

bhagavad-

gita
treatise of self-help

verse in contemporary idiom
with codification of interpolations



BS Murthy



Bhagvad-Gita: Treatise of Self-help
Sans 110 interpolations in contemporary verse
BS Murthy
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F-9, Nandini Mansion,
1-10-234, Ashok Nagar,
Hyderabad – 500 020

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Dedicated to grandparents,

Paternal: Bulusu Thimmaiah -Lakshmi Narasamma,
Maternal: Challa Kameswara Rao - Suramma
And parents: Peraiah Sastry and Kamakshi,
In whose care my destiny so favourably placed me.

Contents

[Content 1: Introduction](#)
[Content 2 : Awe Unfounded](#)
[Content 3 : All about Interpolations](#)
[Chapter 1:](#) Arjuna's Dilemma
[Chapter 2:](#) All about Life
[Chapter 3:](#) Theory of Action
[Chapter 4:](#) Practical Wisdom
[Chapter 5:](#) Art of Renunciation
[Chapter 6:](#) Practice of Restraint
[Chapter 7:](#) Know the Spirit
[Chapter 8:](#) Cycle of Creation
[Chapter 9:](#) The Sacred Secret
[Chapter 10:](#) Discern the Divine
[Chapter 11:](#) Nature of Omnipresence
[Chapter 12:](#) Doctrine of Faith

[Chapter 13](#): Field and Farmer
[Chapter 14](#): Proclivities to Know
[Chapter 15](#): Art of Liberation
[Chapter 16](#): Frailty of Thought
[Chapter 17](#): Science of Devotion
[Chapter 18](#): Thy Looking-glass



[Introduction](#)

The spiritual ethos and the philosophical outlook that the Bhagavad-Gita postulates paves the way for the liberation of man, who, as Rousseau said, '*being born free, is everywhere in chains*'. But equally it is a mirror of human psychology, which enables man to discern his debilities for appropriate redressal.

All the same, the boon of an oral tradition that kept it alive for over two millennia became its bane with the proliferation of interpolations therein. Besides muddying its pristine philosophy, these insertions affect the sequential conformity and structural economy of the grand discourse. What is worse, to the chagrin of the majority of the Hindus, some of these legitimize the inimical caste system while upholding the priestly perks and prejudices.

This rendition seeks to restore to the Gita, its original character by ridding it of hundred and ten interpolations, which tend to keep the skeptics away from it. And ironically these muddle the understanding of the adherents as well. In the theatre of man as nothing surpasses the drama of war, the stage for unveiling the Gita's unrivalled philosophy was set on the battleground of Kurukshetra at the threshold of the battle of Mahabharata.

[Awe Unfounded](#)

The Bhagavad-Gita, popularly known as Gita, with its twin tracks of spiritual ethos and philosophical outlook, helps man commute to the destination of human excellence on the broad gauge of life. The unsurpassed art of living that the Gita expostulates, paves the way for the 'liberation of man' and that's what makes the Gita, which probably is around for over two millennia now, the treatise of self-help.

Nonetheless, all along, its spiritual track has come to acquire primacy what with its protagonists being the religiously inclined men and women for most part. Even

Mahatma Gandhi, the most famous and ardent advocate of Gita of our times, was eloquent about the spiritual solace that it afforded him. Needless to say, the innumerable commentaries on the Gita that appear in print or get voiced in discourses invariably come from people with religio-spiritual orientation. Insensibly, all these led to the public perception of the Gita as a spiritual tome, and that has brought about a situation where everyone swears by it but few venture to approach it.

That is due to, either the general lack of spiritual inclination in man, or his palpable apprehension that, anyway, it might be beyond one's comprehension. And those who attempt to read any of the commentaries give up soon enough – bowled either by the spiritual spin in theological jargon or tired of those lengthy commentaries. Oh, don't these texts tend to exhibit the commentator's own scholarship in Vedanta! In the bargain, hardly any reach the end, which would have helped them understand themselves better. What an irony in that having been bogged down in the semantics, one fails to grasp Krishna's message that's tailor made for him! And it is all about realization made difficult.

The public or private discourses on the Gita relatively fare better for they enthrall the audience by the eloquence of the speaker besides the interest the interspersed anecdotes elicit. However, amidst all this verbiage, the profundity of Krishna's message would seldom register in the minds of those who try to seek it. Of course, the commentary-discourse route misses on the essential ingredient of understanding - contemplation. After all, Krishna himself recommends to Arjuna at the end of his talk, s63, ch.18,

*'That thee heard of this wisdom
For task on hand now apply mind'.*

If only Sanskrit, the *deva bhāsha*, the language of the gods for the Hindus, and for the 18th Century British intellectual Sir William Jones, '*is of wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either*' were in currency now, it would have been a different proposition. Thus, the average person needing no interpretative crutches might have read the Gita in its pristine beauty, speculating about the profound wisdom lying in the sophisticated philosophy it postulates. That would have afforded one to view human nature, including his or her own, in that contemplative mirror enameled by the Gita. But that might be if and when Sanskrit, by the will of the gods, becomes a language of the masses in times to come.

But for the present, English, which many proud British linguists humbly held as the second best language in the world, is the right medium for contemplating the Gita even in the native land of Sanskrit. Of course, in verse sans commentary, and this is an attempt with that objective, needless to say, with divine inspiration.

What is the Gita all about that made many western intellectuals, though alien to the Hindu philosophy sing its praises? It is owing to its emphasis on human emancipation as opposed to the religious conditioning of man. Thus, its universal appeal jells with the hearts and minds of people, irrespective of their religious beliefs and cultural sensitivities. Simply put, the philosophy the Gita portrays is meant to help one imbibe the right attitude to lead life, but not to buttress his religious dogma of God. How this was achieved is the wonder that is Gita, cast in the Hindu mould but shaped into the secular form! After all, it might have been in the realms of human genius aided by some divine metallurgy.

The stage chosen for unfolding the grand philosophy is in itself reflective of the brilliance of the Gita. Nothing ever surpasses the drama of war in the realms of life and

so is the case with the accompanying debate about its rights and wrongs. At the threshold of the epic battle of Mahabharata, on the sacred grounds of Kurukshetra, Arjuna, the Pāndava Prince, suffers from qualms at the prospect of killing kith and kin in the Kaurava camp besides all those whom he adores therein. It has always been in the nature of man to worry about the prospect of his death besides that of his near and dear. Thus Lord Krishna, a friend of the Pandavās who happened to be Arjuna's charioteer, opens this classic discourse in s11, ch.2 by chiding his disciple and setting its trend as well,

*'Averting as knowing
Worried over trivia!
Reckon never wise
Dead and alive both'.*

What follows in the best part of the remaining 643 verses spread over 17 chapters can be summarized thus:

The Supreme Spirit through Nature causes the birth of all beings. Thus, the indwelling spirit in the beings is a divisible part of the same Indivisible Supreme Spirit. The spirit lying within beings is subject in degrees to virtue, passion and delusion, the three attributes of Nature. It should remain the human endeavor to free the indwelling spirit from these nature-induced influences. This, however, is not possible for any in a single birth, and indeed, it would take the sustained effort of lot many births for that.

Thus, in the end, the soul could be tended towards that state of purity, which matches with that of the Supreme Spirit. As and when this happens, the indwelling spirit merges with the Supreme Spirit which is nothing but moksha. Understandably, from that state of unison with the Supreme, man never returns to be born again. This is about the spiritual goal of man in this world. In short, it's in the nature of the Supreme Spirit to separate the wheat from the chaff by bringing beings for dalliance in the domain of the Nature. While a pass ensures merger with the Supreme Spirit, failure keeps man ever in limbo. It is thus left for man to reach the Supreme, and the Gita shows him the way.

In the Gita lie the tools that tend one's spirit to that pristine purity, and that makes it the kitbag of moksha. Were it to postulate reaching that state through devotion alone, it would have been no more than a Hindu religious scripture, though of immense quality. In this, it is to be appreciated; the one thing that is common with the Oriental as well as the Semitic religions is the stress upon good human conduct. Nevertheless, the commonality seems to fork at some length, what with the Semitic religious precepts having their own caveat conditional. Well, Hinduism and its derivatives, Buddhism, Jainism etc., advocate virtue per se as the ideal human condition. But at the other end of the religious tunnel, Judaism, and its siblings, Christianity and Islam, obliging the faithful to uphold their dogmas, provide a religious code to human virtue.

It is thus, the Gita, without any religious dogma, deals with all aspects of human nature, and what is more, proposes corrective approaches for a peaceful, purposeful, and realized life. And this makes it the Treatise of Self- help for one and all, irrespective of his or her religious orientation and social background. Figure it out for yourself as Arjuna could do.

Now back to where it all began - the misleading image of the Gita as something that cannot be comprehended, even by the spiritually oriented, leave alone the mundane minded, without the guidance from a guru, well versed in the nuances of theology. Nothing could be farther from truth considering what Arjuna averred after having heard Krishna, (s73, ch.18),

*'Glad O Lord
Gone are doubts,
Sense I gained
With Thy words.'*

And consider this. Arjuna was an educated prince and an exemplary warrior but with no specialized knowledge or training in theology.

Yet he found no difficulty in grasping the centrality of Krishna's advice that helped dispel his doubts. After all, it could be expected that Krishna who knew his friend's limitations on that count would have fashioned his discourse suitably. And won't that bring the Gita into the orbit of average human understanding? More so, Krishna's discourse was intended to be a ready reckoner for Arjuna and not an assignment in spirituality to be attended to as homework, with reference books and all, leaving the battlefield for the day.

But then why all this spin of spiritual intricacy on such a straightforward man-to-man talk! We must appreciate that the philosophy of the Gita is the apogee of the Hindu thought process that evolved through the Vedas, the Brahmasutrās and finally the Upanishads. In a way, the Gita is the Seal of the Hindu Wisdom, for it separates the ritualistic chaff from the spiritual grain in the granary of *sanātana dharma*. For those well versed in these and other such works, it is a tempting proposition to delve into the conceptual origins of a given *śloka* of the Gita in those ancient classics. But to what avail all that, and what is sought to be proved after all! That the Gita was a plagiarized work of Vyāsa?

Well, didn't Vyāsa place the Gita in proper perspective with 'the end of the chapter averment that it is the quintessence of the Upanishads and the Brahmasutrās'. Yet this futile exercise of backward integration of the Gita with the Upanishads and others continues, giving raise to myriad interpretations to what is essentially a simple and straightforward message that Krishna intended for average human comprehension. In modern parlance, Bhagavad-Gita is like the Board Note, and it does not behove the board members to pore over the relevant files.

Though some well-meaning men and women have all along tried to straightjacket the Gita as a 'Book of Work', still it is the scriptural tag that sticks to it. Admittedly, this is not only detrimental to the Great Gita but also the misfortune of the common man who would have otherwise ventured to read it, and benefited as well. Thus, this work should be viewed as the outcome of an urge to place the Gita in its proper perspective for the utmost common good. On the degree of its success could depend how it would have served the cause of the Lord and that of man for whose benefit the Gita, the Treatise of Self-help, was fashioned, though not as scripture. It pays to recall the words of Krishna,

*'That thee heard of this wisdom
For task on hand now apply mind'.*

Now it is left for all to deliberate and decide whether the Gita *per se* was Krishna's unrivalled divine revelation, or Vyāsā's philosophical discourse nonpareil. It is noteworthy that each of the eighteen chapters of the Gita has this post script - this chapter, with so and so designation, has the bearing of the Upanishads, possesses the knowledge of the Brahmasutrās and deals with the science of its application. And the Upanishads, as we all know, were but the works of man, though of divine proportion.

Thus, if we were to concede that the Gita was a divine disclosure, then that would suggest that Krishna borrowed from the Upanishadic philosophy to fashion his discourse! Won't that mean Lord Vishnu in His *avatar* as Krishna, relied on the works of

man to formulate moksha for him! That is an absurd proposition, at any rate that is, isn't it? Well, it's a matter for man to deliberate and decide.

Last but not the least is the sectarian twist some interpolations give to the Gita to the hurt of the majority of the Hindus. Understandably, the offended sections view this secular text with suspicion, and thus keep away from it altogether, missing so much as a consequence of the same. In 'All About Interpolations' that follows, this aberration is sought to be corrected, and it is hoped that for the general good of the Hindus this aspect of the Gita would be set right for all times to come.

[All about Interpolations](#)

It was long suspected there could be interpolations in the Gita as it was being received down the ages through oral tradition. One way to scent the nature of these, if not zero in on every one of them, is to subject the text to the twin tests of sequential conformity and structural economy. Sequential conformity is all about uniformity of purpose sans digression and structural economy but represents the absence of repetitiveness. If the body Bhagavad-Gita of 700 *slokas* were to be scanned for possible fault lines on the above lines, the result would be but positive.

It must be realized that Bhagavad-Gita is the quintessence of the Brahmasutrās and the Upanishads, themselves the offshoots of the Vedic spiritual roots. Those esoteric portions that relate to spiritual knowledge apart, the Vedas contain ritualistic nuances of religious ceremonies. It is the latter that has been the source of the temporal power, which the priestly class of Brahmins came to exert on the Hindu religious mind. And these very people happened to be the principal protagonists of the Gita.

It is pertinent to note that while postulating *nishkāma karma*, the theory of disinterested action, Krishna is critical of the ritualistic aspects of and expectations from the Vedas (s42 - 45 and s53 of ch.2.). Indeed, the guiding philosophy of the Gita is all about action, pure and simple, to tend one on the path of duty without attachment. Were the message to be allowed to percolate down, wouldn't it have hurt the Brahmins, the gods' own angels on earth as the Nārāyana Upanishad proclaims, where it hurts most? Herein lies the provocation for them to dilute the philosophy, and the opportunity was theirs, being the repositories of the very message. Won't the priestly perks associated with the rituals of death do, to cite an example?

If upon its death, as Krishna avers, the soul were to transmigrate into another body, what for are the elaborate rituals for the dead! It is against this background that we might appreciate those interpolations that tend to advocate the ritualism on one hand, and the Brahmin preeminence on the other. However, the non-application of mind on part of the Hindus who vouchsafe for these aspects of the Gita is indeed saddening.

Nevertheless, such interpolative *slokas* that are at variance with the avowed purpose of the Gita would show themselves up for ready pickings. In a seemingly about turn from s42- s45 and s53 of ch.2, s9-s16 of ch.3 formulate the procedural aspects of the rituals and the divine backing they enjoy. These, and such other aberrations highlighted in the prefaces of the chapters in this work were clearly the handiwork of the priestly interests to obfuscate the impact of the anti-ritualistic thrust of the Gita.

On one hand, these interpolations were meant to impart legitimacy to their creed by advocating the same through the revered text. And on the other, these were meant to stall the threat the Gita might pose to their calling in the long run. Likewise, the sprinkling of *slokas* that seek to confirm the prominence of the priestly class or affirm their prejudices cannot be anything but interpolations. To cap it all, are the s23-s27 of ch.8 which literally mean that if a person dies when the moon is on ascent he would

attain moksha, other way round were it in descent, and such like. These *slokas* espousing superstition, simply put are out of tune.

Nevertheless, when interpreted figuratively they jell with the overall message of the Gita as if to prove that the discourse of reason cannot be polluted even by superstitious insertions. Be that as it may, there is an uncanny element in these artful interpolations in that they were inserted in the narrative in such a manner that if read casually they effectively merge with the text. More so for the religiously conditioned Hindu whose upbringing conforms to the ritualistic regimen!

Next is the aspect of structural economy. One finds similitude of a given content in many a *sloka* in the same or in a different context throughout the text. Obviously, some of them are interpolations but which were the originals and which are the imitations, may be impossible to find out for they smugly fit into the overall structure. Be that as it may, save lengthening the discourse, they do not belittle the same and fortunately not even tire the reader, thanks to the exemplary charm of Sanskrit as a language. In this context, it is relevant to note that Krishna indicated in s19, ch.10 that he would reveal a few of His Glories, but what we have is a twenty-two *sloka* block of the same, s 20-42, in the same chapter and another twenty, s15-s31 in the next. One can be certain that many of the *slokas* in them contain interpolative padding. Nevertheless, these *slokas* make an exciting reading notwithstanding the faux pas in s36 ch.10 where fraud in gambling is described as the Glory of the Supreme. However, s12 -s15 of ch 15 in similar vein are interpolations being digressions.

If after deliberating, one decides that the Gita is more a work of Vyāsā's genius than any divine revelation by Lord Krishna, then he or she might come to the conclusion that the concluding s78 of the last chapter meant to impart divinity to the discourse is an interpolation.

However, no exercise of this kind would be complete unless the four pairs of *slokas* that have the same first lines are scrutinized. With the common first line, *sreyān sva-dharmo vigunah*, s35, ch.3 and s47, ch.18, seek to perpetuate caste oriented duties by discouraging any switch over, and thus are clear interpolations. S15 and s 28 of ch.6 both open with *yunjann evam sadātmānam* and the message too remains more or less the same though contextually different. Yet it appears that the former could be an interpolation. S34, ch.9 and s65, ch.18 not only start with *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto* but also mean same thing. In the ninth chapter as discussed in the introduction therein, s32 and s33 are clear interpolations. It also need be noted that s31 has the chapter closing character about it. Now follows this repetitive chapter-concluding *sloka* after two interpolations, s32 and s33. Logically speaking s34 is but an interpolation to help a proper chapter closure by slightly altering s65, ch.18. S7, ch.16 and s30, ch.18 both start with *pravruttim cha nivruttim cha* line but are contextually different and thus remain above suspicion.

Identified here in this third edition are 110 *slokas* of deviant nature in the entire text that could be taken as interpolations with reasonable certainty. However, so as not to besmirch the general tenor of the discourse in this Treatise of Self-help, the same are interpreted in a broader perspective, but not in their narrow sense intended by the interpolators. Be that as it may, there naturally arises a hypothetical question - What if the priestly interests of yore had seen to it that the said philosophy defining *slokas* of the second chapter that are inimical to their creed were omitted altogether? In that case we would have been left with no option but to take the perplexing interpolations with a pinch of salt in the absence of any clue to negate them as such.

Chapter 1 **Arjuna's Dilemma**

In this opening chapter, the grand stage for the discourse nonpareil is set on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Gathered with their armies are the estranged cousins, the Pāndavās and the Kauravās, all set to join the battle. After reviewing the relative strengths of the opposing formations, Duryodhana, the Kaurava prince, fancies his chances. On the other hand, Arjuna, alias Pārtha, the spearhead of the Pāndava forces, is beset with moral indignation. He begins to see the futility of a fratricidal war that would result in the death of kith and kin in numbers. To Lord Krishna, who dons the role of his charioteer, a distressed Arjuna enumerates the ills that visit society in the wake of wars. Exasperated in the end, he expresses his intent to rescind from the impending war regardless.

The contrasting attitudes of the principal combatants of the Battle of Mahabharata are illustrative of the dualities inherent in human nature, exemplified by man's proclivities. Duryodhana as well as Arjuna meticulously prepared for the battle ahead, and both were bent upon fighting to the finish. But when the chips are down, while Duryodhana dreamt of victory, Arjuna suffered from qualms. It is this inherent duality of human nature that so prominently figures in Lord Krishna's discourse in the coming chapters.

In popular parlance, this chapter, comprising 47 *slokas* (verses), is known as *Arjuna Vishāda Yoga, Arjuna's Grief*. However, it is worth noting that though Arjuna's demeanor in the battlefield personifies grief, it's the dilemma of his persona that gives cause to it. Thus, there is merit in this chapter being rechristened as *Arjuna's Dilemma*. On the other hand, it is the supreme irony, or in the fitness of things, depending on how one views it, that this Treatise of Self-help should begin with Dhritarāshtra's query, whose blind love towards his son Duryodhana brought things to this pass.

One might notice the inconsistency in Duryodhana's assessment of Pāndava forces in that while in s3-s6 he considers them formidable; in s10 he dismisses them as pygmies. Maybe it has something to do with his state of mind on the eve of war.

1

Thus spoke Dhritarāshtra:
Appraise Sanjay as my sons
Gathered at the battleground
Face the sons of my sibling
Eager for the war on hand.

2

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Eyeing Pāndavs there lined up
So to assess relative strengths
Reached Duryodhan, Dron in time.

3

Find āchārya, said the Prince,
Pāndav force thus there arrayed
None other than by Drushtadyumn
Whom thou taught all tricks of war.

4

Virat 'n Drupad, so Yuyudhāna
With Bhim 'n Arjun they stand out.

5

Dhrushtaket, the one to dread
King of Kashi and Purujit
Kuntibhoj 'n Saibyā too
Chekitān, their force augment.

6

Uttamouj 'n Yudhāmanyu
Abhimanyu so Vikrānta
Draupadi's offspring not to speak
Five-star generals all no less.

7

For thy feel of our own strength
Roll-call heroes of ours O, revered.

8

Thou with Bhishm, Karn 'n Kripa
Make all four our Field Marshals,
Bhurisrav, Aswathām 'n Vikarn
Our Marshals, near Field Marshals.

9

With their lives on line for me
Adept at weaponry varied all
Abound valorous in our ranks
Past masters of group warfare.

10

Nurses Bhishmā force our vast
Lot it's Bhimā's tend their small.

11

Let's close ranks in well laid files
Cover we flanks for Bhishmā's guard.

12

Words by these moved
Grandsire Bhishm,
Warrior verily unrivalled
War cry he gave with his conch.

13

Egged by Bhishmā, geared Kauravs
War cries their rent, those high skies.

14

Krishna 'n Arjun, in their turn
From chariot of white stallions
Gave in kind they with kindred.

15

With Panchajanya, Lord Krishna
Broke sound barriers with Arjun
Who blew to hilt Devadatta
As blared Bhima, his Paundra.

16

Blew conch Yudhisthir full throated
Anantavijaya in tandem
With his siblings, Nakul 'n Sahadev,
Blew who Sughosh 'n Manipushpak.

17

King of Kashi, master archer
Sikhandi Marshal, their formidable
Sāthyaki, Drushtadyumn 'n Virāt
Warriors they all never vanquished,

18

Drupada as well Draupadi's progeny
With their hero Abhimanyu
Blew, O monarch, at one go
Conchs of theirs to deafening sound.

19

Tumult that ensued shook the ground
Bewildered Kauravs, as skies roared.

20

When came time to join lines
So it happened O my Lord
With his Gandiv in harness
Hanumān's ensign in flutter
Arjun stared at Kauravs hard
And thus spoke to Lord Krishna.

21/22

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Pray posit chariot ours upfront
So that I can have a look
At those itching for this war.

23

Time I discern those backing
Duryodhan the evil minded.

24

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Upfront Krishna took Arjun
In their chariot drawn by four.

25

Beseached Krishna then Arjun
That he behold Bhishm 'n Dron
As well all those there gathered.

26

Espied Arjun his clansmen
Grandads, uncles, brothers and all
Teachers as well friends of note.

27

At the sight of
His kinsmen,
He in distress
Spoke worried.

28

Thus spoke Arjuna:
Disturb kinsfolk here gathered
Feel I parched, it nauseates too.

29

Horrify no end prospects war
Un-grips Gandiv, looks I'm sick.

30

Looks like it's an illusion
Lord I envision bad omens all.

31

Crave I not for power or pelf
What's it worth to kill Kauravs?

32

Know not avails what empire
What sort pleasures it entails!

33

Whom all we wish well in life
Here they face us risking same.

34

Us they oppose
Dads, grand-dads
Sons, grandsons, so uncles
Brothers-in-law 'n teachers too!

35

Were the stakes be sky high like
Ruling earth 'n heaven as well
Let those Kauravs itch for fight
I won't have this war on hand.

36

Go as they on sinful path
Why earn sin by slaying them.

37

See I no gain by their end
Why then kill our kith 'n kin?

38

Blinded by greed, bent on deceit
Fail they foresee, war ruins the race.

39

Wiser for the woes of wars
Why not Lord we rescind now.

40

Die aged en masse dharma's votaries
Won't that let go youth ours haywire?

41

Sex ratio adverse that war ensues
Turns women soft on caste barriers.

42

Fallen women all go to hell
What is more their bastards rob
Posthumous rites of forebearers.

43

Liaisons low of women wanton
Set our race on ruinous course.

44

Is it not said, O My Lord
Fail who dharma are hell bound.

45

What urge killing kith and kin,
Why should we sin lusting crown?

46

Disarm I now on my own
Let them harm me if they deem.

47

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Thus O Raja
Despaired Arjun
Arms he threw
And sat distressed.

*Ends thus
Arjuna's Dilemma,
The First Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.*

Chapter 2

All about Life

.
This character defining chapter of the Gita comprising 72 *slokas*, known as *sāṅkhya yoga*, Realization through Knowledge, is regarded by many, as the peerless part of the great epic. Arjuna's dilemma, meanwhile, turns into grief, as the horrific prospect of slaying Bhishma, his revered granduncle, and Drona, his venerated guru, sinks into his consciousness. Boggled down by sentiment, Arjuna appeals to Lord Krishna for guidance. The Lord's response starting with the epoch making eleventh *sloka*,

*'Averting as knowing
Worried over trivia!
Reckon never wise
Dead and alive both,'*

is indeed the curtain raiser to the grand discourse.

It is apparent that the sentiment of causing death and destruction plagues Arjuna. Thus, Lord Krishna brings the very issue to the fore to dispel the unwarranted fear of death by stressing upon the trans-migratory nature of the indwelling spirit of all beings. Then the Lord proceeds to enlighten Arjuna about his duty to fight as a warrior besides touching upon the infamy of surrender.

To enable Arjuna overcome the predicament of attachment, Lord Krishna elaborates upon the precepts and practices of detached action, besides its spiritual and philosophical connotations. As a way of caution, the Lord finally explains to Arjuna how his sensual nature hinders man to act in true detachment. This chapter, indeed, is the spectrum supreme of the kaleidoscope of wisdom that Bhagvad Gita is.

1

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
In pity Krishna
Addressed Arjuna,
Bogged in sorrow
With tears profuse.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:
Oh, what affliction
At this juncture!

Wholly un-Aryan
Unholy as well!!

3
Mind-set impotent that unnerves
Strengthen thou for fight on hand.

4
Thus spoke Arjuna:
Adore as I, how dare I
Make Bhishma 'n Dron target?

5
Better I go with begging bowl
Than earn disgrace slaying them,
Would the scepter ever glitter
In the bloodstained hands of mine?

6
Those us oppose
We hate hurting,
What use war
Who victors are?

7
About my duty I'm in doubt
Tell me kindly what is right.

8
Beset by doubts,
Saddled by grief
Would I be joyous
Were I the king?

9
Thus spoke Sanjaya:
Bent to rescind
Arjun had no more to speak.

10
Make I privy O my Lord
Speaks as Krishna to Arjun
Stood who there in confusion.

11
Thus spoke the Lord:
Averring as knowing
Worried over trivia!
Reckon never wise
Dead and alive both.

12
You and Me
As well these,
Have had past
Future as well.

13
Wise all realize
Embodies selfsame spirit in one
From birth to death, in every birth.

14
Sensual feelings, grief 'n joy
Transient are like, heat and cold.

15
Weigh who pain 'n pleasure equal
Such are those on path freedom.

16
What's not real, it's never been
And that's true, it's ever there
That's how wise all came to see.

17
Spirit in lay us All-Pervading
Given that not to destruction,
What sense doth it make to think
That's immutable gets destroyed!

18
Perish all bodies, Spirit not therein
Know this truth, and take up arms.

19
With no slayer, nor one slain
Whoso feels that he might kill
It's in delusion that he harps.

20
Unbound being ever unborn
Ageless since it's endless too
Goes on Spirit, beyond life-span.

21
Spirit as entity hath no birth
How can thou kill what's not born!

22
Change as men fade if clothes
So doth Spirit as frames are worn.

23
Hurts no weapon the Spirit in thee
Nor scathe elements, wind, water 'n fire.

24
Unalterable 'n Eternal
Immovable but pervades all
Permanent 'n so Everlasting
Spirit thus none can ever destruct.

25
Can sans form Spirit get bound?
Get right answer thou won't burn.

26
Prima facie if thou feel
Subject Spirit is to rebirths
Why grieve over end of frame?

27
Dies as one
For like rebirth,
Why feel sad
Of what's cyclic.

28
Isn't thy lament over that
Un-manifested to start with
Gets manifested just as guest
And bids adieu in due course.

29
Seen in wonder, spoken in awe
Spirit none knows that lies in him.

30
Dies not Spirit as die beings
What for man then tends to grieve!

31
Being a warrior dharma thine
That thee fight with all thy might.

32
For martyrs of unsought wars
Ever open are heavenly gates.

33
If thee back out from duty
Imperil thou thy own dharma
And that earns thee infamy.

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