50
6. Buddhi : The Intellect	65
7. The Human Life Process	73
8. The Death	81
9. The Worldly Pleasures	90
10. Yoga : Union with God	98
11. Kama : Desires	106
12. Anger	112
13. Greed	115
14. Jnana Yoga : Path of Knowledge	120
15. Karma Yoga : Path of Right Action	131
16. Bhakti Yoga : Path of Devotion	143
17. Sukh : Happiness	150
18. Shanti : Peace	157
19. Essence of Gita	168



## **SIGNIFICANCE OF HUMAN LIFE**

Human life is an invaluable gift of God. Nothing else is more important in the world than being born a human being. It is the result of our good deeds in the previous life. The human life is superior to other forms of lives - the animals and plants. The entire creation of God, comprising forms of nature and varieties of lives, is mainly meant to be used by man. The human is the best and the most beautiful creation of Almighty God. The conventional language fails to sing the enormous glory of human life. It is so rare, achieved after numerous lives, believed to be as many as eighty four lacs, in different forms. It is considered to be the abode of gods and a gift of the Almighty.

The human life is invaluable. One feels its significance better after it goes out of existence. Once you lose it, you are in the

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vortex of multiple lives and rebirths. The human life does not come cheap as we believe. It is a golden opportunity for us. If we fail to use it well, do not value it properly, cannot convert it to purposeful venture, only great disaster is in store for us - महती विनष्टिः, to quote Upanishad. Human life is not granted frequently. It is the means to get rid of life-and-death cycle. It is only through the human form that we realise ourselves and reach our beloved God. There is no other way to know and find God than this form. That is why the human life is so important and invaluable, and should be utilized properly.

Living well is an art. Not all know how to live well. You need wealth of thought to be able to live well. People loam this art when in fact the story of life comes to an end. Bygone days never come back. A child is born crying, lives through worrying, complaining, cursing and pursuing his desires and problems, and

then takes leave of this world lamenting and grieving over his failures.

He forgot the very purpose of human life. He spent his life fulfilling the basic needs – food, sleep, worldly matters – just like animals. He lost the opportunity of uplifting himself by opting for noble deeds. A wise man is one who is able to control himself before it is too late. He opts for the righteous path by avoiding all kinds of evils.

Gita is a commentary on complete life. It is Gita which tells us what the purpose of life is and also how to live the life well. The life is a battlefield – Kurukshetra – full of conflicts between different kinds of concerns, desires and passions. No one in this world is free of conflicting problems, and desires. Men and women, young and old, all are there in this battlefield. There is one struggling hard to acquire some thing, while the other is anxious

to abandon what he has. One suffers because he is hungry, the other does the same for lack of it. Life is full of sufferings of one kind or the other.

Life is a kind of battle. The art of winning the battle is what Gita tells us. Gita provides practical, useful and simple solutions to different problems of life. Message of Gita is : Do not run away from problems, worries, and complexities of life but face them squarely. Find out the solutions with patience and the help of knowledge. If there is a problem, there is a solution too. One has to strive for achieving the objective of life along with carrying on the normal activities of running around for meeting the worldly needs and facing problems of day-to-day living. One has to move forward gradually to the goal. Such a man – diligent, energetic – comes out victorious in the struggle of life. Lord Krishna taught Arjuna the art of living based on

knowledge, the knowledge of life, and Arjuna succeeded in his mission. Life is a battle, internally as well as externally. It has to be won. How to win this battle is the thing which Gita tells us about and teaches us. This is Gita's philosophy of life. One who learns it well becomes liberated from worldly bonds. This liberation from worldly bonds is the ultimate aim of human life.

## **PARAMATMA : GOD**

Gita's thinking, teaching and ideology are God-centered. Entire Gita is full of praise for God – the Supreme Power. It describes various forms, attributes and functions of God and also His blessings for the mankind. A person can no longer remain a non-believer after he has gone through Gita, listened to its discourses and contemplated over them sincerely. Gita explains in detail, the laws, the

system, and the functioning of creation, and also the spirit of devotion that is initiated by the Supreme Power - Paramatma. Every person nurtures faith in one or the other divine power. The 'power' has different forms and is referred to by different names, such as Ishwara, Bhagwan, Parameshwara, Prabhu. People have different methods of expressing their faith, devotion, respect, and trust in God and also worshipping him. All the people regard the divine power as omnipresent and omnipotent. It is the divine power which creates this world, maintains it and finally brings it to an end. There is no end to his greatness. You will find his doings everywhere, be it water, earth or stars, everywhere you will find the creation of God functioning under certain laws. Hosts of holy men - sages, saints, ascetics, scholars - failed to unravel God's mystery by acknowledging their failure in the words *Neti Neti* 'there is no end to this'. He defies all description. He is infinite.



Yogiraja Lord Krishna has described in detail the enormity and magnificence of God. The river, the mountain, the ocean, the sky - all are signs of the munificence of God. At every step in Gita, there are references creating awareness and inspiration for realizing God. The divine power is present everywhere through His attributes and actions. The entire world is the act of God. See His laws and actions. When you see the flower, think of the maker of the flower. Says Gita :

सर्वतः पाणिपादं सर्वतोऽक्षि—शिरोमुखम् ।

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठिति ॥

“God has His feet and hands everywhere. He sees everywhere. He pervades through all the things in the world.” God’s creation is perfect. His actions are perfect. He leaves nothing imperfect. See the human body. It is a network of innumerable veins, arteries, bones and so on. Roti, dal and vegetables

are being converted into blood. We do sleep in the night but breathing continues, food continues to be digested, formation and distribution of blood continues regularly. Who is managing all this? Seeing that the body is functioning normally, one has to accept the existence of a power which manages all this. No medical specialist, an ascetic, a scholar, or a scientist has so far been able to know the body completely, as it is the creation of God. Only He knows His things. Saint Tulsi Das says in his Ramacharitmanas : "He moves without feet, hears without ears, does a number of things without hands." Such are the ways of the Almighty.

God hears, sees and knows everything. We cannot hide any of our acts from Him. We cannot change His system of dispensing justice. He is our witness as well as justice maker. We cannot run away from His vast empire. We need His favour and kindness



every moment. We cannot measure up the world of His deeds. He is lord of innumerable collections of various kinds. He sees it that everyone is fed well. He protects the helpless people. He takes care of everybody.

Lord Krishna helps Arjuna in Gita to understand and realise for himself the infinite power of God. To be in the vicinity of God is the ultimate aim of human life. A man blessed with consciousness of God's constant company with Him as also His presence everywhere, can protect himself against sins, unrighteous acts, worries and distress. Gita teaches us :

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।  
विनश्यत् स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति सः पश्यति ॥

“One who sees God being present among all the mortal beings, without discriminating between them is the real seer.”

All the worldly objects are mortal. All the things, which come into being, are bound to become extinct some day. Death is inalienable from birth. The world is in constant movement. The animates and the inanimates, all are given to change, are transitional. The word 'jagat' in Sanskrit literally means 'one which constantly moves'. Nothing lasts forever in the world. Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna : God is present in all the animates and inanimates. He is immortal. He is eternal. One of his names शेष, i.e. who survives, signifies this quality of God. It is He who creates, maintains and finally destroys this world. God has four functions to perform. Firstly, He creates the world. No man or woman, howsoever great, can make such a colourful and varied world as God. Secondly, he preserves and maintains it. No other power than God can maintain such a vast expanse of earth, ocean and sky. Thirdly, He finally reduces this world to nothing. Within minutes and seconds this

world undergoes drastic change. No power can stop earthquakes, cyclones and storms. Fourthly, He grants rewards or punishments to people according to nature of their deeds. God sees to it that as one sows, so shall he reap. His justice is beyond criticism, he does not discriminate against or favours anyone. He does not perform any other function except the above. He is the master and the owner of this world. He is the monarch of all He surveys.

The mighty, the wealthy, the virtuous, the devotees, the renouncer, all bow to the order and rules created by God. No person dares to break them. One who dares, finds himself battered. One who leaves the shelter of His blessings, finds himself deprived of peace, happiness, contentment and blessings. People are sad, troubled, tense and worried; the reason is that they have parted company with true God and become involved with false gods and goddesses. The God resides right inside

our hearts. We are searching him outside in the physical world. Here we have gone wrong. God does not need our wealth and offering. He is pleased with our deeds, the righteous deeds. Rituals like touching the feet do not impress Him. People want to please God with money, speeches and songs. It is a mistake. Lord Krishna cautions Arjuna time and again:

तमेव शरणं गच्छ, सर्वभावेन भारत!

“Seek the shelter of God wholeheartedly”. You can achieve the goal of life only when you know Him and believe in Him. Life is dull and joyless without God. Satisfaction of soul lies only in achieving God. Nothing else in this world can give absolute delight and contentment to the soul. The soul cannot free itself from the life-and-death cycle until it achieves closeness to God. Therefore, sooner or later everybody has to seek shelter with God. There is no other way to the goal.

The man cannot free himself from birth and death, old age and disease without achieving God. As soon as a child is born it cries, as if to lament having fallen prey to cycle of worldly sufferings. Being born and dying again and again is painful. Finally, one has to go back sad and empty-handed.

Achieving proximity to God is possible in human existence only. The main aim of human life is, to say so, achieving God. If we fail to manage achieving the main aim of human life, we would be losing a golden opportunity and would be reduced to living an animal life. 'Know thyself' is the mantra of achieving God. Soul is the gateway to union with God. You can experience God through your soul only. The poet Kabir speaks the truth in a remarkably simple language: 'O Man, where do you search me? I am very close to you – right inside yourself', says God.

It is strange that the man is seeking God in the outside world - the temples, pilgrimage centres, gurus, caves etc. The one being sought for, is sitting right inside us. Union with God is not possible so long as the doors within our hearts remain shut. The human soul and God are not far from each other in terms of time as well as space. It is अज्ञान — ignorance, lack of true knowledge — which separates them. Ignorance is the cause of numerous sufferings, difficulties, worries and tensions. According to Gita, one who always feels the presence of God in his heart and believes in God's presence in the hearts of other creatures too, is the truly learned person, the experiencer of God. Further says Gita:

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।  
 भ्रामयन् सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानीव मायया ॥

“O Arjuna, God exists in the heart of all living beings. It is He who is whirling the



creatures round by His illusory trick.” God is one but is referred to by many names in consonance with his different attributes, deeds and dispositions. For example, one of his names is Mata ‘the mother’. As a mother feeds his worthy and unworthy children alike, so does God all the creatures in the world. He feeds the non-believer in the same way as the believer.

Yogiraj Lord Shri Krishna says in Gita clearly that Paramatma, God, lives in the heart of all the beings. The man fails to feel his presence because of his ignorance and impurity of the heart. The heart is full of various kinds of vice – lust and anger, greed and illusion, jealousy and malice, and so on. Sensuous pleasures, lewd passions and desires appear to have settled down in the temple of heart. Unhealthy habits of smoking, drinking and non-vegetarian food have desecrated our heart. How can we have the

feeling of God's presence in such a polluted environment? Words of Saint Tulsi Das are enlightening : 'Only those persons achieve Me whose hearts are clean', says God.

One can feel God's presence in his heart when noble sentiments – सत्गुण – dominate, mind and heart are clean and pure, true knowledge and sense of discretion and renunciation are wide awake, and soul attains self-realisation. The experience is bright light and pure delight. God is subject to experience. Many a thing in the world does exist but is not visible, e.g. air, cold, heat, hunger, thirst etc. Similarly, God is not visible and is realised through experience only. Lord Shri Krishna tells Arjuna repeatedly : "Know the true God." He always resides in the temple of heart. You will find him there only. Turn inwards. Road to realising God is straight and even through true knowledge, pure deeds, and sincere worship.



These days, people indulge in sinning, wrongdoing, falsehood, deception, dishonesty, unhealthy food habits, and ignoble deeds even during their quest for God. It is a mistake and a wrong path. That is why that in spite of numerous programmes of worshipping, religious assemblies, devotional singing and recitation, pilgrimage, religious discourse etc., there is no reform or change for the better and no qualitative improvement in the life of the society. There is a spate of gurus, the so – called learned people, and monks should have otherwise ensured decrease in sinning, wrongdoing, falsehood and evils. However, conversely these are on increase, because we are committing mistake at the basic level. No one wants to reform himself truthfully and honestly. One who is prompted to reform himself, will wake up to his duty, alienate himself from sinning and wrongdoing, shall feel a change in his life, resulting in change

for the better in his thinking and behaviour patterns.

Lord Shri Krishna says : Arjuna ! first deserve and then desire for union with God. Cleanse yourself well. Follow the path of truth. Change your food habits, manners and morals and thinking and behaving. Strictly control your bad habits. Gita has told us many ways to achieve this : स्वाध्याय (swadhyaya) 'study of self-elevating works,' सत्संग (satsang) 'good company', साधना (sadhana) 'mental training', यमानियम (yama-niyama) 'restraint of desires and code of conduct', आत्मचिंतन (atma-chintan) 'self-contemplation', योगाभ्यास (yogabhyasa) 'practising concentration and meditation', and so on. It announces the call :

उद्धरेदात्मनाऽऽत्मानम् ।

"Elevate yourself by yourself".  
Self-improvement is your own responsibility.

You can elevate yourself by yourself only.

Gita has laid special emphasis on learning, action, and worship. One should strive attaining God with the help of noble actions performed knowledgeably. Such a course of actions helps a man to become a great man, an ordinary person to be an extraordinary one, and an outlaw convert into a saint, and a sinner transform into a holy man. The irony with the man in the present age is that he wants to achieve result without striving for it. Commits wrong, yet wants to be saved from the consequence. Desires peace, yet acts in a way as to cause unrest. Wants happiness, yet indulges in acts of unhappiness. Wants to be and remain free of ailments, yet his living and food habits are hardly compatible. Talks about union with God by going to the temple, listening to religious discourse and being in the righteous company,

yet indulges in worldly matters, wrongdoing, acts of jealousy etc. as soon as he gets away from that environment. Gita says, such a man is a self-cheater. Persons like him keep cheating themselves. God maintains distance from such people. These people do not deserve the path of Bhakti and are unable to derive the real contentment even by following the course of Bhakti, which they do ritualistically.

Bhakti, devotion, is not a thing to be shown off. It is a way of life. Bhakti is a matter of heart. Bhakti aims at happiness, born of union with God. The true devotee does not indulge in showing off. If you get away from God and the path shown by him, you will be inviting strife, unrest, and discontent, leading to worries, tension and confusion. A bad intention affects mind and body equally. Greed for money will distance you from your own people and also others, and your life will be

reduced to a beastly level. The graph of amassing objects of worldly pleasure and their glitter may go up, but that of experiencing spiritual and mental peace, happiness, humaneness and mutual love will come down. Closeness to God and spirit of Bhakti help you to get away from wrong emotions and actions. Bhakti makes your life pure and virtuous. Bhakti drives away your reckless desires, worries and base feelings. The immortal message from Gita is :

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत!

“O Arjuna, submit to God wholeheartedly.” You can achieve the aim of your life under the protection of the Almighty only. Only the protection of God, the Creator of the universe, leads us to the state of well-being. The various sects, gurus, monks, and godly figures, mushrooming around, cannot bring us the real bliss. Only His shelter and

blessings will bestow upon us the tranquillity and the immortality we seek. Bhakti of the Almighty makes you strong. Strength thus derived leads you to self-realisation. The realisation helps you to get rid of sinning, immortality, falsehood, deception etc.; life becomes clean, beautiful and virtuous; feelings and thoughts become noble; the spirit of service and doing good to others is awakened; and our life retracts itself from the wrong path.

Lord Shri Krishna tells Arjuna the path of realising the Supreme Power : "Lead your life from this world to beyond this world, materialism to spiritualism, body to soul, and nature to God. Free yourself gradually from the bonds of worldly life with the help of reasoning, discernment and spirit of renunciation. The more you renounce, the more you become happy, calm and content. It is through the grace of God that self-

realisation takes place; one is able to free himself of ignorance, inactivity, passions and desires; shows inclination towards nobility; the evil effects on mind collected over the past lives vanish; and the human soul, passing, through a series of lives together with improving the quality of every life, attains salvation.

According to Gita, a soul attains मुक्ति 'salvation', attains after going through a number of births and liberating himself from life and death cycle, old age and sickness, different ailments and griefs. This is called मोक्ष also. मोक्ष means 'final emancipation, deliverance of the soul from recurring births or transmigration, and experiencing the bliss of God's vicinity for a long period'. This is the goal of human life according to Gita and also Indian intellectual heritage. The human life is instrumental to attaining this goal.



Gita conveys this message and propagates this ideology. Gita represents diverse modes of contemplating truthfulness of the Supreme Power. It is very difficult for an ordinary person to reach upto this deep thought. Lord Shri Krishna has explained to Arjuna the nature and character of God in various ways. He also helped Arjuna to have a glimpse of God's splendour. Gita's main aim is to motivate the man towards the same splendour. Gita's message or mandate about God is that He is omnipresent. Submit yourself to Him, try to know Him in right earnest. Only then you can achieve true happiness, peace and delight. Keep yourself in his permanent company. All others may leave you in the lurch, but He will never do that. Everywhere and always He is with you. Living in your heart, He takes care of you and guards you against wrongdoings. Listen to His voice. Your well-being lies therein alone. When Arjuna listened to God's

message, only then he felt blessed. In short, these are Gita's views of God, stated in simple manner.

## **SOUL IS IMMORTAL**

Discourse on soul is the second important topic in Gita – the first being God. Gita's discourse on soul is clear and simple – a lot better than similar descriptions elsewhere. The nature and character of soul, the immortality of soul, and the logic of the concept of soul – these may be stated as the main elements of the discourse on soul, a unique contribution to the human civilisation by Gita. This may be understood as victory of spiritualism over materialism. That the soul is immortal is a ray of hope for humanity. Lord Shri Krishna's discourse on soul is easy to understand and practical, a unique feature of course. According to Gita, existence of this

world is due to God. Soul is there because of being the master of bodies. Atma (the soul) literally means 'one that moves constantly', is dynamic and animate. Life results from fusion between animate and inanimate. The body is inanimate; but the soul is animate. So long as the both are together, life persists. A break between them is death. The soul is essence of life in body. When it departs, what is left is a corpse, a lifeless object, just a heap of clay. The body with soul is valued in crores; the same without soul is not worth even a single penny. It is clear now that the soul reigns over body. The body with soul is active, beautiful, and attractive. All the worldly relations, kiths and kins, family members, wealth and money, objects of luxury relate to and depend on the body. With departure of soul, the body is reduced to nothing. The body is invaluable so long as soul is there. Each part of the body carries a high price tag. Ask the man the price of the part of the body

which he doesn't have. The man lives his life through his body only. This is the body which enjoys worldly pleasures. The most important and valuable component of the body is soul. Soul is the very foundation of body. Soul-musing; reflecting on soul, is an important feature of Gita discourse.

Message and teaching of Gita is : "Soul never dies. Nobody can kill it. It is the body which meets the death". The true knowledge about soul helps the man to avoid disappointment, frustration and sorrow. Instead, he is infused with zeal to live well, go ahead, and reform and elevate himself. He can make up the loss of this life in the next one. Any time, he can go for self-reform. Since soul is immortal, journey to gaining heights never ends. It continues from one life to another. Gains made in the previous life will be extended to the next one. That is why that, in the Indian tradition, a man on the

verge of death is advised to chant the name of God. A number of charity acts are organized in order that the chain of his noble actions continues, providing for upliftment in his next life.

The materialist, the hedonist and unfortunately the modern educated non-believing man does not accept the entity of soul. He argues, that nothing remains behind once the body is finished. What is not visible, does not exist. Nobody has so far seen the soul. Then, how to admit its existence? The answer is that there are many things which we cannot see but certainly we can feel them. Who has seen entities like hunger, thirst, heat and cold? All these are felt by us vividly and experienced beyond doubt. The same is true of soul; its entity is subject to experience. With the departure of soul, the body turns lifeless, lies on the ground motionless. Though it looks intact as if nothing has happened to it, it is of

no value now as the most valued force has gone out of it. After a while, it starts stinking. No one is ready to take its charge. Family members and friends, who were ready to spend large sums of money for keeping the body and the soul together, are no longer prepared to spend anything now as the soul has deserted the body. Nobody has till now been able to catch hold of the soul, but the soul has been asserting its existence ever since.

Gita gives the name 'atma' to this vital force. Gita presents a practically oriented simple and beautiful interpretation of atma. Gita became popular and was accorded a place of honour on account of its idealistic, lofty and inspiring ideas. Gita is the principal source of knowledge about atma which is a kind of elixir to mankind. Message of Gita has a worldwide attraction. Thinking on immortality of soul as enshrined in Gita is not to be found

elsewhere in the world. Gita describes immortality of soul in these words:

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचित्,  
 नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।  
 अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो,  
 न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

“Atma is never born. It never dies. It is not being born once and then born again. It is unborn, ever-lasting, eternal, and existing since time immemorial. It does not die even after the death of the body.” The man who aims at procuring all kinds of worldly luxury, and does not go beyond this material world, forgets the superior object, atma. He does not listen to the voice of his soul. He comes to grief. Devoid of true knowledge, he laments over the past. It is the knowledge of atma only which does away with the worldly sorrows.



Arjuna, after seeing his kiths and kins in the battlefield on the one hand and the grandeur of royalty and worldly wealth on the other, forgot his duty. It was then that Lord Shri Krishna explained to him the significance of atma, its immortality, the reality of the world, the aim of human life, and thus relieved him of his ignorance and selfish ego. The Lord transformed an almost dead man into a raging warrior by his well-reasoned arguments and thoughts. Thoughts and ideas are storehouse of strength. Gita gives you an idea for life: try to know the reality and truth of life. The world is selfish. All worldly relationships are selfish. The world is an ever-changing entity. Everything is changing fast. The human body is also undergoing changes. A day will come when the body will cease to exist. The atma is eternal and immortal. Death comes to one who is born. Since atma does not take birth, it does not meet death either. Death is the attribute of the body. All the forms of life – the

humans, animals, birds, insects etc. – gain existence through body, hence are bound to die one day or on the other. No power on earth can prevent the coming of death. This is the inviolable law of God. Nobody can change it. The size of creatures varies from small to big, but soul in all is similar, irrespective of the size of the creatures. The soul in an ant and in an elephant is similar. Where there is life and movement, there is soul. Atma, the soul, is not accessible through any microscope or any such other instrument. Nobody has till now been able to catch it physically.

The body is mortal. It must perish some day. The soul is immortal. No power on earth can kill it. Gita imparts the substance of this knowledge in the following words :

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि, नैनं दहति पावकः ।  
न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो, न शोषयति मारुतः ॥

“Atma cannot be decimated by weapons, nor can be burnt down by fire or moistened by water or dried up by air.” The fire, the water, and the air can affect the body, but not the soul. On the other hand, it is soul which is the experiencer of bliss or sorrow occurring to the body. Whatever good or bad, holy or unholy action, right or wrong during life, it is soul which experiences the consequence. It is soul which undergoes suffering in different forms of existence according to the deeds of the person. It is the soul which is responsible for right or wrong. The soul, elevated by contact with senses, mind and intellect, earns respect and fame, and at the same time loses them all on the same account. The soul, failing in self-realisation, faces degradation and disgrace.

Lord Shri Krishna advises Arjuna again and again ‘to know himself, understand his own self which is soul itself.’ Spiritual

knowledge, the knowledge of soul, is considered significant and given a place of honour. The great souls of the world took their lives to greater heights and were able to transform this world. They achieved self-realisation and succeeded in lifting themselves above the worldly matters. The people who submitted to greed, selfishness, egoism, hedonism, and passions and followed the course of 'eat, drink and be merry' mistaking it for the aim of life, fall victim to strifes, worries, tensions and desires, and passing through different forms of life, keep on doing the rounds of life and death process. They live the lives of animals, who live just for worldly enjoyment and a sort of 'body-worship'. They fail to achieve the aim of human life.

Gita says, it is only in the human life that self-realisation is possible. The other forms of life are meant for material enjoyment only. The birds and beasts do not know the

aim of their lives. The animals get up in the morning and start eating straightaway or go away searching for food. If a human being follows suit, how is he different from the animals? For a human being, food is the means, not the goal. The final goal is soul, realisation of soul.

Company of the noble persons, religious discourses, lectures, यज्ञ etc. are meant for human beings, not for the animals. The learned people take care of soul alongwith the body. He knows that the soul, though living in the body, is more valuable than the body. The man, residing in the house, is more important than the house itself. The body is a means, so are house, money and other things of comfort. The soul is the end, the accomplishment. Says Gita, "know the soul. The man can reach the Supreme Soul through the individual soul only." The man of the present age is knowledgeable, yet wants to

know more. However, those who want to know the individual soul as well as the supreme soul are few and far between. Just one or two out of hundreds and thousands aim for this goal. The rest indulge in worldly enjoyment only.

The common man is living the life of ignorance, selfishness, egoism, greed and profit motive. He is almost blind to true knowledge. His spirit of self-knowledge is blunt. He is just running after the fleeting shadows. He does not know his destination and where it is? Most of the people find it hard to live their lives well. Gita's message is, "Live your life well and fine. It is the thoughts and ideas, and not the material comforts, which help you live well." People living with worldly comforts are not necessarily happy. Happiness is a certain state of mind, a state of positive thoughts. The world is a great teacher. It says, "Look at the changing state



of worldly phenomenon. If you look at it with discerning eyes, you will find it different; different from as the ordinary people see it. You will, however find it colourful and lovely if you see it with the eyes of greed, passion, desire and pleasure.” Look at your own body. It is undergoing changes every moment. Each day is cutting down your life-span. ‘I am today, say, forty years old’ is an expression of ignorance. The truth is that our life span has reduced by one year. He, who understands this change and through it the soul, is neither sad, nor worried. He is the truly learned man. The following teaching of Gita is memorable:

देहिनोऽस्मिन् यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।  
तथा देहान्तर-प्राप्तिः धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥

“As the soul, residing in the body, goes through the stages of childhood, youth and old age, so it transmigrates to another body after death. The wise people are not perturbed



by this change." They take the change as a law of creation and remain calm. The death is the gateway to the next life.

You will find the new body only after you have relinquished the old sick one. The death is inalienably linked with the birth. Changes occur to the body, not to the soul. The life and the world will turn hell if there is no change in things. It is the change which makes for newness and charm in this world. Life without change is not interesting. State of 'no change' leads to monotony. The man will go mad if the day does not convert into night. Therefore, don't be scared of change. The change brings with itself new possibilities and hopes for the mankind. It is the change which brings charm and beauty to human life and the world.

The wise consider the world an inn, a temporary resting place. The thinking is that

this life is just a halting point. There were many lives earlier and will be there in future also. The soul is a traveller. It has been travelling for many lives together. Sometimes this, and sometimes that, the chain has been going on since very very long. The self-realising wise people do not feel the pain of death when they leave this world. They know, their stay in the world is not permanent. They got this life in order to go through the outcome of the past life actions and perform noble deeds in the present one. The wise people do not go against their souls. They live, not for the body, but for the soul. The ignorant lives to enjoy the body. One who acts and thinks against the voice of the soul, is called आत्महन्ता, the self-killer. The soul of the self-killer goes through many a dark life. Whenever we act against our souls, we invariably face the death. Speaking metaphorically, we die many a death during a single day.

“Arjuna got his enlightenment after Lord Shri Krishna explained to him the knowledge of soul and its immortality. Arjuna did achieve his self-realisation. His life strategy changed. There was new spirit, new enthusiasm and new inspiration in his life. Says Lord Shri Krishna:

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय,  
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।  
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णा-  
न्यान्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥

“As a man discards his old and worn out clothes and puts on new ones, so does the soul takes up the new body, rejecting the old and the diseased one.” The soul finding itself unable to work with the old, diseased and the worn out body, wants to change it. This very change is called death. As our clothes, after being used over a long period, wear out and lose their charm and brightness and thus

become due for change, so is the case with our body. As we change our old clothes, so does the soul change the body. The soul changes the body in accordance with the actions of the doer. As are the actions, so is the new form of life. Nobody can do anything about it. It is the inviolable law. The devil, the human, the god – these are, so to say, the three situations. If a man engages himself in good deeds, charity, service, and reverence to the supreme power, he becomes god or deity. If he indulges in sinning, all kinds of wrongdoings, he becomes a devil. It all depends on a man's actions and his aim of life.

“For a wise man, death is bliss. But for the unwise, it is pain and sorrow. The self-knowing person is neither sad nor worried at the sight of death. He knows well that he will have the form of life allotted to him in accordance with his actions in the present life. The unwise man, for whom the body and

worldly pleasures are the aim of life, is fearful and tearful at the sight of death. He sees darkness around himself. He enjoyed a lot of worldly pleasures during his present life but failed to prepare for the future. Human life is meant for achieving self realisation, but he almost wasted it by indulging in acts of jealousy and greed, and going for sensual pleasures. Gita conveys the message of immortality of the soul. It says, you try to know your body, fine, but do the same for your soul too. Plan something for enriching your soul – serious study, good company, worshipping and so on. Feed your soul with the elixir of true knowledge. Without spiritual knowledge your life is lifeless and fruitless. It is the spiritual knowledge which wards off sorrows, worries, diseases, grief and tension. Spiritual knowledge and self-meditation are the only means to tackle material problems, confusions, conflicts of desires and passions. Only spiritual knowledge can help you to break

the ties of worldly bondage. The modern man has made a lot of progress on material front but is lagging behind in the matter of spiritual upliftment. He has amassed a lot for the consumption by body, but failed to gather enough for the soul. Gita's message on self-realisation and immortality of soul has a practical value for the modern human life. Spiritual knowledge is a great need of the modern age.

## OUR SENSES

Gita has comprehended every aspect and problem of life. The special feature of Gita is to give psychologically oriented, practical and useful solutions to problems of human life. God has bestowed upon a man a set of ten organs of sense; five of perception (ज्ञानेन्द्रिय) and five of actions (कर्मेन्द्रिय). The five organs of perception help us to perceive

different objects. We see with the eyes, hear with the ears, smell with the nose, taste with the tongue, and touch with the skin. Organs of action are : the speech, the hands, the feet, the genital, and the anus. The organs of perception occupy upper part of the body while those of action, barring speech, the lower one. The body has been compared with a chariot. The soul, sitting on this chariot, is its master. All the ten senses are like horses yoked to the chariot. The mind acts as the bridle of the horses. The intellect is the charioteer. The objects of the senses are the pathways (towards which the horses run). If the chariot of life goes in the right direction, the soul will reach its destination. The destination of soul is achieving God and salvation. If the senses, the mind, and the intellect go out of control, the chariot of life will collapse and be completely ruined. If that happens, the human life, we earned after a series of births, will go waste.



Lord Shri Krishna has given us a thoughtful message on senses and their objects. The senses are running fast towards the objects. They do not stop at any point. The senses behaving thus have been likened to animals. As the animals run mindlessly with the head upwards, so are the senses – the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the skin – running towards their objects unaware of the consequences. They are fully fed by us, yet are hungry and restless. Nobody has so far been able to satisfy them. Even in the old age, our senses keep us pounding. The body has exhausted its strength, even then senses assert and drive the human beings into blind alleys of worldly life at the cost of their peace and self-respect. The scientific-technological advancement has helped mankind pile up objects of worldly pleasure. It has left the man confused as to what to retain and what to leave. Senses are subordinate to the mind. The mind employs the senses to get its things

done. It leads and forces the senses to the ends it aims for. It is due to the mind that the senses are always fickle and unsatisfied.

Gita instructs the mankind to keep the senses under control. These are powerful and possess vigour. Guide them in the right direction. Don't rely upon them. You don't know when they ditch you, drag you towards sin and vice, thus causing your downfall. The great sages, ascetics, saints, holy men, and the learned, compelled by the senses, met their downfall. As it is difficult to climb up the mountain but quite easy to fall down, so it is hard to control the senses. Downfall is quick and easy. Wisdom lies in exercising control over them. Says Gita:

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।  
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाभसि ॥

“When the mind follows the senses which

are running after the worldly objects, it loses control over the faculty of intellect – exactly the way the wind causes the boat in the sea totter and finally sink.” The senses tend to be outgoing. Chasing their objects is in their nature. The eyes want to see beautiful things and scenes. The tongue wants to enjoy delicious food. The ears are anxious to listen melodious music. Senses are so powerful that they forcibly drag you to their objects and you simply submit to them.

Lord Shri Krishna tells Arjuna that the wise people make their senses inward looking with the help of thoughtful knowledge and sense of discretion. As a turtle with its limbs drawn inside, can endure a lot of weight and hitting on its back, so a man, who has controlled his senses by exercising restraint and regularity, liberates himself from the attack of diseases, sorrows and worries. Where there is pleasure, there is pain. It is the eternal

truth. The unwise man is the slave of senses, and as such suffers a lot, commits sins and wrongful acts, undergoes distress himself and makes others grieve, and passes his life lamenting over the past. Nobody has so far been able to satisfy the greed of the senses. They are insatiable. A man tastes different kinds of delicious sweets during his life. Even then, his mouth, at the mention of sweets, starts watering in his later age also. This is the lust of the senses. The senses are irresistibly drawn towards their objects as are the animals towards the green grass. Overly attached to the pleasurable objects, they stray into wilderness. Gita advises us, the worldly people:

वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि, तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ।

“One, who has controlled his senses, is truly the learned man.” Only such a man

deserves to practise 'bhakti' and self-meditation. Living in a house or the jungle does not make any difference to him. The wise man feeds his senses with what they need and does not allow the junk to come in.

Gita teaches us to be sthitaprajna (स्थितप्रज्ञ) 'firm in judgement, free from any hallucination, contented'. Truly speaking a sthitaprajna is one who has controlled his senses, turned them from the wrong path to the right one and directed them from the course of pleasures to that of self-restraint. His senses do not lean towards sin or unrighteous and wrongful acts. Instead, he directs the vigour of his senses to worshipping God and doing the universal good. The world has suffered on account of unsteady and pleasure-seeking senses. The people, whose senses are extrovert and seek pleasures without discrimination, remain sick, worried,

restless and sad, and keep suffering the consequences of going for pleasures alone throughout their lives.

Gita warns repeatedly: if you want to lead a life of happiness, peace and purity, control your senses. Do not waste the vigour of senses in seeking pleasures. Use the same for self-welfare and self-elevation. Senses losing their vigour, bring you close to death. It is the senses which make for a heaven or a hell in this and the next life. The people who have gained this knowledge and experienced the divine secret can be said to have achieved accomplishment.

## **THE MIND**

Gita provides for treating mental diseases. The entire human society is troubled by confusions, worries, tensions, desires and



diseases. Along with the material progress together with quantitative increase in the objects of wordly pleasure, comfort and luxury, the mental diseases are on the rise. Gita has given psychologically justified, practically oriented and easy to implement solutions to mental diseases and problems. A work like this is not to be found elsewhere. Gita, for its wealth of knowledge on mind, is unique in the world. It is the mind which makes you a captive of desires at one stage, and it is the mind again which liberates you from them at another. The mind is your friend and also your enemy. It is the mind which lifts you up and then fells you down. We are godly because of mind; we are like demon because of mind. When the mind is downbeat, the body too is downcast; when it is disappointed, the body gets old; when it is depraved, the body is sick.



Gita is a repository of thoughtful reflections on mind. Treatment of the physical disorders is available with the doctors and hospitals, but the same for mental afflictions is not available with them. Diseases of mind are very unusual and normally defy treatment. Only a truly learned person and an ascetic can understand and treat them. Arjuna's problem was a mental, rather physical, one. Lord Shri Krishna was an efficient therapist. He made Arjuna aware of his social obligation when he became victim of illusion and ignorance in the battlefield. Lord Krishna lifted the sagging morale of Arjuna by injecting well-reasoned thought in his mind and turned a dejected man into a fighting warrior. The mind has immense power. It wins success wherever it is applied. A man is able to achieve greatness by consolidating the power of mind and applying the same to the desired aim. Says Gita:

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।  
ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥

“The mind, fickle and obdurate and wandering around, has to be reined in and placed under control.” Only then the direction of the mind changes and the process of looking inwards is set in motion.

The mind by nature is fickle. It is never stable; is always in a state of flux. If it does not aim for good, it leans towards bad. Whether a man is sleeping or is awake, the mind is engrossed in different activities of thinking, and dreaming fanciful flights thought as its food. The mind is like water. As the water flows downwards, so does the mind goes towards lowly acts of sinning, evils and worldly pleasures, at fast speed. It tends to look for excuses for avoiding good company, bhakti, serving the people and self-improvement. As the pressure system is

applied to lift the water upwards, so are the devices of true knowledge, spirit of renunciation, good company, worship of God etc. for elevating the mind. In the beds of your home nursery, you make slope in the direction in which you want the water to flow, and place obstructions where you want it not to flow. The same way, enthuse your mind with positive feelings of happiness, search for honour and fame for turning it to the direction you want it to take, and discourage it from going for negative objectives with the means of true knowledge, spirit of renunciation and avoidance, and the apprehension of resultant unhappiness. The unbridled movement of the mind can be blocked by adopting this course. The mind also fears death and the scene of cremation ground. When the mind is in the strong grip of worldliness, a fanciful trip to the cremation ground is helpful to bring it under control.

Lust, anger, greed, excessive attachment, jealousy, malice, to name a few, are the mental disorders. The diseases of body are curable by the medicines available in the market, but the same is not the case with the diseases of the mind. The true bliss, calmness, happiness, contentment and so on are the matters of mind. There is no medicine to treat the lust, greed and anger of an affected person. It is Gita which provides for the treatment; the lust can be treated by true knowledge and spirit of renunciation, anger by calmness, and greed by contentment; in short, by changing the thinking patterns.

Gita says, "Try to understand the mind and learn to tame and control it. The mind is never satisfied and there is no end to greed. Greed is the cause of sinful acts. God has given us enough to satisfy our needs but there is never enough to satisfy our greed. The

greed of mind goes on increasing with every act of satisfying it. The mind is like a monkey. As the monkey, without being steady at one place, keeps leaping and jumping from one branch to another, so does the mind from one subject to another. It is not satisfied with what it has. It is always restless to acquire what it doesn't have. Those who yield to mind, are always tense/agitated and sad. No one has so far been able to satisfy all the demands of the mind. The mind keeps a man agitated, full of worries and tension. The man is engaged in satisfying the demands of the mind throughout his life. The fire flares up if we pour ghee into it. So is the mind emboldened if we go on satisfying desires and seeking pleasures for it.

Gita offers a simple, straightforward and practical explanation of observing issues of human life in question-answer style. Arjuna asks Lord Krishna, "O Lord, the mind is much

more fickle than the wind and moves very fast. Within moments it flies away. Every moment it is changing colours. Just at the sight of the objects of worldly pleasure, it turns insistent and restless to grab them. It defies self-control and discretion. It is mad after its avowed desires till it realises them. It enjoys them up to the hilt, then loses interest and starts chasing new targets. The mind is cunning and deceitful; cheats the man throughout his life; never allows him to sit quiet. It goes on dreaming the impossible until the man has wasted his entire life. The pot of worldly desires has a hole at the bottom. Go on filling it at the top. It is never filled. How to control it O' Lord? What are the ways and means to tame it. Sir?"

In reply, Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna how to discipline the mind. He says:

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्त्येय वैराग्येण च गृहाते ।



“The mind can be disciplined by ‘abhyasa’, the continued practice, and ‘vairagya’, the spirit of indifference to the world.” You can steady your mind by increasing the power of concentration by repeated practice. Practice helps you achieve results. Practice makes a man perfect. Continued practice is imbued with great power. Abhyasa denotes repeated efforts made to steady the mind for a high cause. In case, the mind wanders, fails to concentrate, troubles you quite a bit, is in a state of fix, you should try to change its course with the help of knowledge, deliberation, discretion, and renunciation. This results in abhyasa strengthened. Abhyasa needs continuity. Brief and occasional interruptions may be tolerable, not the long ones. Repeated interruptions come in the way of achieving results. Even if the mind fails to concentrate, keep your body engaged. By and by, the mind will also be



engaged and begin realizing the experience. The mind has many flaws no doubt, but it has a special feature – it yields to engagement wherever you want it to engage. It indulges in funs and frolic and sensual pleasures, but in the moments when it is pure and virtuous, it also experiences sense of fulfilment in engaging in bhakti, worshipping, praying, singing devotional songs, and service to the people.

Elevation of mind requires continuous hard work, repeated practice, noble ideas, deliberations, actions and good company. It is by practice and discipline that the man is able to tame the lion, the elephant, the bear, the monkey etc. and makes them dance to his tune. Similarly, the mind can be taken away from the wrong path with the help of practice, discipline, restraint and reasoning. The mind is elevated by firm resolve and austerity. One

has to struggle hard for bringing the mind onto the right path. The wise man succeeds in this but the unwise ruin themselves by being slave to mind. One who succeeds in taming the mind becomes a great man.

This may be achieved by way of elaboration of abhyasa. Now let us talk about the other approach to mental concentration and calmness – the approach of vairagya, i.e. the spirit of renunciation and indifference to the worldly matters. Vairagya means to withdraw the mind thoughtfully from the worldly objects and pleasures which we have experienced in different ways. Vairagya means to become knowledgeable about the reality of the world and detached from the worldly pleasures. The mind keeps on coming back to what it has experienced in the wordly pleasures. It wants to repeat the enjoyment and continue to be in the same state of feeling.

Vairagya entails inculcating thoughtful aversion to and distance from the wordly pleasures. The mind learns the truth and reality of human life when it views the worldly objects, money and conveniences, family relationships and social connections with the sense of discrimination. It is able to realise that the world looking so fascinating and captivating is in reality so selfish and useless. The physical human form is beautiful and charming, but viewed with discerning eyes, it is just dirt and filth. The wise man sees the truth and turns ascetic, a renouncer. Wisdom comes from suffering a loss. This leads to indifference to the world. A common man is a victim of ignorance. Acquisition of momentary and mortal worldly objects is the main aim of life for him, and it is for these things only that he has been running around and picking up quarrels with the fellow beings throughout his life. That is why he is sad and agitated. The

reality is that there is pain hidden in all the pleasures. What feels pleasant at one moment, becomes unpleasant at the next one. The mind gets away from the objects it enjoyed a moment ago. No object in this world has the capability to calm down the mind and keep it in the constant contact of the man. The man is able to break free from affection and attachment, sensual pleasures and desires when the true spirit of renunciation dawns upon him. He has the genuine feeling of renunciation, when his inner self is awakened, his eyes of knowledge are opened, he understands the reality of the world, and has feeling of revulsion towards the experience of worldly pleasures. As a result, the direction of mind changes. It becomes upright and is filled with remorse that the invaluable life was wasted in chasing the fleeting pleasures of life and the present one, as continued from the past, is passing through

various diseases and agonies, leaving the man incapable of doing anything worth the name.

The state of renunciation or self-denial leads the mind towards the perception of truth. This results in interest being aroused in the sacred study (study of the Vedas), good company, mental training, bhakti, praying etc. Self-denial is instrumental to getting away from the world and consequently getting inclined towards God. The more the distance of mind from the superficial attractions, desires, passions and pleasures, the more calm, focussed, taciturn and devoted to worship of God it becomes. The more the mind's indulgence with the worldly pleasures, the more unsteady, unquiet, unsatisfied and wicked it would be. The mind is simply unstoppable. The market today is full of varieties of consumer goods of every

description. The result is before us to see that everybody's mind remains perturbed and troubled all the time.

The more we feed the mind with what it desires, the more it will demand. Wisdom lies in exercising restraint in this matter. Understanding the real need is the true understanding, the knowledge. Conquering mind is conquering the world. The more the mind turning inwards, the more happy, focussed and calm it is. The true bliss and peace, contentment and happiness is there within the mind itself. If there is no peace inside the mind, it cannot achieve this outside of it.

Gita tells us the ways to keep the mind in good shape, calm and restrained. Gita guides us in the art of elevating and increasing resoluteness of mind in such a practical,

psychologically justified and utilitarian manner that is not to be found elsewhere.

## **BUDDHI : THE INTELLECT**

Next to atman, the soul, it is buddhi, the intellect, which is important for the human beings. The intellect is God's precious gift to the mankind. Intellectual strength is the superior strength. It distinguishes the man from the animal in a significant manner. All our prayers say to God to grant us 'sad-buddhi (the virtuous intellect)'. The intellect is superior to mind, according to Gita. Only the righteous intellect can elevate and urge the mind to tread the right path. As the brake is necessary to control the speed of a vehicle, so is intellect to restrain the human mind from going astray. A wicked intellect can play havoc with the human life. The virtuous intellect leads a man



to lofty, sacred and blissful acts and thoughts. The wicked intellect drags the man towards lowly acts and thoughts.

Lord Krishna has explained to Arjuna the significance of a well-composed and sanctified intellect in these words.

शनैः शनैरुपरमेद् बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।  
आत्मस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

“The man should withdraw gradually from worldliness by subordinating his mind to his own self with the help of patience-backed intellect. Nothing else be allowed to come to mind in the process.” The intellect is placed above the mind. The mind is controlled by the intellect. The fickle and the disorderly mind is tamed and restrained by the intellect. The righteous intellect imparts knowledge and sense of discretion to the man and saves

him from sins, unrighteousness and moral degradation. The intellect helps the mind to switch from diffusion over to concentration of its powers and inspires it towards the goal of self-reflection and spiritual knowledge. The intellect combines the worldly matters with worship of God. The virtuous intellect helps the mind to get away from worldliness and arouses in it the feelings of calmness, self-realization, happiness, and contentment. Gita's discourse on steady intellect, which is well-composed and free from passion, is quite clear. A man endowed with such an intellect is called sthitaprajna (स्थितप्रज्ञ). He is one who is not sad in adversity, is not arrogant in affluence, is not worried of misfortune, does not deviate from the path of nobility. When faced with adversity, remains committed to observance of his duties and is always content, happy, calm and thankful to the Almighty.

Such a person, judicious and blessed with virtuous intellect, is capable of blocking the waves of worldly pleasures, passions and worries with the help of wisdom and self-denial. A man of this kind is called an awakened man. He has his inner vision in good shape, is alert like a watchman, knows his aim of life well-receives nourishment and strength for his virtuous intellect by worshipping God. Such a learned person is able to, along with fulfilling his obligations of social and familial life, turn the movement of his mind from outward to inward universe.

Gita instructs the mankind that the virtuous intellect bestows upon the human life and society the boon of happiness, calmness, contentment, love and human feelings, and keeps the spirit of humanity alive, and also helps distancing from sin, unrighteousness, injustice, falsehood, corruption and

beastliness. The sense of genuine discretion protects the man against internal conflicts, confusions, tensions, pressures and worries. A guilt in the intellect sets in motion the all round decline of the man. A guilty intellect spells doom for the man. A man's intellect suffers degradation from bad company, selfishness, greed, anger, egoism, and life-style of vices. Gita has suggested good company, self-reflection, worshipping and praying, bhakti, service etc. as the means to preserve the virtuous, sincere and religious character of the intellect.

Gita has laid stress on satvik (pure and good) food. Our sages and saints have shown particular awareness about food and devotional song. Food, in a way, is foundation of body and thoughts. If our food is impure, our body, mind, thought will degenerate accordingly. If our food is pure and good, our

intellect will also be elevated. The food-habits of the people nowadays are not proper. That is the reason that the people's mind, intellect, thinking and action are on decline and the tendency of highly improper feelings and action is on the rise. The tendency is a dreadful danger for the mankind. The virtuous human intellect must put an end to the evil spirits of violence, sinning, unrighteousness, falsehood, and corrupt practices. Otherwise the future will be dark and disastrous. In order to be saved from the coming danger, there is only one way out according to Gita, that a man should be a man in true sense of the word and there should prevail virtuous intellect-ideas-actions and human feelings among the people. That human beings should be full of humaneness, is possible by virtuous intellect only. Virtuous intellect leads to self-realisation. Self-realisation clean the mind of ignorance, brightens the inner vision and

consequently the man is able to free himself of distress, pain, problems and difficulties. It is the intellect which keeps the mind on the right track and leads him to the truth and righteousness. Lord Krishna says :

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।  
तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥

“O man ! you will attain vairagya from the worldly enjoyment that you know already and will come to know later, when your intellect will cross over the tide of confusion.” When the mind is under control of the virtuous intellect, it is able to save itself from many a vice, sin and wrong. Gradually, the mind is headed for calmness. The intellect becomes steady and discerning. It keeps the man happy, calm and fulfilled. The soul is placed above the intellect. Awakening of soul keeps the intellect stead-fast and sincere. If the

intellect is heading for the right path and virtuousness, elevation of soul is almost imminent. Virtuous intellect is a means to realisation of soul. The wise man hears the voice of soul. But the unwise, indulging in selfishness, greed and ignorance, tends to ignore the voice of soul. The result is that he leans towards sins, unrighteousness, injustice and falsehood. He is known as 'self-destroyer'. The souls of self-destroying people go on wandering about in many a dark life-form for ages together. The wise is an awakened man and listens to voice of the soul. The soul warns us against sinning, practising falsehood and wrongdoing.

Gita transmits essence of true knowledge. Gita's immortal message is :

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते।



“Nothing in this world is more sacred than knowledge.” We should allow our life being guided by the sincere intellect. Only sincere and virtuous intellect can get us true knowledge and make our life blissful, calm, and happy.

## **THE HUMAN LIFE PROCESS**

Next to the immortality of soul, it is birth and death of the human beings which have been dealt with in detail in Gita. Human life is like a river, with birth and death forming its two shores. The death comes along with the birth. The moment a man is born, the death is the inevitable company. As the lightning is hidden in the cloud, so is death in life. One who is born, must die some day. One who has come into this world, must leave it one day. Birth and death are like two sides of a

coin. As a body has two feet, so has human life, the birth and the death, as its two feet.

Innumerable people in this world have benefitted from the life-giving energy released through the knowledge of Gita by Lord Krishna. Gita has almost changed the style of knowing, thinking and doing things of the world. Gita tells us how to live life meaningfully. Gita's philosophy of life is practical. Gita answers many questions about life; some of these are : what is the significance of life; why have this been given to us; what are the duties and responsibilities of life; how to make this life beautiful, superior, pure and great? The life is like a journey. As different kinds of birds gather on a tree at the fall of night and fly away towards their destinations at the break of dawn, so do the people of different descriptions get together in course of journey of life and then separate when the departing

moment arrives. The world is merely a halting place for the soul. The soul gets a human form after going through a number of births. After leaving this body, the soul doesn't know as to which form of life it will enter into next, and where and with who as parents. The mystery remains unresolved till date. Kinship relations of the worldly life are unpredictable. They can be likened to the two wooden sticks getting together and then separating in the sea-waves perhaps never to be together again. The relations of kinship and pleasures of life are limited to this world.

According to Gita, human life is short. The people, having experienced the consequences of their past actions, must leave this world one day. Nobody can block this process. This has continued since the world came into existence. Coming and going constitute life process.

Gita has almost immortalised the theory of rebirth. Says Gita that there was a life earlier to the present one. It will be there in future as well. There are factors which we ourselves can control; e.g. doing good things or bad things. Others are controlled by God. We cannot change the consequences of actions of our previous birth. This is God's order. The man cannot interfere in that. If he could, there would have been no sick, sad, poor or troubled man in this world. There are agonies, worries and problems which are created by man himself. He himself is suffering on account of those and also making others suffer too. Majority of the people are in distress because of their bad habits and behaviour and suffer humiliation too on that account.

Our life can be happy if we improve our habits, thinking and behaviour. Human life is heavenly. We have turned it into a hell. Gita

instructs us to build up the life and invest our energy and time in elevating the life. If we fail to learn the art of living, we will have no use of various worldly objects of comfort and luxury we have amassed. Arjuna, as depicted in Gita, is frustrated, has abandoned hope in life and is worried and tense. He seems to have lost the game of life. He finds life joyless and futile. He wants to run away from the world. He does not find the world any more attractive. It is then that Lord Krishna infuses enthusiasm, inspiration, courage in him and gives guidance for living life with a purpose. He says: 'O Arjuna ! you have to elevate, sanctify and beautify the life that you have. No running away from this world. Living right here, you have to keep awake, seek the heaven, take it to greater heights, find out bliss, calmness and happiness in it and also bring change where necessary.'

According to Gita, if we succeed in making our life purposeful, our next life will also find a superior form. Our present life is the foundation for our next life. Our actions of the present life will fructify into luck or fate of the next one. As we shall sow, so shall we reap. Says Lord Krishna to Arjuna: 'if you want to have success in your life and the world, you should get up, wake up and be in your mettle. This life is invaluable. Carry out your duty and commitment to the society. Your duty will sanctify your life. You have become victim of worldly bondage and charm and are getting away from your commitment and duty. You will be known as coward and earn a bad name for yourself. If you are giving up your duty on account of attachment to and attraction of the body, then you are wrong. The body is mortal. It was not there earlier and will not be there in future too. Grief for the loss of body is a matter of ignorance. The body and the

world are mortal. One which is made also breaks. The world is also not a permanent entity. As the stream pattern of the river has keeps changing every moment so does the human life and the world. O Arjuna, do not worry. Instead, contemplate. Contemplation will help you solve your problems and do away with distress and worries. Those who contemplated, were soon self-controlled. You have to prepare for the next life right in this life and elevate the virtues, actions and nature of this life.'

Gita has explained the phenomenon of life well and also discussed the ways and means to elevate the human life. Gita has laid special stress on pure food and devotional singing. One who takes impure food, spoils his own body as well as mind. Quality of food is at the root of the quality of thoughts and ideas the humans have. Simple and pure food



ensures simplicity and purity of a man's mind, intellect and thought. One whose food is not pure, cannot concentrate on bhakti, praying, good company and religious discourse.' Gita says: 'a man may have different engagements, but he should find time for his own self also. The man is unlucky who does not attend to himself.'

Religious discourse, good company, mental training, study of serious works, service to the people and so on are the means of self-elevation. This brings purity in life. Gita lays special stress on cleanliness, purity and truthfulness in improving the quality of life. They win success who are able to inculcate the above virtues. One should try to steer clear of futile controversies, confusions and problems. Human life is the best boon from God. Gita tells us the way to live a regular and balanced life. If we want to make our life truly purposeful, we should follow Gita's

instructions. Only then we will be able to free ourselves from distress, worries and problems. This is the essence of Gita's philosophy of life.

## THE DEATH

Gita's treatment of death is as clear and detailed as that of life. The death is never away from life even for a moment. It travels along life. Interestingly, the death is the most effective guard of man. Says Gita:

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युः, ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।

"One who is born must die one day. So shall the dead be born again." This is inviolable. The death performs two functions. It alienates the man from one point and aligns him with the other. One of the meanings of mrityu (the death) is : it converts the body

simply into dust. The death is the attribute of the body. Broadly speaking, the death is the name of body-change. Since the advent of creation, life and death have been going on together. Scared of the death, one may run away from home to a distant place, the death will chase him there too. Many incidents report that a person bound for a certain destination, finally landed elsewhere. Every person is carrying a ticket of death in his pocket. We do not know, who has to travel how long and whereto. All people are standing in the death queue. The moment, one is born, he starts inching forward to death. When one dies, we should feel that we too will die certainly. The death has warned us too. Be prepared, your turn is due. The death will claim you one day.

Gita says, "The body is made up of fire, water, air, earth and sky. In the event of death all these merge into respective universal

elements. Nothing is destroyed in the world. It only undergoes transformation.” Giving up the body is death and entry of the soul into the new body is rebirth. The death is like sleep. After the sleep, the man feels refreshed and rejuvenated. Similarly, when the body is weakened and exhausted and is no longer a functional entity, then the soul abandons it and enters into a new one. As a snake changes its slough, so does the soul changes the old body. The death is the gateway to the next life. We shall get the new one, after we have given up the old one. Hindi expression, ‘चल बसा’ (has departed) conveys that the soul has left this abode and settled down in the other.

Lord Krishna says to Arjuna, ‘death is like nectar and a teacher.’ The death rather inspires a man to get rid of unrighteousness, sins, quarrels and vices. The scene of death

helps a man to keep away from wrongdoing. If there were no fear of death, a man would have almost become immoral. It is the death which saves the man from falling prey to ego and finally face downfall. The death helps the man to perceive the truth. The scene of the cremation place arouses in the man a quest for knowledge and indifference to the world. Awareness of death is helpful in avoiding harmful activities. If a man has learnt that one day he shall have to leave the world for good empty-handed, he will ask himself. "why to indulge in quarrels, controversies, greed and conflicts? Why to amass the ill wealth of unrighteousness and sins? I came to this world fist-bound and shall go away with hands stretched. I didn't bring anything with me, nor shall I carry anything with me." If we have such thoughts and feelings in our mind, we can avoid many ills in course of our life. Remembrance of death provides for elevation of the self and nearness to God.

It is the teaching of Gita that the death is like amrit (elixir). The death makes human life valuable. It is the death which inspires, rather forces, the man to speed up the matters and conclude them before it is too late. As if it says, "Hurry up. No one is sure of the breath, the sign of life. Inhaling may not necessarily be followed by exhaling." Exhaling is the sign of life; not exhaling is the death. Every person has to pass through the stages of old age and death. No one has so far been above these compulsions. Old age means unavoidable afflictions of the body. The diseases, troubles, agonies, difficulties occurring to the body in the old age, cannot be cured by any power that be – a physician, a surgeon or an ascetic for that matter. Only the death can cure them; better say, only death is their cure. Suppose, the old age has arrived. The functioning efficiency of the senses has come down considerably, the body has been

afflicted with a number of diseases, rendering it rather a liability. It has started stinking. The son, wife and other near and dear ones shirk coming close to it. The condition is pitiable. No earthly power can rid the body of this condition. At this moment, the death pays a visit. It gives the rotten, stinking body a new life. Everybody wants to kiss, see, and love the new body. No material and physical power on the earth can do such a miracle and bring about a change as can the death. Therefore the death is like an elixir, the true life-giver. That is why it is said to have great complementary value; i.e. one which completes the incomplete.

Gita says : live upto the ripe age in this world. Be complete before you leave; incompleteness is not the ideal. Life is like a crop. The crop is first ripened, then it is cut and dried, and finally it is harvested. Death



visiting the body, already ripened on account of old age, is a natural development. The death imparts completeness to human life. There are three types of fruit on the tree. First, those which are plucked before they ripen; they have no juice and sweetness and are hard to be plucked, requiring an extra ounce of energy. Second, those which ripen on the tree and become rotten while still on the tree. They are of no use to anyone. Lastly, there are fruits which ripen on the tree and then leave it, dropping down on the earth and also be of use to some one. In the process, they leave the seeds in the womb of the mother earth which gives birth to new fruit-bearing trees. Similarly, the death is worth hailing in which the body meets its end, suffering the least from diseases, troubles and agonies. Such a death is called a natural death. It is also referred to as कालमृत्यु (timely death). Untimely

death is one which overtakes the body before it completes its normal life span.

Says Lord Krishna: 'O Arjuna! Do not worry about death; rather ponder over it. One who does not fear death is called mrityunjaya (one who has conquered death). Death is the part of life in the body. The essence of the body is the soul. Take care of it and contemplate over it. Those who know themselves do not fear death. For a self-knowing person the death is a natural change (of body). Those who fear God, do not fear death. They are confident of being reborn as humans on the strength of their noble deeds; their good actions ensure the human form of life in the next birth.' Gita also says:

युक्ताहार विहारस्य युक्त चेष्टस्य कर्मसु।

"A man can increase his life-span by observing right kind of food, movements and

other kinds of activities." Life-span depends on breaths, which is a game of numbers. There are people, who exhaust their wealth of breaths rather early. Then there are people who succeed in augmenting strength of their breaths by yama (doing moral duty), niyama (restraining the mind), sanyama (self-restraint), pranayama (controlling breathing while remembering God), yogabhyasa (practice of meditation), brahmacharya (religious studentship), and so on. His life-span is extended. Wicked actions quicken the rate of breathing. During the company of the good, religious discourse, service to the people, and acts of bhakti, our breathing is normal. It depends on us, how we spend and utilize our breaths. The unwise waste them in worldly pleasures, passions, diseases, griefs, tensions and so on. The wise live a life of regularity, restraint and sobriety and live long. Gita drives the fear of death out of the man's mind and

also tells him how to be free of fear of death. One who studies and understands Gita, does not fear death and is also not pestered by grief and worries. The wise take the death as a natural change and abandon the body calmly. While doing that the wise do not cry and never regret over the past. They complete the journey of life remembering God. This is the simple knowledge Gita gives us about death.

## **THE WORLDLY PLEASURES**

Gita throws light on almost every aspect of human life. Gita shows us the correct way to live the life well. Knowledge of Gita took concrete shape in a situation surrounded by worry, tension and conflict. In one situation of life, the man, faced with difficulties, problems and confusions, gives up courage and runs

away from the reality. In the other, the converse situation, the man faces the adversities patiently and comes out victorious in the struggle. Gita favours the latter course. Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna :

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि, त्यक्त्वा संगं धनंजय ।

“O Arjuna! setting aside your attachment to the world, do your duty to the humanity, with a state of mind absorbed in contemplation of the Supreme Spirit.” Don’t get nervous in the face of difficulties. Life is struggle. Fear not. One who dares, wins. Gita does not preach resignation. Says Gita, “Do not run away from the world. Keep awake resolutely. Enjoy the world in a normal and regular way, but with detachment. Be constantly in company of knowledge, action and worship while staying a family man.” Lord Krishna has, through Gita, given the man the message of

staying jivan-mukta (free from worldly bonds). Gita trains you in the art of living.

Look at the inspiring words of Gita: 'The true human being is one, who, while walking along the path of sincerity and honesty, maintains his balance and observes his duty and social obligation earnestly.' It further says :

यज्ञार्थात् कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।

“Actions not performed with the spirit of yajna, place the man in bondage.” Our actions should be for the good of the others. The man who dedicates his achievements to God will inculcate in himself, the sense of detachment; he shall be free of selfishness, and thus the spiritual awakening will take place. Such a man will be known as a spiritual person, an ascetic, a renouncer, even if he continues with his usual worldly engagements.

All the actions performed with the spirit of good to others and renunciation of worldly pleasures are yajna. The entire creation is a non-stop yajna, initiated by the Almighty.

The spirit of yajna creates happy conditions. Actions performed without selfishness are no longer a binding for the man. It is the bindings created by man's actions that he experiences happiness or distress. Salvation is understood as liberation from those bindings. Actions inspired by a man's ego place around him the chains responsible for different kinds of experience. Gita's teaching is :

लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ।

“Such a man, who is not fettered by results of his actions, rises above sins the way a lotus in water remains untouched by



water.” As the water level rises, so does the lotus. It doesn’t allow the water to stay even for a moment on its leaf. This is the philosophy of life propounded by Gita. It teaches us to live in the world as a lotus; do live in the world, but don’t get stuck into it. Pass through the bazaar without being attracted by its wares. Do not be drowned in the objects of worldly pleasures, fascination, wealth and money, home and family to an extent that you just become oblivious of your own nature and aim of life. Says Lord Krishna: “The world is meant to be enjoyed and experienced by you. It doesn’t belong to you. You are the caretaker of this world, not its owner. Your association with this world is for a short period. One day, you will have to leave it. If you remain somewhat indifferent to this world during lifetime, you will not feel pain and distress when you leave it. Only those are pained and distressed who mistake everything in the world

for human life. For them, enjoying the world is the aim of their life.'

The people have forgotten their duty and responsibility to the humanity, aim of life and God himself, and are running madly after worldly pleasures, wealth and money. That is why they are sad, perturbed and distressed. There is no end to pleasures.

There are heaps of pleasurable things scattered all over. The ordinary man is running like a mad to acquire these and enjoy them. It is a rat race. The wealth being collected today is motivated by the desire to enjoy the world. A good part of money is being spent for treating the diseases born of those enjoyments.

Gita cautions and warns that no one has so far been satisfied with experiencing pleasurable things. The more the enjoyment,

the more the desire for it, just the same way as the more ghee into the fire, the more strong the flames. This is an inviolable law.

Lord Shri Krishna says: 'Consume and use the worldly things according to your need. Excessive consumption leads to the man's downfall and weakens the spiritual strength. The consumables weaken the strength of the senses. Consequently, the man meets an untimely death. The wise keep their needs and desires to the minimum. He collects only such consumables and comforts as are necessary for life and helpful in achieving its aim.'

Gita's message is clear: 'Do not run after luxuries of life, wealth and money like a mad. These are illusions and are out to cheat you. Whosoever chased them, returned disappointed at last. These things never end,

but the story of life does end. There is no limit to illusion and attachment. It will go on increasing so long as you go on working on it. As the fireplace goes on absorbing the wood pieces without a limit, so are the greedy and slaves of worldly pleasures. Such people waste away their life. When they suffer on account of wrong acts and learn their mistakes they find it is too late now. They have almost reached the point of no return.' This is Gita's message on this subject in a nutshell.

Collect and desire for enjoyable things to the extent as is very necessary for life. Less the desires and necessities of life, less the problems and troubles. The means coming in the way of achieving the end should be given up without delay. The aim of life is to have self-realisation and proximity to God along with a regular worldly life and observance of the social code of conduct.

Whatever and whosoever is helpful in achieving this objective is welcome. The rest deserve to be given a good bye.

## **YOGA : UNION WITH GOD**

From worldly pleasure to union with God, physical to metaphysical, material to spiritual, body to soul, and nature to the supreme power – this is the healthy Indian way of life. Gita is the storehouse of deep, comprehensive and practical thinking on yoga. Exercise and yogic postures are good for physical health and yogic mental training for the mental health. Yoga is the treatment for mental diseases. The death attacks the human body from two routes – worldly enjoyments and diseases. Yoga is the only means of maintaining good health and postponing the death to the maximum possible extent. Yoga is a particular

way of life for keeping ourselves in good health, calm, happy and free of diseases. Yoga is a means to liberate from tension, pressure, worry, sleeplessness, unquietness, and so on. Yoga is a great gift to the world by India. We can make our life restrained, balanced, healthy and regular by adopting yogic system. Says Gita :

युक्ताहारविहारस्य, युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु।  
युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य, योगो भवति दुःखहा॥

“Yogic practice is the trouble-shooter for one who regulates his movements and food habits, makes suitable efforts towards performing actions, and maintains the schedule of sleeping and waking up.” One of the meanings of yoga is ‘discipline’. Restraining and disciplining the food habits and movements, general life style, actions and initiatives, is practising yoga. The proper

function of yoga is: to bring the otherwise disorderly life in order to help the mind getting away from the pleasurable things, to make the intellect bow to soul, and to situate the soul in its true form to enable it experience the Supreme Power. Another meaning of yoga is 'union'. Still another is 'the soul going into the state of samadhi (abstract meditation)'. Yoga is the form of knowledge through which the individual soul is able to experience the Supreme Soul. The joining of the individual soul and the supreme soul takes place in the temple of heart. The both live in the man's heart. Therefore, heart is the real temple. A meeting with God is not possible till there is no sincerity, religiousness, sacredness, purity coupled with faith and devotion in the temple of heart. Meeting with God is never possible in an unclean, impure and morbid heart.



The worldly people want to meet God with a heart filled with lust, anger, greed, attachment, jealousy, hatred, sins, unrighteousness and unacceptable food habits. How strange! The people are looking for the superior-most and the sacred-most God in a filthy heart. How is it possible? According to Gita, precondition for practising Yoga is cleansing the body, mind, wealth, thought, action, heart etc. Only a clean and genuine heart deserves yoga. So long as the senses are leaning towards their objects, the mind is indulging in pleasures, there is attachment to the worldly pleasures, there is still desire for going for pleasures and the mind is filled with passions, the mind will not be able to head for the genuine yogic mental training. In order to get success in Yoga, we will have to inculcate in the mind an aversion to worldly pleasures, to enable it to keep away from the attraction of those pleasures.

Faculties of knowledge and renunciation will have to be strengthened. We will have to remind ourselves time and again that though we went for all kinds of pleasures, gave our all senses the satisfaction of their respective consumables, even then, they are not satiated. The whole life was spent in meeting their never-ending demands. What's the result? We, as slaves of senses, have failed to go ahead. No satisfaction till date and the mind still longs for the pleasures and so on. Such a stream of thought functions as a brake for the mind. The mind is able to hold itself. The spirit of renunciation dawns, and the mind starts leaning towards yoga.

Gita offers practical and psychologically justified ideas about yoga. Lord Shri Krishna was himself a karmayogi 'the one practising the philosophy of detached action'. Whatever

he did, he did with dexterity and perfection. He says :

योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ।

“Performing with excellence is yoga.” Whatever you do, do it efficiently and beautifully. Observing excellence in work culture is yoga. Whatever your identity – a mother, a father, a son, a teacher – if you carry out the prescribed task sincerely, honestly and skillfully with a zeal of perfectionist, you are practising yoga. Mixing beauty with duty is yoga.

समत्वं योग उच्यते ।

“Viewing all with the spirit of equality is yoga.” The spirit of equality not only in the abstract but also in the concrete, in actual behaviour. Here ‘all’ means people and

circumstances and what have you. Maintaining a sense of harmony in all situations and circumstances, not being affected either in happiness or distress, gain or loss, birth or death is also yoga. Gita's concept of yoga permeates the entire human life. Discharging the responsibility, doing the duty, behaving and acting in general — doing all this well and in a pleasing manner is part of yoga. Living a life of regularity, self-restraint and discipline is the practical aspect of yoga.

According to Gita, yoga in fact is the process of entering the inner world from the external one. Yoga is the method of knowing the abstract through the concrete. Yoga is a way of concentrating the innumerable powers of mind. Yoga is controlling, elevating and directing the mind which is otherwise obdurate, fickle and uncontrolled. The mind is a man's friend and also the enemy. One who

succeeds in controlling mind, also controls himself. One who loses control over mind, also loses control over himself. Wherever the mind goes and strays, yoga tames it and directs it towards the soul. Yama (moral duty) and niyama (mental restraint) are the foundations of yoga. The mind submits to the intellect. The intellect applies brake to the mind. Yoga keeps the intellect clean and pure.

Gita is a detailed account of glory of yoga. In the present day life and world, the mental diseases are on the rise. Lust, anger, attachment etc. are the diseases of the mind. There is no cure for these diseases in the material world. Suppose, a man is very angry. There is no treatment of anger with any physician. You have to take recourse to yoga for treating anger. Another man is greedy. He is running after things in greed. He can be treated by yoga only. Yoga will teach the mind

the lesson of self-restraint and the mind will be restrained. Along with he will restrain anger and greed. People are suffering from tension, worries, fears, restlessness, diseases, unquietness etc. on account of desires, passions and greed for consumption. The treatment of this lies with the yogic mental training. Yoga puts a brake on the fickleness, passions and pleasures. Yoga keeps the mind and body calm, happy, healthy and free of worry. According to Gita, yoga is the key to happy life. Yogic mental training helps a man achieve his aim in life. It is through yogic practice only that a devotee realizes himself and the Almighty.

## **KAMA : DESIRES**

Gita treats mental diseases. Cure of mental diseases is difficult. People nowadays

are suffering more from mental rather than physical diseases. Diseases of the body can be treated in a normal way but it is Gita which tells about treating the mental diseases. Says Gita :

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभः, तस्मादेतत् त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥

“Desires, anger and greed, these three are the doorways to the hell and hence destroyers of mankind. All the three should be got rid of.” The three are basic instincts. When they cross the limit, they lead man to his downfall. The individual, the family and the society are in the grip of reversion. Humanity suffers utter disorderliness and consequently the man is pushed down even below the level of animal. The three together are so powerful that they decrease man’s knowledge, thinking power and sense of



discrimination to zero level. One should guard himself against them.

The simple and popular meaning of the word kama is worldly desires. Another is desire for carnal gratification. Both the aspects of kama, of course in limits, are considered necessary for running family life. These two are like two shores of the river within which the river flows and proves useful for the mankind. When the river starts overflowing the shores, breaking down the embankment, it sounds peril. Similarly, when human desires override the restraints, limits and order, they prove disastrous. This is called moral decline of man. A good man is known by high ideals and inspiring life-values which he believes in. Gita instructs the man in the above quote to avoid the excess of desires and wishes. These turn a man's life into hell.

The more the desires and the necessities, the more poor the man is. Worries and conflicts are integral parts of the desires. No one can change it. God can fulfil the man's needs but cannot satisfy his greed. An ordinary man is not aware of his real needs. He lands himself in trouble and distress by mindlessly increasing his desires and necessities. Says Gita :

ध्यायतः विषयान् पुंसः संगस्तेषूपजायते ।  
संगात् संजायते कामः, कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥

“The man, to begin with, thinks and dreams about objects of worldly pleasure. Then he develops attachment to them. This leads to the feeling of kama. Since all the desires are not fulfilled, this results in anger.”

There is lot of running and wandering about, upheaval, and conflicts in the world

today. Its main reason is the fast increasing tendency of worldly enjoyment and amassing worldly things. A man wants to earn as much as possible, that too as early as possible, whatever the means - fair or foul, he doesn't care. He is almost mad after money. That is why the greed and temptation are on the rise. There is no end to worldly enjoyments. We will bid goodbye to this world one day, all these enjoyments, notwithstanding. The body wears out but our cravings stay young. The body grows old but the mind is still dreaming of delicious food. Worldly enjoyments inflict sickness on the body and mind, and leave them in bad shape.

Over-accumulation of things causes unhappiness. Gita says that life becomes happy and calm by controlling body, mind and money. Accumulate according to your need. Driven by worldly and carnal desires, the

modern man is turning his home and life into hell. Because of this there are different types of vices, morbidities, problems and confusions.

We pour ghee into the fire and it flares up. So do the desires when continuously satiated. The fire of desires is such that it never dies. It has ruined many people. Whosoever is gotten in its grip, was made to bid goodbye to this world. The people indulging in fulfilment of desires, enjoyments, luxuries, and vices do not live long. Gita asks the people to save themselves from this destructive fire. Husband and wife, while staying within limits by observing righteousness, restraint and moderation, should satisfy their all sorts of desires which will lead them to happiness, calmness, fulfilment and contentment. This very law of nature provides for social orderliness and balance. The man who violates the norms of

orderliness, self-restraint, righteousness, moderation and morality, sees his life and family meeting a disastrous end.

## **ANGER**

When our desires are not fulfilled, things do not happen the way we want or are not favourable to us, likings are not realised, and there are obstacles to the accomplishment of our interests, then anger takes place in our mind. Kama leads to anger which is thus the outcome of 'tamas', (the quality of darkness or ignorance) to be directly linked with kama. There are unfulfilled desires and passions at the root of anger. The mind of everyone is filled with desires and passions. When they are not realised, we become angry. Angry man is irritated easily and is driven to frenzy. It creates tension, worry, depression, restlessness, and despondency in other

people and the whole environment. There is no fire like anger. The man in anger burns himself first, just like the matchstick, which burns itself first even though it may fail to burn the object at which it is aimed.

The feeling of anger eliminates, temporarily though, such noble things as knowledge, thought, contemplation, moderation and well being. Consequently, the capacity of thought processing weakens, entry of the right kind of ideas is blocked and the tension and pressure in the body are on the rise. The usual appetite and sleep are blunted in the state of anger. The man loses self-control. Even a little anger undoes all that has been achieved. In the fit of anger, man happens to act in a way that leaves him lamenting over his lapse throughout his life. Consequently the life becomes a living hell. Anger spells doom and reduces our good

deeds to just ashes. Anger multiplies further by ignorance. The disease of anger is growing and spreading fast nowadays. Many a dispute, quarrel and wrong is taking place on this account. Our vanity adds to the anger.

Gita tells us the correct treatment of the disease of anger: 'win anger by suppression of anger (अक्रोध)'. The wise man does not grapple with the anger. He tries to handle that very moment with such things as knowledge, thought and discretion. If a man in anger is like fire and the other acts like water, things come under control.

There are a number of effective ways to avoid fit of anger of the angry person such as, keeping patience, forgetting and forgiving, controlling the situation, maintaining the mental balance, getting out of the sight of the angry man. Keeping silent and not reacting



also pacifies the other man's anger. For getting out of the state of anger, you may do the following: keep silent, drink some water, engage yourself in some task, remove the source of anger from the spot, and so on. Anger is a great enemy. One who conquers it, succeeds in life. One who fails, finds his own life, the family and the social group he belongs to, distressed, troubled, and disturbed. Gita cautions us against anger and advises us to conquer it by calmness. Be wise and root it out completely so as to eliminate its existence. This is the teaching of Gita.

## **GREED**

Gita deals with the topic of greed in detail. Greed is the root cause of all the sins. Greed knows no limit. The desire for more than what we have got goes on increasing.

Greed is never satiated. The greedy man is always restive, sad, and disturbed. Greed makes a man rather blind. A greedy person fails to distinguish between his own and the one not his own. Driven by greed the man commits all kinds of wrong. In order to achieve his narrow self-interests he does not hesitate in harming others and acting wrongly. The cravings of a greedy man are never satiated. His sense of discretion and thinking capacity turn selfish gradually. He may have wealth of all the three worlds, even then he is not satisfied. The greed of the greedy man goes on growing with every gain he makes in terms of worldly objects.

Gita's proposition is that a man should desire and collect to the extent as is necessary to fulfil his necessities, and discharge responsibilities of life in a simple manner without being forced to seek other's

help. Money earned through dubious means leads the man to his downfall, brings him diseases and increases his lust and desires. Money earned righteously gives a man peace, contentment and prosperity. Wealth has three states: donation, consumption and waste. The best use of money is utilizing it in service, good to others and cooperation. This brings divinity to the man. God loves such people. Money given in donation brings us contentment, happiness and peace. The second condition of money is its consumption. There is no limit to worldly consumption. However, there is a limit to the man's capacity to consume. After all, how much does he need? Things to be consumed and enjoyed are innumerable. The man leaves the world, but the things of worldly use remain behind in the world. Greed for enjoyables goes on increasing. Science and technology together with market economy have created and made

available a variety of consumable objects that the man has gone mad after them, thus making his own life miserable. The valuable human life is finished in the worldly pursuits. Knowledge of Gita guides you that if you want to be happy, content and calm, do not look at the things themselves; rather how much of them you actually need. You will be saved from confusions, problems and agonies.

The third condition of money is waste. The money, neither donated nor consumed, goes down the drain. The greedy man suffers a fall from grace within himself. Such a man does not deserve to be a devotee of God. Temptation and greed defile the man's intellect. The qualities of heart, as truth, knowledge, discretion, righteousness, morality lose their vigour. On account of greed and lust, he himself is disturbed, insatiated, unquiet and sad and also puts others in the same condition. The miserly person lives a life of

misery throughout and leaves this world stricken with diseases and regrets over his actions in life. Neither he lives in peace nor lets other live in peace. Greed is a serious malady which turns a man into an animal and leaves him battered and shattered.

According to Gita, contentment is the unfailing treatment of greed. To feel content by whatever is acquired by one's own efforts and purposeful acts is contentment. A thoughtful, contemplating and discriminating person, thinks that God has granted him in proportion to his hard work. He is thankful to God for his gains. His thinking is that he had brought nothing with him when he was born, and therefore whatever is given to him is his profit in the deal. Thanks to God for this. It is the dissatisfied man who always complains. The contented person expresses gratitude and thanks to God. The discerning person knows

that whatever be the size of his accumulated wealth and money and means of worldly enjoyment, he will have to leave all that at the time of final departure. Therefore, it is no use being greedy for more and more. He prays God to grant him that much as required and seeks his grace for a contented life. The man conquers greed and is content, happy and calm. He keeps his desires and necessities to the minimum, has won over his mind, is trustful and devotee of God, earns and spends with sincerity and honesty and does not long for the path of victory. Herein lies glory of Gita.

## **JNANA YOGA : PATH OF KNOWLEDGE**

Gita is a storehouse of the glory of jnana yoga (acquiring spiritual knowledge). Knowledge is like eyes. As the human life is incomplete and dark without eyes, so are

the human life and the world full of sorrow and unrest without the knowledge of truth. Gita teaches us :

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

“There is nothing more sacred than knowledge in this world.” Knowledge is light and bliss. Ignorance is darkness and distress. Nothing is clear and in its real form in the dark. Everything is clear and in its real form in the light. Ignorance leads to distress, disease, worry, and dispute. More the ignorance, more the man being involved in desires, worldly matters and passions, making his life a hell. Knowledge helps the man to control himself and saves him from the downfall. Therefore, it is called, ‘amrita’ (elixir of immortality). Whosoever took the amrita of knowledge, became immortal. Knowledge of truth entitles a man to salvation.



The unwise takes the body, the world, the material enjoyment, wealth and money for everything in life. He goes about all this day and night. He collects newer and newer things to nurse his body in all possible ways. In his ignorance he forgets that the body is inanimate and a means to the end. The priceless element is soul. The body is moving and beautiful because of soul. The soul makes it valuable. Once this soul has left it, the body has no value. It is just dust. Whatever is visible in the world will perish one day. Forgetting the invaluable animate soul, not responding to soul's call, only because of the material and momentary attractions of life, is sheer ignorance. Driven by this ignorance, the man commits sin, fraud and crime and loses human values.

The self-realising person remains free of the impact of vices and unrighteousness.

With the help of knowledge he can distinguish between the virtue and the vice, righteousness and unrighteousness, truth and falsehood, life and death, and so on. The wise man knows that distress is hidden behind all the enjoyable things in the world. They are pleasant as long as we enjoy them. In the consequence, they cause suffering. We mistake the inanimate for the animate, unhappiness for happiness, transient for permanent and the body for soul. It is sheer ignorance. Gita awakens us to eliminate ignorance, and inertia, and open our eyes of knowledge. We have slept for long and it is time that we woke up. We have enjoyed the world too much. Now we think of bidding it goodbye. So far we have looked at the world as an object of enjoyment; now we look at it as an object of abandonment.

True knowledge makes human life sacred, beautiful and superior. The wise

crosses over the ocean of worldly life by boat of knowledge. The unwise completes his life journey crying and going through distress, misfortunes, conflicts and discomforts. If the man has knowledge, his life and family are heaven for him. The ignorant turns the heaven into a hell. Living is an art. All the people do not know it. Lord Shri Krishna explains art of living to Arjuna: "O Arjuna, you will realize the reality of the world if you see it through the eyes of knowledge. The world looking so attractive, tempting and likeable from outside is not really that from inside. Live knowledgeably in this world and you will not come to grief. The knowledgeable person does not abandon his duty, vigour and responsibility."

He does not deviate from the path of truthfulness and honesty under the pressure of greed, temptation and illusion. He is content in every condition and circumstances. He

is content and thankful to God whatever he earns by his efforts and devotion. He has faith in God's system of dispensation of justice in accordance with the outcome of his deeds. Self-knowing person keeps his senses, mind and intellect under control. He doesn't involve himself in mindless disputes and futile matters. He knows the value of time. He makes use of the worldly objects as if they are medicines. Medicine is used carefully, neither less nor more than necessary. Make use of the world similarly, i.e. upto the required extent. The knowledgeable person withdraws his mind and intellect from vices, sins and wrong acts and engages them in virtuous deeds by his power of knowledge. Gita has this to say about ignorance :

अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः।

“Knowledge is concealed by ignorance, and this leads the people to illusion.” To

elaborate upon this, knowledge lies hidden under the cover of ignorance, the truth under the falsehood, righteousness under unrighteousness, virtue under vice, justice under injustice, soul under the body and the supreme power under nature. An ordinary man is easily drawn towards ignorance, falsehood, vice, body and nature. It is the natural property of the mind to become easy prey to wrong and bad. One can meet his downfall in many ways. Almost every step is slipping and full of danger. An ignorant man gets trapped in it. Ignorance leads to many vices. Wordly desires, anger, greed, illusion, jealousy, malice, and these negative forces seize the mind and heart of the man. There arise different kinds of problems, confusions and troubles on account of this. Happiness, peace, bliss, and contentment are gone. The body and the mind fall sick. Inclination towards good conduct, learning, and the company of the

good is on decline and 'nastikata' (disbelief in the existence of God) is on the rise. Such a person is not interested in acquiring true knowledge. He indulges in false practices of fraudulancy, pretension and deception in order to escape from the impact of sinning and to showing off to the world.

Lord Shri Krishna awakens Arjuna to experience of truth :

श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।  
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥

“He succeeds in acquiring knowledge who is faithful, devoted and has control over his senses. Having acquired knowledge, he attains peace of mind in no time.” Faith or trust (shraddha) has significant place in human life. Faith is based on truth. Faith without truth is blind faith. Faith and devotion help attaining

the desired aim. Knowledge and faith are intimately related. Knowledge leads the man to peacefulness. Attaining peace is not possible without knowledge. The knowledgeable weeds out the disturbing thoughts and actions through the power of knowledge and the state of peace dawns upon him. The healer treats the disease with his knowledge-power and the body is restored to health.

All the ascetics, sages, saints and great men born in the world, have through knowledge-power, conquered the mind, senses and worldly attractions, put a constraint on their desires, withdrew their mind from worldly pleasures and engaged it in religiousness and spirituality and made their life sincere, pure and dutiful. Arjuna become a true warrior by knowledge-power. Power of knowledge is the greatest power. Life is lifeless



without knowledge of truth. Mind is controlled by the intellect. If the intellect is not pure, sincere and genuine, it will be difficult to control the mind. Only pure thoughts help the mind to stay restrained.

In the presence of knowledge, ignorance vanishes in the same way as does darkness in the presence of light. Similarly, when knowledge asserts, the ignorance, sins, unrighteousness, and vices are kept at bay. Says Gita :

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भ्रमसात्कुरुते तथा ।

“The fire of knowledge reduces all the actions, rather bad actions including emotions and thoughts to ashes.” In that state of mind, awakens divinity in the heart, divine ideas appear, and the humanity is born, the base feelings are suppressed, direction of life takes

a turn for the betterment and the man is transformed from a sinner to a devotee. Lord Krishna's discourse frees Arjuna from his ignorance, illusion and attachment. Then he fights the war in order to protect truth, justice, righteousness and duty. He was in a state of ignorance and wavering mind, at a loss to know what to do. As he gained knowledge, he became active towards realising his duty, commitment and the aim of life. The knowledgeable person also performs his duty and moves ahead towards attaining the goal of his life. The stage of his life serves as a model and becomes an inspiring and fascinating event. Blessed by God, he achieves the supreme state in his present life and beyond. This is the simplified version of Gita's Jnana Yoga.

## **KARMA YOGA : PATH OF RIGHT ACTION**

Karma Yoga is a significant and inspiring feature of Gita. Gita is a source of enthusiasm, courage, bravery and strong will to live. It transforms a coward into a brave and infuses in him the spirit to live on. It was Gita's teaching that made Arjuna to pick up the bow and arrow again which he had earlier abandoned. Karma yoga means carrying out one's duty, commitment and responsibility without thinking about reward. This is the main teaching and purpose of Gita. This is called Nishkama Karma Yoga (performing actions without expecting reward). Karma-yogi attains salvation and realises God by performing actions without expecting reward. Gita explains significance of karma (action) in the following words :

न हि कश्चित् क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

“No one can stay even for a moment without performing action.” Performing actions is the reason of being of life. Gita emphasises Karma-Vada (the principle of performing action). It is in the nature of things that a man performs actions by mind, speech and body – actions whether good or bad. Actions raise the status of the man and it is the actions which cause his downfall. Actions make a man god and actions again make him a demon. Action is devotion, worship and prayer. Action makes a man great. The world is functioning through the network of actions. Glory of karma knows no bounds. Karma-phal (reward of actions) are various and numerous and it is on this account that some one is well-known, the other is little known; one is very rich, has all the luxuries of life, while the other is a beggar, without a shelter. One is being born in a palace, while the other in a poor man's

hut – all in the same moment. How do you explain this paradox? The only logical explanation is that all this disparity is due to disparity in people's karmas and their different kinds of rewards. Gita's following words are a warning for all :

अवश्यमेव भोक्तव्यं कृतं कर्म शुभाशुभम् ।

“Whatever good or bad actions, we perform, we must face the consequences.” No power on earth can change this law. We are rewarded or punished in accordance with our karmas. This is God-made order and there is no flaw in it. One who believes in this God-made order, can save himself from sins, unrighteousness and vices.

Gita is clear about one point that there was life earlier, exists at present, and will be there in future as well. The cycle of coming and going and rebirth have existed forever.

Salvation and liberation mean breaking free from this cycle. The present life is the consequence of actions of the past life. The actions performed in the present life will ensure the next life. As for consequence of actions, the man is subordinate to them. There are different opinions: 'The life yet to come is a myth. The present life is the reality. Eat, drink and be merry.' This thinking and feeling leads the man to beastliness, sinning, unrighteousness and vices. When there is no aim in the life of man, what is the difference between a man and an animal? We also indulge in animal acts like eating, drinking, sleeping, etc. as the animals do. The fact is that the aim of human life is very high. By reforming our actions, we make our life pure and sacred. Consequently, we feel the urge for performing virtuous actions.

Lord Shri Krishna repeatedly tells Arjuna: 'O Arjuna, leave aside the ego and consciousness of a doer, be detached, do not expect the reward of your actions and perform your actions keeping your tempers even. Actions performed with detachment make the man's heart pure, genuine and righteous.' Be a karmayogi. It is the karma, your actions, which lift you up and push you down, so says Gita :

योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ।

"Achieving excellence in performing actions is yoga." Gita has linked yoga with day-to-day practical life. Sitting in samadhi (state of intense meditation) is not the only form of yoga. Whatever you do, you should do as beautifully, excellently and devotedly as possible. Strive for perfection. Sometimes, the man loses concentration and the quality



of work suffers. Action is not performed successfully. Perfection is attained when devotion is complete, whatever the nature of the work. This too is yoga. Lord Shri Krishna has linked it with practical life. He has illustrated yoga from his own life. Whatever Lord Krishna did, he did it skillfully and efficiently. He grazed the cattle in a way as to excel in the art which nobody else could match. He maintained his friendship with others which became a model in itself. He drove the chariot with such an excellence that left the world wondering. He did service to the people which became an example in itself. Whatever Lord Krishna did, it left a mark on the minds of the people. This is true karmayoga. Whatever we do, we must do beautifully and devotedly.

Scope of and contemplation over karma is vast and intense according to Gita. Broadly,

karmas can be classified under two heads :  
 (a) sakama karma (सकाम कर्म) (actions performed with attachment), (b) nishkama karma (निष्काम कर्म) (actions performed with detachment).

Sakama karma is one comprising selfishness, profit motive, and expectation of reward. There is always a feeling of ego, 'I have done this' kind of thing, a desire for reward for the services rendered. One goes for making a donation, doing virtuous acts, worshipping etc. with a desire to earn name and fame or expectation of forgiveness of his crimes, leading to finding a place in the heaven. Behind all this lies the desire of getting or gaining something. Selfishness is invariably there. He expects to gain more by giving less. All these are sakama karmas. Nishkama karma is one which is performed with a sense of duty and responsibility, in compliance with God's wish or commandment as a matter of

feeling. These are marked by absence of the feeling of exchange ('in exchange of'), and presence of the feeling of duty without expectation for returns. For example, some one pays ten rupees to a needy beggar. He does not expect any returns. It is a nishkama karma. He made the donation with a feeling that God has given him enough. It is therefore his duty that he should serve the needy and strive for the welfare of the humanity. Donation made with this feeling does not make a man feel uneasy. He donates and then forgets about it. There is the saying: do good to others and forget about it.

People expect more and that too at once. Most of the actions are performed with expectation of reward. In absence of reward, there is frustration and distress. There is no complaint or regret when the parents bring up their children with a sense of duty. If children also respond the same way, serve

and nurse their parents and elders, there will be no difficulty. However, the present generation is not doing its duty. It is becoming conscious of its rights rather than duties. That is why there are problems, confusions, conflicts, tension, and worries. Gita teaches us to carry out our duty. The man is independent in performing actions. The result depends on God. The man cannot intervene in that. Says Gita :

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

“The right of the man is restricted to doing his duty. He has no control over the result.” The duty having been done, its result is not a matter of the doer’s will. It is beyond the competence of the man to intervene in the process of result of his actions. This process is in the hands of God. Had this not been the case, no man would have become a mosquito or a fly, an insect or a worm, a

dog or a cat in his next life. This is the arrangement made by the external power (external to the doer and the deed) according to which the creatures have to enter into inferior forms of life as well. No ascetic or sage or a saint has so far been able to change this system. No one has been pardoned for his sins and crimes. If we sow a thorny tree, we shall get thorns only, and not the mangoes. 'He that soweth vice shalt not reap virtue.' Only this belief and the principle of as-the-action, so-the-result can save the man from sin, unrighteousness, crimes and other vices. This is the purposeful teaching of Gita which helps the man to control and reform himself. He is advised to keep away from wrongdoing, not to indulge in vicious actions, not to add to burden of his errors, fear God, since his punishment is discrete and nobody can escape the hold of his system of justice.

It is the man's actions which entrap him in shackles of worldliness, difficulties and agonies, and it is the actions again which liberate him from the consequences of actions. Says Gita :

असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ।

“Actions performed without attachment lead man to realization of Supreme Power.” Deeds done with the spirit of service, good to others, righteousness and maximum good for the maximum people do not put shackles around man. The man carrying out God's mandate does not face humiliation and is not inclined to vices :

लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ।

“As the leaves of the lotus in the water are not wetted by the water, so remains the nishkama karmayogi detached even leading

a usual social life.” He remains pure and above the sin, carrying out his duty without selfish motive, and experiencing worldly life without getting involved, completes the journey of his life successfully. Gita gives to the world the message of karmavada (the principle of performing actions): be industrious, make progress while performing genuine and benevolent deeds in this world as also the other, lying beyond this world. Spread the fragrance of your good actions in the human life and among the people of the world. Genuine and humane actions give life true bliss and peace, and happiness and contentment. Gita gives this inspiration and awareness to human beings. Do your duty while living in the world. Discharge your responsibility honestly. According to Gita, one who lives his life in this manner makes his present life purposeful and attains a better abode in his next life.



## **BHAKTI YOGA : PATH OF DEVOTION**

Gita is a 'triveni' (confluence of three) of jnana, karma, and bhakti. The main aim of human life is to head for 'bhagvad-bhakti' (practising loving faith in God) while performing actions with knowledge. Human form of life is important for the reason that bhakti, worship, praying, company of the good can take place only in this form. These are not possible in any other form of life. Gita does not offer any specific method of bhakti and worship of any specific forms of God, nor accommodates any particular approach, based on sect, ideology and faith, to the above. Gita does not contain notions of religious bigotry and communal frenzy. Gita offers thinking for the good and sense of equality for all the creatures, both human and the rest. It speaks the voice of well-being for all the people even if they are

of different persuasions. Gita offers a simple, direct and practical discourse on bhakti-yoga.

Bhakti is a way of life. It is a process of getting close to God. It is a matter of heart. It relates to mind, intellect, the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. Bhakti means directness, simplicity, spontaneity, and naturalness. Gita lays down the identity of a bhakta in the following terms :

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां, मैत्र, करुण एव च ।  
निर्मयो निरहंकारः, समदुःखसुख क्षमी ॥

“A bhakta has malice towards none, is friendly and kind to all, is fearless, does not suffer from inflated ego, is capable of nurturing equanimity in happiness as also the unhappiness conditions.”

According to Gita, bhakti is a part of day-to-day practical life. It is something to be

practised while leading a normal family and social life. A clear, clean and pure heart is the necessary condition for bhakti. There are four types of bhakta according to Gita : (a) 'arta' (आर्त) (distressed), who seeks shelter with God when struck by suffering; (b) 'arthi' (अर्थी) (desiring person), who remembers God to fulfil his desires; (c) 'jijnasu' (जिज्ञासु) (eager to know), who wants to know God for its own sake; (d) 'jnani' (ज्ञानी) (the knowledgeable), who has loving faith in God, wants to attain God as based on knowledge and action. Only such a bhakta can truly attain God.

Before you begin bhakti of God, try to know his nature and character. The present day world though believes in God but does not know him truly. Gita presents a wide-ranging description of God. Having seen the stupendousness of God's creation, we realise His infinite and enormous power. God is seen everywhere through His actions, laws and

arrangements. Lord Shri Krishna motivates Arjuna repeatedly towards God, the eternal power, which existed in the beginning of the creation, and has created and maintained the entire universe. The eternal power is known and referred to by many names. It is through the kindness, and grace of that omnipresent power that human life and the world are going on.

According to Gita, bhakti is a means of attaining God, knowledge and renunciation are the foundations of bhakti. Bhakti cannot hold without them. Our heart is the genuine temple of God. The realization of God takes place in this temple of heart, not in the man-made temples visible around. The more clean, spotless, pure and virtuous is the temple of heart, the more is feeling of joy and bliss in bhakti.

Bhakti is not fruitful in a heart where worldly desires, anger, greed, attachment, jealousy, malice, hatred, vice and negative feelings dominate. In a state like this, bhakti is an outward show and a farce.

Bhakti is rich in 'satoguna' (quality of goodness and virtue). When the heart is pure and full of divinity, bhakti is sheer joy and bliss. The present day practice of bhakti is taking place in an environment of 'rajoguna' (quality of luxuriousness and merry-making) and 'tamoguna' (the quality of darkness and ignorance). There are desires, anger, greed, falsehood, unrighteousness in the heart. Ritual of bhakti is being performed by loud sounding songs, mechanical reading of written text, show of money, and physical movement, but there is no spirit of bhakti in the mind, intellect and the soul of the practitioner. No change is visible in the thinking, action, behaviour, and

nature of man despite much worshipping, seeking company of the good people and religious discourse. Perhaps, people have failed to understand bhakti in the right spirit. Truthfulness and clean heart are the conditions of bhakti. Be eligible for bhakti by cleansing the body, the mind and the money and then observe the norms of bhakti in spirit and rituals.

Gita repeatedly lays stress on knowledge and renunciation for engaging in bhakti. It says: 'Open your eyes of knowledge, understand the true form and meaning of life, and free your mind and body of worldly desires, passions and wickedness. The intellect will be purified by knowledge only, the virtuous intellect will understand the nature and character of soul. When the soul will be situated in its own form, and as such will be clean, pure and virtuous, only then it will be able to experience the eternal God.' The

individual soul is the gateway to the meeting with the Supreme Soul. Gita says: 'God is subject to experience. Eyes of knowledge help us to experience God in our hearts. The true bhakta, along with observing yama-niyama-sanyam (self-control), achieves closeness to God in his pure soul by constant practice of yoga.' Lord Shri Krishna has explained bhakti yoga in details in Gita. Life is lifeless and futile without bhakti. Bhakti provides food for soul. Bliss of bhakti is the real food for the soul. There is infinite power in bhakti. Spirit of bhakti brings balance in human life, puts a brake on materialism, disquiet, tension and worry and then the man gets rid of internal and external vices. Consequently, the life is full of fragrance. Frustration, distress and dearth of joy are gone. And the life is full of energy, enthusiasm, and high spirit. Gita gives the message of making human life superior and pure by bhakti yoga.



## **SUKH : HAPPINESS**

People want happiness and peace. No one longs for unhappiness and turbulence. All are running after happiness. But the tragedy is that more the desire for being close to happiness and peace, more the increase in distance from them. No one knows since when the game is going on. Gita tells us about the true nature and character of happiness and peace and also the simple and direct way to achieve it. There is a feel-good factor in the concept of sukh (happiness): one which makes you comfortable, is favourable, appeals to your internal and external senses. Opposite to it – uncomfortable and discomfoting feeling – is unhappiness. Sensual happiness relates to body. Such happiness is experienced when the senses come in contact with the objects. Happiness is experienced so long as our senses are involved with worldly objects. The moment the contact breaks, happiness

vanishes. Only memory remains. So long the tongue is in company of delicious meals, it enjoys the taste. The moment meals are over, the joy of taste too evaporates. The same is true of other senses — eyes, ears, nose, skin — with their respective objects. The fickle human mind runs after the newly emerging worldly objects. It does not allow the man to rest for a while. The ordinary man is losing fast the precious years of his life in the narrow alleys of sensual enjoyment. The worldly objects giving you the transient pleasure today will cause pain later. The food tasting fine in the present moment, becomes troublesome in the later one.

Lord Shri Krishna says: ‘O Arjuna! all the worldly enjoyments have a beginning and an end. They exist today, are gone tomorrow. The wise do not indulge in such transient and mortal enjoyments. They do not take these for everything in life. They use them for

maintaining their life process to the required extent. The self-realising wise people search for true and permanent happiness inside their hearts. The true happiness and peace resides within. The man is looking for it in the outside world. This is ignorance. When the man experiences the happiness inside his heart, he withdraws from the worldly transient joys. He feels no attraction towards them. His way of thinking changes and along with it his life style too.'

It is sheer ignorance and error that more the means of enjoyment and money with us, the more happy we are. There is no permanent happiness in them. These are merely means, not the end. In the material world of today there is no dearth of enjoyable things satisfying all our senses. Yet the man is not happy and is facing tension, worry, disease, lack of peace and contentment and is living in a state of conflict. He has everything

in his material world, but nothing in his inner world. He is unhappy himself and is making others unhappy too. Had there been happiness in the outside world, all would have felt happy, content and calm. But the reality is different. Almost all are restless.

The invaluable message of Gita is: happiness is a matter of mind and heart. Some people are content with less while others want more and more and yet are not happy. So long as the man does not get the desired thing, he thinks that all the joy lies in getting that particular item. When he gets that, he loses the joy and attraction of that object. Then he thinks, happiness is still far away from him. The man is going around caught up in the hope-despair syndrome. According to the law of creation, the joy-giving worldly objects and the experiencer of joy, both leave this world finally. Says Gita :

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगाः दुःखयोनय एव ते ।

“The transient joy, born of contact between the senses and the objects, ends up in agony.” The end of joys is painful. What is favourable before the actual experience is not the same afterwards. When the mind pursues blindly the directionless activities of the senses, the man is bound to meet his downfall. Lord Shri Krishna explains to Arjuna that because of excessive desires and enjoyments, the man is distressed, disturbed, worried and trapped in conflicts. There is no end to desires. The more the longing, the more are the worries and efforts to fulfil the longing. No one has so far been able to satisfy all his desires. When one is fulfilled, the other arises at once in a different form.

As there are waves of water in the pond, so are there the waves of desires and longings in the heart. Knowledgeable man is one who

cuts down his desires and necessities. Those who do not accumulate more than they need, are able to avoid different types of sufferings, confusions, problems and controversies. This message from Gita is the unfailing formula for keeping the present day world and human life happy, peaceful and content.

Lord Shri Krishna says: 'Earn money honestly. Only the honestly earned money gives peace, contentment, happiness and prosperity. The money earned by questionable means makes the man grow and prosper in the initial stages, but, is later lost in sickness, disputes, worldly enjoyments and mindless spending, and causes the man's decline.' Purity of the money – money earned by pure means – is the highest form of purity in the material world. From money, we get food, food affects our mind, the mind releases thoughts, thoughts lead to actions, and actions cause the appropriate consequence – joy or no joy.



Gita believes in performing actions. As is the action, so is the result. If you want happiness in life, perform actions leading you to attaining happiness and peace. The paradox is that the man of the present age acts in a way as to cause strife and disquiet, but expects results in terms of happiness and peace. He expects mango-like fruits from the trees which grow thorns. How is it possible? As you sow, so shall you reap. As for happiness, contentment and peace, one does not get them for the asking. One has to perform actions which are the source of attaining happiness, make life clean, simple and plain. Reduce your desires and necessities to the minimum. Adjust to circumstances. Learn to live calm, happy and content in every stage of life. Look at and feel emotionally for what you have received from God, and thank Him for his generosity. Go on trying to come close to God along with



growing age. This will help you being saved from many worries and confusions. The body is like a property, take care of it; it is the most precious thing of the material life. The body is the means of completing the journey of life. Secondly, go on multiplying the wealth of self-knowledge. This will bring the human life and the world in a state of balance and order, resulting in happiness. If you want true happiness, shift yourself from the outside world to the inside world, which is abode of eternal happiness. Look inwards; this is the message of Gita.

## SHANTI : PEACE

Gita teaches us :

विहाय कामान् यः सर्वान् पुमाँश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।  
निर्ममो निरहंकारः, स शान्तिम् अधिगच्छति ॥

“Only such a man attains peace who renounces all the unnecessary desires, moves about selfless in the world and has abandoned the spirit of possessiveness and egoism.”

Pleasure results when senses experience worldly things. Peace is internal and a matter of mind. Peace is obtained by a particular mode of thought, action, and behaviour. Peace is not a purchasable commodity. Peace is a matter of experience and a state of mind, which one has to look for in his heart and experience it. One may have a lot of things in material terms and may still be discontent and restless. Conversely, there may be people with less than very much and are content and calm. It depends on the individual how far he has been able to persuade himself for the right path. An ordinary man goes places and meets people in quest for peace. All are after peace. All want peace. No one longs for what is not

peaceful. Despite this, majority of the people in the world are disturbed and perturbed and are going about their worldly affairs, worried and tense.

Gita gives a wake-up call to the people : 'Stop for a while and think, where are you headed for? You will not find peace there where you are going to. Leaving aside peace, you are joining the race for peacelessness.' Ardent desire for various types of worldly objects, a longing to amass a lot, too many desires together, all this is causing turbulence and unrest in the mind of the man. The thinking that 'feed the mind as it wills, do not starve it' is the source of loss of peace to the man. What a big mistake and ignorance! The richest man of the world has not so far been able to satiate the mind fully. Howsoever you may feed the mind, it is never enough. The man collects wealth and money, so many different things and worldly objects to satiate

the mind. If these are not gotten the straight way, he opts for the wrong path of sin, unrighteousness, bribe, and corruption. All these wrongs take away man's appetite, sleep, peace and happiness. Falsehood, hypocrisy and sins do not allow the man to have normal sleep. Gita says loudly :

अशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ?

“The man without peace is not happy.” He is engaged in devising ways and means to have more and more and going madly after wealth and money. The man without peace is always under stress, worry, tension, going astray – and cannot sit calmly at home. Wrongdoing keeps him disturbed, normal appetite and sleep are lost, and the unity of family and social life breaks down. Such a man is not at peace either inside his home or outside of it.

The ignorant goes to temples, pilgrimage centres, gurus, monks and saints in the quest for peace. There too he finds showing off and the sway of money. The truth is far away from there. He is disappointed there too. The ignorant man, surrounded by attachment, illusion and worldliness, fails to reach the source of peace. His thinking and search for peace is outwardly oriented. His eyes are open outwardly, but are closed inwardly. Happiness, peace and contentment are inside over hearts. We are looking for them in the external world. Peace will be attained by doing one's duty, going for right thinking, self-contemplation and closeness to God. Unfortunately, today's man is getting away from all these things. He has allowed his mind to be vitiated and forgotten his duty. He has almost killed his soul, and abandoned the true God. He has become victim of different mental and physical diseases. How shall he achieve peace? The man without peace is, day in and day out,

after money and in the process has misjudged the aim of life as to eat, drink and be merry. He has gone astray from the basic aim and lost his touch with reality. A good number of people, who are placed in such condition look happy and full of life from the standpoint of money, luxurious objects, and articles of worldly enjoyment, but as for peace, contentment, happiness, sensitivity and humaneness, they draw a blank. Despite all the wealth and prosperity, the mind is empty and unsteady. The stream of insatiated desires and passions is flowing in the heart, and wealth and money are not multiplied. Having amassed quite a lot, the man is unhappy, dejected, blank-headed, perturbed and frustrated.

Gita helps to hold ourselves and explains to us that as long as the man will not restrain himself from joining the blind race for accumulating wealth, will not apply brake to



his wild desires and passions, will not break free of the grip of the false dreams and will not restrain the wild run of the senses, he will not be able to get rid of his worries, agonies, and loss of peace. One who goes after fulfilling his desires for worldly things without giving a serious thought to them, shall always remain perturbed and disturbed. Desires are never fulfilled fully. They change faces and keep calling again and again, keeping the man running all the time.

No one has so far been able to satiate his desires fully. One passes his whole life in achieving the fulfilment of desires, only to despair at last. The most essential teaching of Gita is that only the one is happy, calm, satiated, and blissful who has reduced and restricted his desires to the adequate minimum, who has reduced his necessities to the bare essential, who has turned himself from outward to the inward, who has



abandoned the world of material enjoyment and has oriented himself to God. In want of this, a man's life is a burden for him which he lives without a purpose. Gita issues a wake-up call and makes him alert. True happiness and peace reside in the home and heart. If we fail to find them there, we cannot find in the outside world. The lasting peace cannot be achieved by abandoning the family life, begging, wishing, searching and in any worldly object. It will neither be achieved by touching the feet of the gurus, taking bath at the centres of pilgrimage, going for devotional singing and reading from the religious text in loud voice and so on. Peace is obtained by performing good deeds. We want peace, but act and think in a way that lead us to loss of peace. We want happiness but our performances and thoughts are such that bring us unhappiness. The road is straight. Choose the acts to perform which are in direct proportion to the desired results. If you want peace, go for the

acts which bring you peace. Leave out the acts and things which cause loss of peace. Change your nature and life style accordingly. Do not repeat the acts, which breach your peace. Peace is inside us, not in the outside world. Imbibe the following invaluable teaching of Gita:

त्यागात् शान्तिरनन्तरम् ।

“Peace is obtainable by inculcating the spirit of abandonment.” The more is the spirit of giving up, the more is the upliftment of the moral self. The knowledgeable man is known by his capacity to give up and give away. The wise is one who experiences the worldly joys, understands the reality, and supported by knowledge and renouncing spirit, gives up the material world. He is not caught up in the accumulation syndrome. The more is the involvement in amassing things, material joys, attachment and illusion, the more are the

trouble, distress, and loss of peace to the man. Lord Shri Krishna tells Arjuna repeatedly: 'O Arjuna! Enjoy this world detachedly. Do not be involved with it. The one who gives up the worldly luxuries after enjoying and experiencing them, obtains happiness and peace, and the one who does not give up, suffers and leads a beastly life, and finally leaves the world unhappy and sad.'

The present-day materialist is busy in collecting and enjoying various types of things. He wants to leave nothing, collects everything and enjoys it all by himself. Selfishness and being restricted to himself has become the identifying feature of the modern educated man. He is ready to do anything for money. Money can give us enjoyable things, luxuries and comforts, all at the expense of righteousness. Values of life are eroding fast. Man has turned into a demon and is indulging

in violence, sinning, and unrighteousness. That is why, there is loss of peace, sorrow, diseases, worries, tension, confusion, and other problems in the world. These will increase in the future, as the man has failed to reach the root cause and consequently is getting away from the path of happiness and peace. Gita's message is clear: 'Take care of yourself, try to understand yourself. Look inwards. Think and muse. Be knowledgeable. Shift from outer world to the inner world. Treasure of happiness and peace is inside you. The outside world is marked by lack of peace and happiness. Involvement with the outside world will make you sad, disturbed and discontent. The true happiness and peace is inside your hearts. More you move from the outer world to the inner world, the more you achieve the peace, contentment and true happiness.'

## ESSENCE OF GITA

Gita is a discourse on the totality of human life. It acts as a friend, philosopher and guide of the man in the journey of life. The essence of the message of Gita, as given below, highlights the underlying unity of the message, which is otherwise hard to grasp.

- ★ Human life is the superior-most form of life on earth. Besides being meaningful in itself, it has a distinct aim. It is the state of the individual soul.
- ★ Paramatma is the Supreme Soul. Individual soul meeting and finally merging with the Supreme Soul is the ultimate truth of human life.
- ★ The soul is immortal. It is the human body which dies, not the soul. Howsoever, the soul depends upon the body to

experience multitude of feelings. The body is indispensable.

- ★ The body functions through the senses — the senses of perception and the senses of action.
- ★ The senses are controlled by the mind. Mind is power, can lead to creating as well as destroying. It is required to be tamed.
- ★ Buddhi, the intellect, is the controlling authority of the mind. Judicious exercise by the intellect leads to accumulation of knowledge. Virtuousness of the intellect is important.
- ★ This brings us to the human life process – its stages, features, nature and character. The birth and the death are the two poles of the human life process.

- ★ Birth is taken for granted. Death is hard to accept. Birth is cherished. Death is feared. The two as poles are considered mutual opposites. That is not true. The both are inter-connected. The new born is the one who died earlier. And the once born is certain to die. Death is as natural as birth.
- ★ Between these two poles lies the human life process, manifest in the social life of man wherein he goes for all sorts of worldly pleasures. However, happiness experienced in them is unreal.
- ★ In fact, the pursuit for worldly pleasures realizes greed and anger, on account of which not only the individual suffers but also the society at large.
- ★ The answer to this is yoga, i.e. union with God. Yoga is a series of inter-related concepts. Practising yoga is performing



well and with a purpose. The most meaningful performance is developing a sense of equanimity in conjunction with controlling the movements of the mind.

★ Yoga is the tri-dimensional phenomenon. Jnana Yoga is the path of knowledge. Karma Yoga is the path of right action. And Bhakti Yoga is the path of devotion. Jnana and bhakti are realised through karma - the nishkama karma (action without attachment, without expectation of reward). Performing nishkama karma is a practical proposition, though hard to practice.

★ Nishkama karma leads to happiness, which in turn leads to peace – a state where the individual soul meets the Supreme Soul and merges with it in a state of complete bliss, the salvation.

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