

GITA SARAH

(Commentary on the Slokas of Bhagavad Gita
selected by Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi)



- Swami Shantananda Puri

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Gita Sarah - A commentary,
by Sri Swami Shantananda Puri Maharaj,
on the slokas of Bhagavad Gita selected by
Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi

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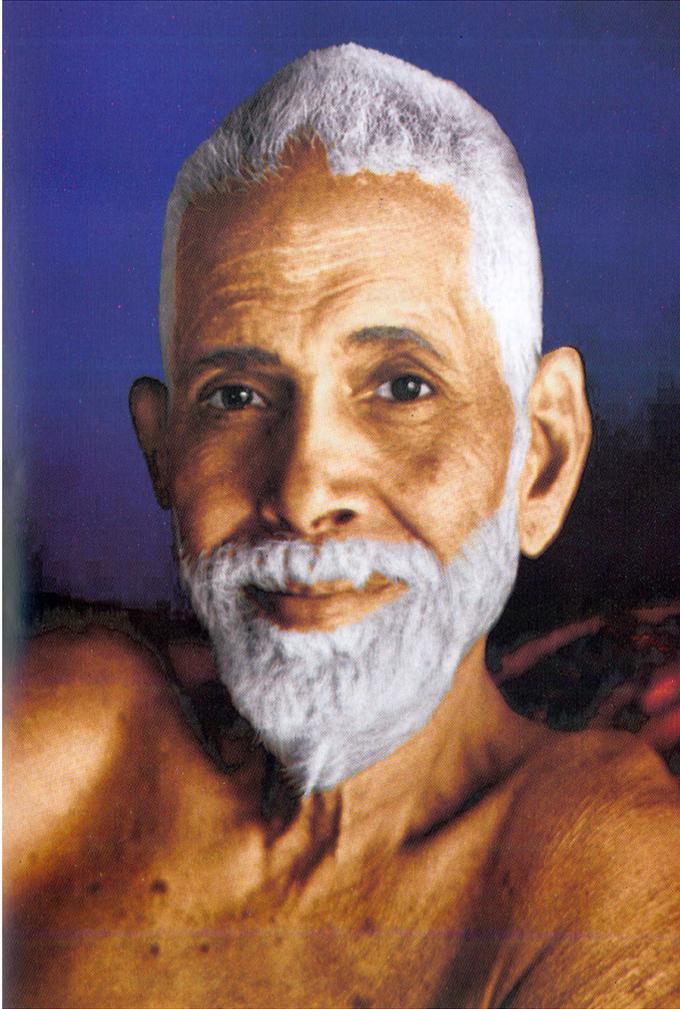
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DEDICATION

Dedicated
at the holy feet of
Bhagavan Sri Ramana,
the greatest luminary in the
firmament of spirituality
in the recent past
with respectful prostrations.

- Swami Shantananda





INTRODUCTION

Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi of Tiruvannamalai (Arunachala) fame, out of his compassion, selected 42 verses out of the 700 verses of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, as representing the quintessence of the entire Gita. It was called **Gita Sarah**. The anecdote as to how he came to select them is interesting. A devotee once requested Bhagavan Ramana to give one sloka from the entire Bhagavad Gita which would represent the essence of the entire Gita. He also explained how it would be easy to commit to memory one verse instead of the entire Gita. Bhagavan Ramana selected and gave him one verse which comes as Sloka 4 in Gita Sarah. Later on he selected all the 42 verses. He had selected them from all the chapters in the order of their importance and not sequentially. In this selection his main emphasis is on the Supreme Self and



keeping one's attention fixed on the Self. Even regarding the words Bhakti, surrender etc., Bhagavan has translated them as Jnana or ultimate knowledge. In this book, the author, while giving the meaning of each sloka, has closely followed the commentary of Adi Sankara. For instance, for the word '**Samarambhah**' translators have given the meaning as **beginning** of enterprises but as per Sankara it is '**Sarva Karamani**' – **All activities** and not beginnings. (**Yasya sarve samarambhah**. For almost all the slokas, Bhagavan Ramana's views on the topic dealt with in the slokas have been quoted citing reference to the 'Talks with Bhagavan'. Each one of the selections is a gem. Hence, besides the meaning, a fairly elaborate commentary has also been given for each sloka.

Srimad Bhagavad Gita is well known even to the school children in India. For the Vedantins (Scholars in the philosophy of nondualism) Sruti (Vedas) and Smriti are



the main authorities and the Bhagavad Gita is a deemed 'Smriti'. Bhagavad Gita has a lot of unique features which are not available in any other sacred text.

For instance, the word 'Yagna' (sacrifice) has been used since the Vedic days for the elaborate fire sacrifices where oblations were given to gods so that the performer could reap various benefits including going to heaven. In Gita, the meaning has been generously extended to include all the activities where one spent time, energy, money etc., either for the benefit of others or for pleasing the Lord; for example – Jnana Yagna where one spends his time in propagating knowledge to others, tapo yagna where one does penance to the Lord and Swadhyaya-where one studies scriptures for propagation to students later etc.

The other special feature is the categorization of penance (tapasya), faith (Sradha) etc. into three kinds according to the three Gunas. When Ravana or



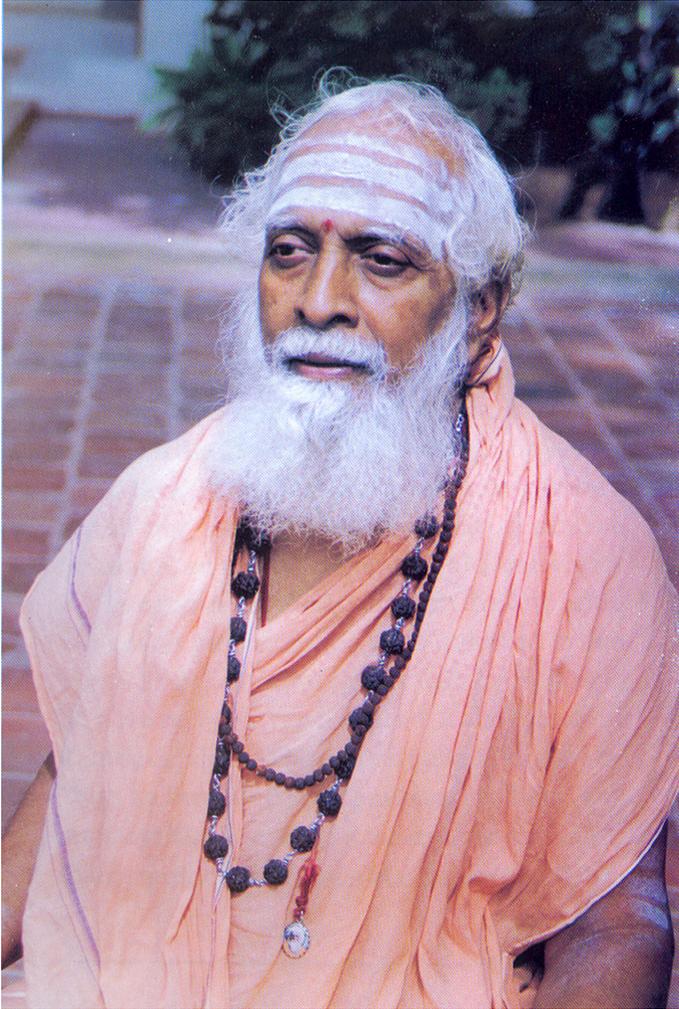
Hiranyakasipu did tapasya, it was for the destruction of the world and oppression of the virtuous etc. and hence it was based on Tamoguna. That is why they all came to a bad end. Thus Gita is a unique text which will be interesting even for the people of modern age including those of the other Western countries too. By placing before us the essence of it in 42 verses Bhagavan Ramana has done a wonderful service to the world.

I hereby acknowledge that I have profusely quoted from the book "Talks with Sri Ramana Maharshi" and I thank the Publishers, Sri Ramanasramam, gratefully, whose other publication "Gita Sarah" is the main topic of the text.

May we all be recipients of the Grace of the Supreme Lord and Bhagavan Ramana.

- Swami Shantananda







SRI GITASARAH
(BY BHAGAVAN SRI RAMANA)

Mangala Sloka

**Pārtha Sārathi Roopena
Srāvayitvā Subhām Giram |
Pārthasyārtiharo Devah
Krupāmoortih Sa patu nah ||**

At the start of any religious or spiritual text, the author normally composes a verse known as ‘mangalacharanam’ invoking the grace of a God preferably relevant to the text. The purpose is to seek the blessings of the Lord for a smooth completion of the text without encountering any obstacles. Such a sloka is also expected to indicate four factors viz. (1) Adhikari- Who



is qualified or fit to study this text (2) Vishayah
– The topic to be dealt with (3) Sambandha
- The relationship of this text with the subject-
topic (4) Prayojana [What is] The purpose
expected to be achieved by reading this text.

In this starting verse, Bhagavan has indicated that Lord Krishna was compassion embodied (Krupamoorthih) and was intent on removing the distress of Arjuna (Parthasyarthiharo). This means that all people irrespective caste, creed, age or qualifications who are in deep distress are entitled (Adhikari) for studying this text. The topic is “Instructions which lead to the auspicious end of attaining liberation (Subham giram)”.

The Sambandha is that this text is meant to expound the topic mentioned above. The purpose or prayojana is “relieving the



distressed people of their miseries and sufferings (arti) in this world forever”.

The simple meaning is :-

May the Supreme Lord who, as an embodiment of compassion appeared in the form of a charioteer to Arjuna and removed the distress of Arjuna by instructing him in words leading ultimately to Self-realisation and liberation, protect us all





(1) Sanjaya Uvacha -

**Tam tathā krupayāvishtam
asrupoornākulekshanam I**

**Vishidantamidam vākyam
uvācha Madhusudanah II**

(Chapter II - 1)

Sanjaya narrated –

*Lord Krishna spoke these following words
to Arjuna who was in distress and thus
overcome with self-pity, with eyes agitated
by and brimming with tears.*

Bhagavan Ramana has selected 42
verses representing the essence of
the seven hundred verses of Bhagavad Gita.



A doubt arises as to how this verse can be considered as important enough to merit selection and that too as the first one. The first chapter of Gita is known as Vishada yoga i.e a path to unite with the Lord through suffering and distress. Whenever a person reaches the deepest level of despair and despondency and surrenders himself unconditionally to the Supreme Power, the indwelling divinity reveals itself and guides him to the ultimate goal with words of highest wisdom. When Devahuti surrendered herself to Kapila (an incarnation of the Lord), the latter gave to the world a 'Sankhya yoga' in the form of advice to his mother. When King Parikshit surrendered himself to Suka Deva, "Srimad Bhagavatam" flowed from the lips of the latter. There is no limit to the compassion of the Lord and hence it



is that there can be no drop-outs in the spiritual field. This verse indicates that even at a time of dire despair and utter helplessness, surrender to the Lord is the only way to redemption. When once we weep before the Lord in utter humility, surrender and confess our sorrows, it opens up a path for God - realization (Yoga). “Distress often leads men to faith in God”. (Talk No. 43)

□ □ □



(2) Sri Bhagavan uvacha -

**Idam sariram Kounteya
Kshetra mityabhideeyate I
Etadyo vetti tam prāhuh
Kshetrajna iti tadvidah II**

(Chapter XIII-1)

Krishna said:-

Oh Arjuna, this body is termed as Kshetra i.e., a field. The one who knows this field is called the Kshetrajna i.e., the knower of the field, by the experts i.e., the sages.

The entire Vedanta philosophy purports to blast away the common misconception of identifying the body as the Self, as the first step. Every



human being consists of two different units with opposing characteristics—namely (1) the body and (2) the spirit – Consciousness absolute which can be roughly likened to a living, loving energy. While the body is unreal, Consciousness is the only undivided reality which pervades all the bodies. The word Sariram (body) is derived from “Srng” meaning that which is always degenerating or depreciating. This body has been likened to a field. In a field if we sow good seeds of fruit – bearing trees, we will have excellent produce of sweet fruits. On the contrary, if we sow thorns, we will get a produce of thorny plants. Similarly if we use the body to do good deeds, we will earn merits which will rebound to our good. On the contrary, if used for evil deeds, it will bring suffering and miseries. Just as a gardener is fully knowledgeable about his garden as to where and which trees or plants exist, the individual soul knows the body thoroughly and is called



a knower of the field (kshetrajna). In our houses, each of the bulbs which gives light consists of two units, namely the bulb and the electricity inside the bulb. Ultimately there is no separate electrical energy coming into the different bulbs. It is the one electricity which comes out of the generator which goes into each bulb. Thus electricity in each bulb, irrespective of the wattage- zero watt, one hundred watt etc. is not a separate individual unit but the same as the totality of electrical energy pervading all the bulbs and is in continuous contact with the generator. In the same way, the individual soul (Jivatma) in each body (bulb) is in reality an integral indivisible part of the Supreme Being (Brahman) which can be likened to the electricity from the generator. This is what is going to be explained in the next verse that the individual soul (kshetrajna) is in reality the same as the universal Supreme Being (Supreme Brahman).





(3) Kshetrajam cāpi mām
viddhi sarva kshetreshu Bhārata I

Kshetra kshetrajnayor
Jnanam yattat Jnanam matam mama II

(XIII-2)

Oh Arjuna, know that the individual knowers (kshetrajna) in all the bodies are all identical with me (the Supreme Being). It is this discriminative knowledge of both the bodies and the kshetrajnas which, according to me, is the ultimate true knowledge of the Absolute.

This body and Atman have opposing characteristics. The body is subject to mortality and the six changes (Shat Bhava) namely- “It is born, it exists (is), it is subject



to transformations, it grows, it deteriorates and dies”. Atman is immortal, immutable, and is not subject to any changes. It is like the bulb and the electricity. If we throw a stone on a bulb, the latter is broken to pieces but the electricity does not get even a scratch. When I say ‘I’ referring to the Self, it does not refer to the body and the senses. The one who sees through the eyes, hears through the ears, walks with his legs and does all these functions is not the eye, ear etc. The eye, ear etc. which are part of the body, though wide open after the death of a person do not see or hear. It is the power of Atman within, which functions through the hoes of the eyes, ears etc. There is only one energy which goes into all the bulbs (bodies) and the quantum in each bulb is called the Atman. This knowledge will enable us to remove our ignorance in falsely identifying ourselves with the body



and thus attain the true knowledge i.e. Self - realisation. “Since you are identifying yourself with the physical body, you speak of the world as being physical and the other world as spiritual. Whereas that which is, is only spiritual..... If you find that you are not this body but the spirit, you will be free from gross or subtle bodies, and then there will be no limitations.” (Talk No. 328)





4) Ahamātmā Gudākesa sarva
bhootāsaya sthitah I

Ahamādischa madhyam ca
bhootanāmanta eva ca II

(X-20)

Oh Arjuna, I am the Self indwelling in the hearts of all beings. I am thus the beginning, the middle, as also the end of all beings.

According to Bhagavan Ramana, this verse is the most important in the entire Bhagavad Gita.

In a dream, I may see several people and all of them are not only my creations (creations of my mind) but I constitute the material cause out of which all these people



have been created (just as the mud is the material cause for a mud- pot). In other words, all the dream figures are my mental imaginations. (mere thoughts.)

It is I who appear as having been born as the various people in the dream, I only run their lives in the dream as the Self in all those bodies and I also appear as having died one day. In the same way, it is the one Absolute Consciousness which appears as several beings in the world of the waking state (the beginning) , runs the lives as individuals (the middle) and appears as subject to death (the end) one day. In reality there is nothing but that one Consciousness which is the absolute truth. There is no world apart from that one Consciousness (Self).

“The Pure being is the Reality. ----- The Pure Being cannot be otherwise than



Consciousness. Otherwise you cannot say that you exist. Therefore Consciousness is the reality. When that consciousness is associated with upadhis you speak of Self consciousness, unconsciousness, ----- human consciousness, dog consciousness, tree consciousness and so on. The unfaltering common factor in all of them is Consciousness.” (Talk no 591). ‘Consciousness’ means to be aware that ‘I exist’, This awareness of our existence is consciousness.





(5) Jātaysa hi dhruvo mrtyr
dhruvam janma mrutasya ca ।

Tasmādaparihāryārthe na tvam
socitu marhasi ॥

(Gita II -27)

For the one who is born, death is certain and vice versa too, in that, for the one who dies, rebirth is inevitable. Hence (Oh Arjuna!) it does not behove you to grieve over a matter which is inevitable.

It is the law of nature that any object like the body of a human being which is born will be subject to death also. The one Consciousness which pervades all bodies, being eternal, is not subject to either birth or death. There is no use of grieving over the



death of a body which, by its very nature, is transient. One should always remember that one is not the body but the eternal Self who is the one who resides in all the bodies. There is no need to grieve over the bereavement of a body. “If one dies, it results in grief for the other who lives. The way to get rid of grief is not to live. Kill the one who grieves. Who will remain then to suffer? The ego must die. That is the only way.” (Talk No 252).

“If a man considers he is born, he cannot avoid the fear of death. Let him find out if he has been born or if the Self has any birth. He will discover that the Self always exists, that the body which is born resolves itself into thought and that the emergence of thought is the root of all mischief.” (Talk No 80)





**(6) Na jāyate mriyate vā kadāchit
nāyam bhootvā bhavitā vā na bhooyah |**

**ajo nityah sāsvatoyam purāno
na hanyate hanyamāne sarire ||**

(|| -20)

The Atman is not born nor does it ever die. It is not also that after being born, it ceases to be anymore (i.e. dies). He is unborn, eternal, everlasting and ancient. Even if the body is slain, Atman remains for ever unharmed.

Unlike the body, Atman is never subject to any changes like growth, decay, transformation, birth, death etc. It remains forever.



By saying that the Self is ancient, it only means that it never grows and though it has been there at all times it always looks new and fresh (as per Sankara). Even if we throw a stone at a bulb, it is the bulb which is shattered to pieces and no harm or no scratch ever befalls the electricity. In the olden days the example of the pot and the space inside (ghatakasa) used to be given. Even though the pot may break, the space inside remains unaffected. It is the same case with the body and the Atman (Self). Even if somebody is to massacre the body, the Self cannot be slain. It is futile to grieve over a broken container so long as the contents remain unharmed.

“Accordingly, there is neither birth nor death. Waking is birth and sleep is death. ----
-What if anyone is dead? They are free from bondage. Mourning is the chain forged by the mind to bind itself to the dead.”



“There will be no more pain if the physical outlook is given up and if the person exists as the Self. Mourning is not an index of true love. It betrays love of the object, of its shape only. That is not love. True love is shown by the certainty that the object of love is in the Self and that it can never become non – existent.” (Talk No. 203)





(7) Acchedyoyamadāhyoyam
akledyo (a) soshya eve ca, I

Nityah saravagatah
sthānurachaloyam sanātanah II

(II-24)

The Self is incapable of being pierced through or burnt by fire; nor can it be wetted (dissolved in water). It cannot also be dried up by air. It is eternal, all pervading, stable, immovable and everlasting.

Why is it that the body is subject to death? The body is constituted of the five basic elements viz; earth, water, fire, air and space. As the bone and flesh are made up of 'earth element' also, it can be cut or



pierced by a weapon like a sword. The soul has no parts or constituents and it is like energy. So it cannot be cut or pierced through. Unlike the body it cannot be burnt by fire. All the five elements cannot cause destruction to the Soul. Being eternal, it is all pervading. Being all pervading, it is very stable. Being stable, it is immovable. It has not been created anew from any prior cause and hence it is ancient or everlasting. This point has already been described in different words in the earlier verses above but this repetition is intentional in that this mistaken notion of the body being considered as the Self may be eliminated and the reality and nature of Atman alone can be realized by the worldly people.





(8) Avināsi tu tadviddhi yena
saravamidam tatam ।

Vināsa mavyayasyāsyā na
kaschit karturmarhati ॥

(II-17)

Know that alone to be imperishable which pervades the entire universe. This being indestructible, nobody is capable of causing its destruction.

The idea conveyed in the verse is exactly the same as already discussed in previous verses. This also purports to emphasize the immortality of this Atman which is the Self of all. As the Self is everywhere who else is there anywhere, who can destroy it?



Question: - Swamiji, from the previous verses it is clear that Atman (Self) never acts and is all perfection and purity. If so where does the question of purification of mind come in?

Answer:- So long as the body-mind complex looks real and so long as we are under a misapprehension that we are bound, we have to do sadhana to remove the false identification of the Self with the body. We remain ever realised (nityamukta) and due to a false conception we are convinced that we are bound souls and identify ourselves with the false body-mind complex with all its prior conditioning and its consequent impurities accumulated in the mind, like attachment, hatred, envy, anger etc. Even after taking full meals, if we go to sleep and dream that we are hungry, we have to search for a hotel in the dream and



take meals there. When once we are in an illusion that we are the body- mind- complex, we have to do sadhana to purify the mind and then wake up from the dream. We have to get rid of what we have imagined ourselves to be by further imagination of sadhana. In reality, the mind being false there is no question of purification of mind. If only we can remain in the ever present awareness that we are the Ātman who is inactive and is only a witness, it is liberation. Purification of mind is the effort done in the dream in order to wake up to reality.





(9) Naasato vidyate bhāvo
naabhavo vidyate satah ।

Ubhayorapi drshtonta -
Stvanayos tatwa darsibhihi ॥

(II-16)

The unreal (asat) has no existence and the real (sat) never ceases to exist. The relative reality of both (sat and asat) has been perceived by the seers of the ultimate truth.

This verse reads like a riddle. It is told that Lord Ganesha who was writing down when Vyasamaharshi was dictating Mahabharata, had put a condition. The condition was that he would continue writing only so long as



Vyasa was able to dictate continuously without pausing even for a minute. Vyasa had also put a counter condition that Ganesa should not proceed ahead with writing until and unless he thoroughly understood the meaning of the verse under dictation. So, Vyasa deliberately introduced some riddle- like verses in Bhagavad Gita (which was part of Mahabharata) so that by the time Ganesa paused to think of the meaning of such a verse, Vyasa was able to gather his thoughts for further dictation.

In the classical texts, the following is the example given to define an ‘Asat’ or unreal object:-

“There goes the son of a barren woman with his head adorned by flowers grown in the sky and carrying a horn of rabbit”. Here, there cannot be the son of a barren woman who is an asat but you



may see one in your dream. Similarly the flower in the sky as also the horn of a rabbit are unreal objects and cannot have an existence of their own except in a dream or imagination. Here, Asat refers to the body and also to opposite pairs (Dvandvas) like heat and cold, pleasure and pain etc. These 'Asat' objects have no existence of their own. They are all products of the mind imagined due to past conditioning. The body is thus a superimposition like the dream objects seen in a dream. If a pot is made up of clay, pot is only a transformation of clay. It is the clay which was its material cause and it only sustains the form of a pot. So a pot is called 'asat'. Pot is a name given to a transformed form of clay. The pot has no true existence as such.

By 'Sat' is meant the final truth i.e. the Atman (Self). As it is all pervasive and



ever present in all beings, there is no time or space where the Self ceases to exist. It is the seers of yore who, as result of their Self-enquiry and Self-relaisation, were able to come to their firm conclusion about the distinction between Self and non-Self which are known as Sat and Asat respectively (as per Sankara Bhashya on Gita). “Yes it is like a cinema show. ---- You are the screen. The Self has created the ego, the ego has its accretion of thoughts which are displayed as the world, the trees, plants, etc., of which you are asking. In reality, all these are nothing but the Self, the same will be found to be all, everywhere and always. Nothing but the Self exists.” (Talk No. 13). This verse has been quoted verbatim by Bhagavan Ramana in talk No 203 also.

□ □ □



(10) Yathā sarvagatam
soukshmyāt ākāsam nopalipyate |

Sarvatrāvasthitito dehe
tathaatmā nopalipyate ||

(XIII-32)

The all- pervading space (though it is in contact with varieties of worldly objects) never gets contaminated or tainted with the qualities of the objects because of its subtle nature. In the same way, the Self which pervades the entire body never gets affected.

The space is everywhere and is in close contact with all the objects of the world which are all contained in it. In spite of this, the differing nature or qualities of the



objects-say, the fragrance of flowers, the bad odour of the gutter, the smell of asafoetida etc., do not get superimposed on the space. The space continues to remain unaffected and pure. In the same way, Atman which is everywhere in all the bodies of various beings, does not absorb any of the qualities of the body or other objects around it. The body may have signs of old age, diseases with foul smell, but none of the attributes touch the Atman which has no attributes.

In this connection, one is reminded of the conversation between Jadabharata, a realized sage and a king called Rahugana, in Srimad Bhagavatam. When the king taunts the former for his lack of attention and alertness while carrying the king in a palanquin, the sage replied:-

“Leanness, stoutness, diseases, mental worries, hunger, thirst, fear, quarrel, desire, decrepitude, sleep, anger etc. - all these



affect a person who considers the body as the Self and thinks that he was born with this body. They do not apply to me who remains as the Self and has no body - sense.”

“The soul remains always uncontaminated. It is the substratum running through all these three states. Wakefulness passes off, I am: the dream state passes off, I am, the sleep state passes off, I am. They repeat themselves, and yet I am. They are like pictures moving on the screen in a cinema show. They do not affect the screen.” (Talk No 244)

□ □ □



(11) Na tad bhāsayate sooryo na
sasānko na pāvakah I

Yad gatvā na nivartante
tad dhāma paramam mama II

(XV-6)

*Neither the sun nor the moon nor the fire
can shine or illuminate that final state
(which is self effulgent). That state is my
Supreme abode wherefrom the people
who once reach it do not return to the
earth again.*

Whenever we want to see any
object we require the sunlight,
moonlight or light of fire, electricity etc. If
a torchlight enables us to see the objects
in darkness, there is no need for a second



torchlight to see the first one which reveals itself also. Atman is self effulgent. When once the state of Self-realisation is attained there is no more death or rebirth.

Although the sun and other luminaries are said to be self –luminous, yet they do not shine forth of themselves but they shine by the light of the Supreme Being.

As regards the second line of the verse Bhagavan Ramana has explained it in a unique way. He confirms that those who reach the cosmic consciousness have not escaped from the clutches of ignorance. “As long as you think that there is a ‘gati’ (movement) - as implied in the word ‘gatva’ (having gone to) - there is ‘punaravritti’ (returns) also. Again gati implies your ‘punaragamanam’ (birth). What is birth? It is birth of ego.



Once born you reach something. If you reach it you return also. Therefore, leave of this verbiage. Be as you are. See who you are and remain as Self, free from birth, going, coming and returning.” (Talk No 181). This is the ultimate significance of this verse.

The entire works of Vyasa are in ‘Samadhi bhasha’ - the language of super consciousness. It is told ‘Samadhi bhasha Vyasasya’. In other words, besides the meaning derived from a dictionary, there are other esoteric interpretations which can be obtained by meditating on each verse. Here, for instance, the sun, moon and fire have not been cited in a casual manner. As per the Vedas (Purusha Sooktam) and astrology, the sun is the source of the eye, moon the source of the mind and fire, the source of speech (vak). Hence the fact that the sun, moon and fire fail to shine in the final abode of the



Supreme Self means that the final goal is such that our gross eyes cannot see, the mind cannot conceive and words or speech cannot describe. It is beyond mind and speech. (“yato vācho nivartante aprāpya manasā saha.”) i.e., transcendental. It is self-revealing. The Supreme abode only means our real nature i.e. to remain as the Self.

Question: - Can this sloka purport to confirm a common saying that the path to God and the state of yearning for union with the Brahman are greater than the union itself.

Answer: - When once we reach the final goal of Self-realisation, there will no longer be any pyrotechnics. We cannot compare the stage of sadhana with the final goal. The Supreme goal when reached is beyond all descriptions, where it is all ‘Bliss’. A bare idea of the profound happiness of that state has been indicated



in a comparative and exponential style in Taittareeya Upanishad.

Question: - If I do sadhana with a limited purpose and if it does not fructify, I will be at a loss. What is to be done?

Answer: - The one who does sadhana for a limited selfish purpose and stops it through frustration will not lose. Whatever sadhana is done will remain credited to one's account. Such a person who approaches God motivated by materialistic desires too is deemed as a Bhakta and is equally dear to the Lord (Gita VIII- 16&17). The one who seeks boons from the Lord loves His gifts no doubt; but in due course he begins to love the Lord, the gift giver even if the receiving of gifts is stopped later. His progress will not be impeded. The Grace continues to work.

□ □ □



(12) Avyakto (a) kshara
ityuktastamāhuh paramām gatim ।

yam prāpya na nivartante
tad dhāma paramam mama ॥

(VIII-21)

*The one who is spoken of as unmanifest
as also imperishable is also called the
Supreme goal. That again is my (Lord's)
supreme abode after reaching which
people do not return to their world any
more.*

As the Supreme Being is the only
reality, He is imperishable. He is also
the Self of all beings. Supreme happiness can
be attained only by the realization of the Self
who is also the Supreme Brahman. Hence this



Supreme Being is the ultimate goal to be reached by all beings. The second line of the verse being almost the same as that of previous verse, has already been dealt with.

□ □ □



(13) **Nirmāna mohā jita sanga doshā
Adhyātma nityā vinivritta kāmāh I**

**Dvandvair vimuktāh sukha dukha sangyair
gachhantyamoodhah padamavyayam tat II**

(XV-5)

Being free from ego and delusion, having conquered the defects namely attachment (as per Sankara “sanga eva doshah”), being constantly engaged in contemplation of the Self, with their desires having ceased, being free from the effects of the complementary opposite pairs known as pleasure and pain etc., such wise men finally reach, undeluded, that imperishable goal.



Here is a beautiful narration of the steps in the sadhana leading to the realization of the Self- the ultimate.

The most important step is to leave off ego (Here the word māna denotes ego and not pride which is a by-product of ego.) and consequent delusion leading to a sense of possession as ‘my and ‘mine.

“Reality is simply the loss of the ego. Destroy the ego by seeking its identity. Because the ego is no entity, it will automatically vanish and Reality will shine forth by itself. This is the direct method.”
(Talk No. 146)

“A spurious ‘I ‘arises between the Pure Consciousness and the insentient body and imagines itself limited to the body. ----- That phantom is the ego or the mind or the individuality.” (Talk No.427)



To be attached to persons as 'my wife' 'my father' etc. or to the house or other things is one of the main obstructions to realisation. This attachment is a result of the ego i.e., identifying oneself with the body. This attachment itself is a great evil or defect (as per Sankara) and this can be conquered when once the ego is eliminated.

“If you give up 'I' and 'Mine' instead, all are given up at a stroke. The very seed of possession is lost. Thus the evil is nipped in the bud or crushed in the germ itself. Dispassion (vairagya) must be very strong to do this.” (Talk No.28)

When all attachment to all worldly objects is gone, one should be able to attach himself to the quest of realizing the Self wholly. The more we attach ourselves to the Self, the more will the desires for material objects vanish. One should



surrender oneself to the Self with all devotion. "Surrender once for all and be done with desire. So long as the doership is retained there is the desire; that is also personality. If this goes the Self is found to shine forth pure." (Talk No. 354)

When once a person is completely rid of all desires, the opposite pairs viz; like and dislike will also disappear. It is this like and dislike which cause pleasure and pain. Bhagavan Ramana has given a beautiful and unique interpretation of these words - pleasure and pain. "Pleasure consists in tuning and keeping the mind within; pain is sending it outward. There is only pleasure. Absence of pleasure is called pain. One's nature is pleasure- Bliss (Ananda)"- (Talk No.244). God only created the world (Iswara srishti) while the man created a relationship of wife, son, friend, enemy etc. (Jiva srishti) and it is the latter which



is responsible for pleasure or pain as per Bhagavan Ramana (Talk No.276). “Pains are dependent on the ego, they cannot be without the ‘I.’” (Talk No. 343). As per Bhagavan Ramana, one must suffer or enjoy them without being carried away by them. One must always try to hold on to the Self.----- “He who is indifferent to pain or pleasure can alone be happy”. (Talk No.546)

When one ceases to have any reaction to pleasure or pain and is bereft of ego, one is freed from all delusion and reaches one’s goal.

□ □ □



(14) Yah sāstra vidhi
mutsrjya vartate kāmakāratah ।

Na sa siddhimavāpnoti na
sukham na parām gatim ॥

(XVI-23)

The one who ignores the injunctions of the scriptures and acts as impelled by his own desires will neither be able to achieve his goals in life nor get happiness in this world nor will he be able to attain the higher states in heaven or liberation.

The scriptures are the very basis of spirituality and religion and the instructions therein are in the form of either injunctions as to what should be done or prohibitions as to what should not be done. It



is very essential to follow the scriptures up to the stage when their essence is realised. They are adopted to the development of the seeker and they form the steps to the higher stage and when once the goal is reached, they are no longer required.

The fact that this is one of the verses selected by Bhagavan Ramana as one of the essentials of Bhagavad Gita denotes the importance he attached to the verse.

□ □ □



(15) Samam sarveshu bhootheshu
tishtantam parameswaram I

Vinasyat svavinasyantam yah
pasyati sa pasyati II

(XIII-27)

He alone sees (in the real sense), who sees the Supreme Lord as abiding equally in all the beings who are subject to destruction while Himself remaining imperishable.

So long as we continue to see the diverse forms of beings in this world as separate from us, it is a wrong perception. It is the same one electricity from the generator which pervades all bulbs of different wattages (zero watt to thousand



watts), different colours etc. Similarly it is the one Supreme Being who is the material cause of all beings- irrespective of whether it is a worm, a reptile, a bird, an animal, a beggar or a king. The universe is not different from Him.

Just as a bulb can be broken to pieces by a stone while the electrical energy remains immune, all the objects of the universe being an illusion like in a dream are subject to destruction one day or the other. The Supreme Being which pervades all the beings is the only Reality and it remains imperishable. The one who realizes this is the one with right perception.

“There is no being who is not conscious and therefore who is not Siva. Not only is he Siva but also all else of which he is aware or not aware. Yet he thinks in sheer ignorance that he sees the universe in diverse forms. But if he sees his Self he is not aware of his separateness from the universe. ----- Siva is



seen as the universe. But the seer does not see the background itself. Think of the man who sees only the cloth and not the cotton of which it is made ----- . Or again the man who sees the letters which he reads but not the paper on which they are written. The objects are Consciousness and forms. But the ordinary person sees the objects in the universe but not Siva in these forms. Siva is the Being assuming these forms and the Consciousness seeing them. That is to say, Siva is the background underlying both the subject and the object.” (Talk No. 450) Whether it is a beggar or a king or a worm, the Supreme Divinity is full and equal in all of them. The full divinity which is inside is not manifesting in its fullness outside because of the resistance or obstacles like attachment, enmity etc. When once these obstacles are removed through sadhana, everyone can become a saint and get liberated here and now.





(16) Bhaktyā tvananyayā 'sakyā
ahamevamvidho(A)rjuna ।

Jnātum drashtum ca tatvena
praveshtum ca parantapa ॥

(XI-54)

*Oh Arjuna, the tormentor of enemies, I
(the Supreme Lord) can be seen in this
form, my real nature known and also
entered into in essence only through one-
pointed devotion.*

The ultimate goal of a man is to get Moksha. Moksha means to get freed from all limitations of time, space etc. and to realize one's oneness with the Supreme Being. For this purpose, one has to know the nature of the Reality through the



knowledge of scriptures. All this is possible only through single pointed devotion and love towards the Supreme Lord. Through such devotion only, one would be enabled to see such Cosmic Form (Visva roopa) as was revealed to Arjuna. When Bhagavan Ramana was asked as to what was Visva Roopa, the latter's reply was –"It is to see the world as the Self or God. In the Bhagavad Gita God is said to be various things and beings and also the whole universe. How to realize it or see if so? Can one see one's Self? Though not seen, can the Self be denied?". (Talk No. 436). As per Bhagavan Ramana, Bhakti and Jnana are not two different things. "Devotion is Jnana. The mind losing itself in Siva's feet is Devotion. Ignorance lost!" (Talk No. 428). Bhagavan also defines Bhakti in another way as absolute surrender



to the Supreme Being. “Leave everything entirely to Him. His is the burden. You have no longer any cares. All your cares are His. Such is surrender. This is Bhakti.” (Talk No. 450)

When Lord Krishna says that Bhakti leads one to enter into Him i.e., to Mukti or Liberation (as per Sankara), its real significance is – “Bhakti is not different from mukti. Bhakti is being as the Self (Swaroopa). One is always that. He realizes it by the means he adopts. What is Bhakti? To think of God. That means only one thought prevails to the exclusion of all other thoughts. That thought is of God which is the Self or it is the Self surrendered unto God. ----- The absence of thought is Bhakti. “It is also mukti.” (Talk No. 650)

□ □ □



(17) Sattvānurupā sarvasya sraddhā
bhavati Bhārata ।

Sradhāmaya(a)yam purusho yo
yacchraddhah sa eva saha ॥

(XVII-3)

Oh Arjuna, the faith of all men is generated in abundance in accordance with the disposition of the conditioned mind. Faith constitutes a man. Verily a man's character is the nature of his faith.

Faith in rituals and worship prescribed in the scriptures is generated in a person according to his nature formed since his birth in conformity with the latent tendencies (vasanas). For instance, some persons have faith in doing



worship of Gods like Siva, Divine Mother etc., while some believe in worshipping certain demigods of higher worlds, like yakshas and demons. Some others worship some ghosts, ghouls and spirits etc. These differences are due to the conditioning of the mind from previous births. In his inimitable way, Bhagavan Ramana has told – “Sradha, Grace, Light, Spirit are all synonymous with the Self.” (Talk No. 381)





**(18) Sraddhāvān labhate Jnānam
tatparah samyatendriyah I**

**Jnānam labdhva parām sāntim
achirenādhigacchati II**

(IV -39)

The one who is full of faith, has all his senses controlled and is exclusively engaged in spiritual practices (sadhanas) attains the knowledge. Having thus attained the knowledge of the final truth, he is very soon endowed with Supreme peace (known also as liberation).

When once a person is full of faith and has God or liberation as his goal, he becomes single-minded in



his devotion so that all his senses refuse to be drawn towards worldly objects. He is fully devoted to his spiritual sadhana. Striving thus exclusively to attain the Supreme Being he succeeds in attaining knowledge.

“But this knowledge which leads to Realisation differs from the ordinary one of the relation of subject and object. It is absolute knowledge.” (Talk No. 68)

The entire knowledge, in reality, is that there is no individuality and that there is only one total Reality. In other words it is a false ego where one identifies oneself with the body. When once the false ego is eradicated by sadhana, the Reality alone remains as the Self. This realization is the absolute peace or liberation.

□ □ □



(19) Teshām satatayuktānām
bhajatām preetipurvakam I

Dadāmi buddhiyogam tam
yena mām upayānti te II

(X-10)

On those persons who are ceaselessly united with me (in constant contemplation) and who worship me with love, I (as the Supreme Being) confer that Buddhi yoga i.e. the right perception of the nature of the ultimate Reality through which they reach me – the Self or the Supreme Lord.

Satata Smaranam” is constant remembrance of God at all times while waking, riding in a car,



eating or talking etc. One should ceaselessly keep his attention on the Self or God to the exclusion of all worldly thoughts. This is the key to liberation. Such a remembrance should not be of a routine nature but be full of love. When once we consider the Supreme Lord as our own very self, love is a natural consequence as we can never love anything else with such intensity as our own Selves. The Brihad Aranykopenishad says – “All the objects of the world like wife, son etc. become dear to us not because of their glory but for the sake of our own Self which is dear to us.”

Buddhi yoga has nothing to do with intellect. The Atman has already been declared as beyond the grasp of the intellect (Buddhi) (Gita III-42&43). Sankara has interpreted it as right perception of Reality.

□ □ □



(20) Teshā mevānukampārtham
ahamajnānājam tamah I

Nāsayāmyātma bhāvastho
jnānadeepena bhāsvatā II

(X - 11)

Out of compassion for such people as mentioned in the previous verse, remaining as I am in the sanctuary of their hearts, I destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the effulgent lamp of knowledge.

The Grace of the Lord is incited by constant sadhana, by meditation etc. This Grace is also called as compassion. However much of sadhana we may do, it is the Grace of the Lord



which finally leads us to liberation. “Divine Grace is essential for Realisation. It leads one to God- realisation. But such Grace is vouchsafed only to him who is a true devotee or yogin, who has striven hard ceaselessly on his path towards freedom.”- (Talk No. 29)

God is stated as seated in the heart for the sake of ignorant people to understand. “Everything is the Self. There is nothing but that. So the Heart must be said to be the entire body of ourselves ----- . But to help the practiser (abhyasi) we have to indicate a definite part of the universe, or the body. So the Heart is pointed out as the seat of the Self. But in truth we are everywhere, we are all that is, and there is nothing else.” (Talk No 29.)

□ □ □



(21) Jnānena tu tadajnānam yeshām
nāsita mātmanah I

Teshā mādityavat jnānam
prakāsayati tatparam II

(V-16)

In respect of those whose ignorance has been destroyed by the discriminative knowledge relating to the Self, that knowledge reveals the ultimate truth about the Supreme like the shining sun revealing all the objects.

Similarly, the mind thinks thoughts and sees objects owing to an underlying ignorance (avidya). The Self is pure knowledge, pure light where there is no duality. Duality implies ignorance.



The knowledge of the Self is beyond relative knowledge and ignorance. -----”
(Talk No. 636)

“I am the body thought is ignorance; that the body is not apart from Self is knowledge. That is the difference between knowledge and ignorance” (Talk No 396.)

To consider the body as Self is ignorance. This identification of the Self with the body is called ego. A person cultivates first the discriminative knowledge that the body and the world (of which the body is a part) are non- self and perishable while the Self alone is the reality and is imperishable. “The Self remains ever even after the body perishes. The discontent is due to the wrong identity of the Eternal Self with the perishable body. The body is a necessary adjunct of the ego. If the ego is killed the eternal Self is revealed in all its glory.” (Talk No. 396.)

□ □ □



(22) Indriyāni Parānyāhuh
indriyebhya param manah I

Manasastu parā buddhir yo
buddeh paratastu sah II

(III -42)

The five senses of perception are said to be superior to the gross body; but greater than the senses is the mind. Greater than the mind is the intellect. The one who is greater than the intellect is He, the Self.

The five senses of perception viz; eye, ear, nose, tongue (taste) and skin, being subtler than the gross body are far superior to the latter. The body is limited and is external. The senses are more pervasive in their scope and internal too. The mind is



like a clerk in an office who can only put up the papers to his officer with his comments as to whether the proposals in the paper are acceptable or not. The mind cognizes and resolves either to do or not to do a thing but the officer who takes the final decision on the paper is the Buddhi or intellect. Hence the mind is superior to the senses and the intellect is superior to the mind. The one who is the indweller and more internal than all the objects seen including the intellect and who is the seer of the intellect is the Supreme Self and He is greater than the intellect. “So intellect is a tool of the Self. The Self uses the intellect for measuring variety. Intellect is not the Self nor apart from the Self. The Self alone is eternal. Intellect is only a phenomenon.”- (Talk No .112.) When Bhagavan speaks of the intellect as a tool of the Self, he has elsewhere explained “Why is intellect developed. It has a purpose. The purpose is that it should show the way to realise the Self. It must be part of that use.” (Talk No. 644)





(23) Evam buddheh param buddhvā
samstabhyātmānamātmanā I

Jahi satrum mahābaho
kamaroopam durasadam II

(III -43)

Oh Arjuna, thus knowing that the Supreme Self is greater than the intellect, one should steady and control oneself by a refined mind. One should thus destroy the enemy in the form of desire which is invincible.

A normal person, due to his prior conditioning feels a want from time to time and it creates a desire to do something or to have something by some action. Thus desire leads to action



and while doing the action, any obstacles create anger or enmity with others. Thus the action may end in merit (punya) or sin (papa) depending on the nature of the activities. This forms the prarabdha (effect of past actions), for the next birth and in order to experience the happiness due to merits and sorrows and sufferings due to sins one has to take birth and this cycle is repeated again and again. Hence this desire is our chief enemy who is so mighty that it is not easy to conquer it. This enemy has to be destroyed if we want to have peace and absolute happiness. By deconditioning the mind of all its latent tendencies leading to desires and making it one- pointed, one should strive to put oneself in a Samadhi state (as per Sankara's commentary), where one remains as his real nature.



“Desire or lust, anger etc., give you pain. Why? Because of the I-conceit; this I-conceit is from ignorance ----- . The ego not arising, the whole chain of mishaps disappears. Therefore prevent the rise of the ego. This can be done by remaining in your own real nature; then lust, anger etc. are conquered.”
(Talk No. 575)

“If one goes on wanting, one’s wants cannot be fulfilled. Whereas if one remains desireless anything will be forthcoming. ----- The mind, remaining still, is Samadhi, no matter whether the world is perceived or not.” (Talk No. 582)

□ □ □



(24) Yathaidhāmsi samiddhognir
bhasmasāt kuruterjuna ।

Jnānāgnih sarva karmāni
bhasmasāt kurute tathā ॥

(IV -37)

Oh Arjuna, just as a blazing fire reduces the fuel to ashes, in the same way, the fire of knowledge reduces all actions to ashes. (i.e. renders them ineffective)

The past latent tendencies incite desires in our mind. It results in action in order to fulfill the desire. The actions may be good or bad as one may resort to crooked and immoral means in order to realise his desire. Good actions like charity result in punya or



merit and in order to enjoy the results of merit one has to take birth again with all its attendant miseries and sufferings. Same is the case with Papa or sin resulting from bad deeds. Thus all actions result in future births and consequent sufferings. The root cause viz. desires are due to the 'I - am- the body' idea (ego). When once a person realizes the Self and dispels once for all his false identification with the body, it is called the absolute knowledge. Thus on attaining the knowledge, all the actions are rendered sterile so that they will be unable to result in future births.

As per Bhagavan Ramaṇa, “Karma is posited as past karma etc.. Prarabdha, agami and sanchita. There must be kartrtva (doer-ship) and karta (doer) for it. Karma (action) cannot be for the body because it is insentient. It is only so long as



dehatma buddhi (I-am-the-body idea) lasts. After transcending dehatma buddhi one becomes a jnani ----- . So a jnani has no karma. That is his experience. -----”

The scriptures say that jnana is the fire which burns away all the karma (sarvakarmani). Sarva (all) is interpreted in two ways : (1) to include prarabdha and (2) to exclude it. In the first way; if a man with three wives dies, it is asked “can two of them be called widows and the third not?” All are widows. So it is with prarabdha, and again sanchita. When there is no karma, none of them can hold out any longer. -----.

“From the jnani’s point of view there is only the Self which manifests in such variety. There is no body or karma apart from the Self, so that the actions do not affect him.” (Talk No. 383)

□ □ □



(25)Yasya sarve samārambhāh kāma
sankalpa varjitāh I

Jnānāgnidagdha karmānām tamāhuh
panditam budhāh II

(IV - 19)

*The one, all actions of whom are started
without being motivated by desire or will
and whose actions have been burnt up
in the fire of knowledge is called a sage
by the wise.*

As told in the previous verse, a jnani's past actions are rendered sterile due to the fire of knowledge. Still he may perform some actions, being inspired by the Divinity, either for the sake of rendering help to the world at large or for



just keeping himself alive. All such actions not having been motivated by personal desires or a will to achieve something, will be rendered ineffective and will not result in further birth. Such actions will be deemed as inaction (akarma). The knowers of Brahman (Self-realised) call such persons as mentioned above as men of wisdom.

“Work performed with attachment is a shackle, whereas work performed with detachment does not affect the doer. He is, even while working, in solitude.”
(Talk No. 20)

□ □ □



(26) Kāma krodha viyuktānām
yatinām yata chetasām I

Abhito brahma nirvānam
vartate viditātmanām II

(V-26)

In respect of those monks who are free from lust and anger, and having subdued their mind have realised their Self, the ultimate beatitude called liberation is a fait accompli from all sides.

Lust and anger are two greatest stumbling blocks against liberation. Anger is the gross manifestation of lust and desire. As the source of lust and anger is in the mind, it is only the monks who have subdued their mind



by severe spiritual practice (sadhana), who will be able to control their passion and anger. When once it is done, it will be easy for them to attain liberation while alive not to speak of freedom after death. When Bhagavan Ramana was asked to confirm whether “we must rid ourselves of lust (Kama), anger (krodha) etc”, his reply was “Give up thoughts. You need not give up anything else. You must be there to see anything. It is the Self. Self is ever-conscious.” (Talk No. 41)

“Kama and Krodha must vanish before Self-realization.” (Talk No. 491)

□ □ □



**(27) Sanaih Sanai rupraramed
budhyā dhriti grheetayā I**

**Atma-samstham manah krtvā na
kinchidapi cintayet II**

(VI-25)

One should bring the mind to stand-still gradually with a determined will. Thus making the mind inhere in the Self, one should not think of anything else.

Unless one is able to eliminate all thoughts of the world (including one's body) it will not be possible to concentrate on the Self or remain as the Self. This is a very slow process as the mind which is only a bundle of thoughts can be controlled after



cultivating dispassion (vairagya) and a lot of practice (abhyasa). It requires a lot of patience and strong will power in order to overcome an overwhelming sense of frustration. When once all thoughts die permanently, never to rise up again, the mind automatically remains established in Self (Atmasamstham).

“Why do you wish to meditate at all? Because you wish to do so, you are told ‘Atma samstham manah krtva’ (fixing the mind in the Self); why do you not remain as you are without meditating? What is that manah (mind)? When all thoughts are eliminated it becomes Atma Samstha (fixed in the Self).”

“But when thoughts cross the mind and an effort is made to eliminate them the effort is usually called meditation. Atmanishtha is your real nature. Remain as you are. This is the aim.” (Talk No .294)

□ □ □



**(28) Yatō yatō nischarati
manas chanchala masthiram ||**

**Tatastato niyamyaitad
Atmanyeva vasam nayet ||**

(VI - 26)

*The mind, which by nature is wavering
and unsteady should again and again be
drawn back from whichever objects
towards which it runs and should be
brought under the control of the Self
alone.*

On account of the conditioning of the
mind in the past several births
to like or dislike of the various objects of
the world and the consequent attraction
or revulsion towards them, generating



attachment, enmity, hatred, jealousy etc. the mind is always flitting from one object to another and is thus by nature, wavering and unsteady. As many times as the mind may run towards the worldly objects, it should be brought back again and again and the attention turned towards the Self. This repeated withdrawal is to be done by making the mind understand as to what the ultimate reality is and how all the objects are mere appearances and also by cultivating the attitude of dispassion (vairagya) towards those objects.

“In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that it is the nature of the mind to wander. One must bring one’s thoughts to bear on God. By long practice the mind is controlled and made steady.

The wavering of the mind is a weakness arising from the dissipation



of its energy in the shape of thoughts. When one makes the mind stick to one thought the energy is conserved and the mind becomes stronger.” (Talk No. 91)

“The Gita method is only one for it. Whenever mind stays away, bring it back to bear on meditation.” (Talk No. 287)

“Abhaysa and Vairagya are necessary. Vairagya is the absence of diffused thoughts; abhyasa is concentration on one thought only. The one is the positive and the other the negative aspect of meditation.” (Talk No. 287)

The mind can be steadied only by strengthening it. The mind grows strong by satsanga (the company of the wise) (Based on talk No. 377)

□ □ □



(29) Yatendriya mano buddih
munir moksha parāyanah |

Vigatechcha bhaya krodho
yah sadā mukta eva sah ||

(V - 28)

The contemplative sage who has controlled his senses, mind and intellect; is heart and soul engaged in striving for liberation and who is bereft of desires, fear and anger, stands ever liberated.

Here Krishna has enumerated certain basic sadhanas which are essential for getting liberation (Moksha). Controlling all the senses and mind is a must. They are the main link with the objects of the external world. This is



necessary for developing single minded devotion towards the goal namely liberation. Unless a person always keeps his goal in front of his mind and develops a volcanic longing to realize his goal, he cannot get success in his efforts. It is then easy for him to get rid of desires, fear and anger. One cannot think of getting anywhere near Moksha till he leaves off all his desires for attaining any object in this world as also his anger. Fear arises out of duality. Only when one is convinced that there is nothing else other than the Self, all fears will go.

“Desire or lust, anger etc., give you pain. Why? Because of the I-conceit; this I-conceit is from ignorance. ----- and this again from ‘I- am –the-body, idea. The last can be only after the rise of the ego. The ego not arising, the whole chain of mishaps disappear. Therefore prevent



the rise of the ego. This can be done by remaining in your own real nature, then lust, anger etc. are conquered.” (Talk No. 575)

“What is the course of the passions? Desire to be happy or enjoy pleasure. Why does the desire for happiness arise? Because your nature is happiness itself and it is natural you come into your own. This happiness is not found anywhere besides the Self. Do not look for it elsewhere. But seek the Self and abide therein.” (Talk No 523)

Regarding getting rid of desires, “You know that you are not the mind. The desires are in the mind. Such knowledge helps one to control them.” (Talk No. 495)

“Every time you attempt satisfaction of a desire, the knowledge comes that it is better to desist. Repeated reminders of this kind will in due course weaken the desires.” (Talk No. 495)





(30) Sarva bhootastha mātmanam
sarvabhootāni cātmani ।

Ikshate yoga yuktātmā
sarvatra samadarsanah ॥

(VI-29)

*The one whose mind is controlled and has
an equal vision everywhere sees his own
Self as abiding in all beings and all beings
in his Self.*

The one whose mind is subdued
looks upon all beings whether
men, animals, birds or worms as the forms
of Brahman alone. As a result he
understands that there is nothing apart
from his own Self and thus sees his own



Self as abiding in all the beings. As the entire world is an imaginary appearance or the creation of one Self, he sees all the beings as contained in his own Self.

“This contains the whole truth. Even this is *oupacharika* (incidental). There is in fact nothing but the Atman. The world is only a projection of the mind. The mind originates from the Atman. So Atman alone is the one Being.” - Ramana’s talks.

□ □ □



(31)Ananyās chintayanto mām,
ye janāh paryupāsate ।

Teshām nityābhiyuktānām
yogakshemam vahāmyaham ॥

(IX-22)

In respect of those devotees who worship me and think of me single – mindedly, for those persons who are constantly united with me, I personally fulfil their personal needs and welfare.

Even many monks, not to speak of devout householders, are anxious and bothered about their future security. They are worried about their old age as to who would feed them and look after them when they become



feeble or disabled. The householders argue that if they were to be constantly engaged in the worship of the Lord, how they could discharge their responsibilities towards their children, wife, parents etc. This is a guaranteed assurance from Lord Krishna that in respect of such devotees, God Himself will look after their entire welfare at home and personally see that all their personal needs are fulfilled.

There is a story to illustrate this aspect. Once a devotee in dire poverty had nothing to eat in his house and had to fast perforce for four days consecutively along with all his family members. Unable to bear the taunts of his wife, he took a charcoal piece and cut out the portion 'Yogakhemam vahamyaham (I attend to all his needs and welfare) in his palm leaf manuscript copy of Bhagavad Gita. While he went away to take bath in the



river, a lovely young boy brought to the house of the devotee in a push cart all the provisions, needed for preparing even a feast, which would last for an entire year and delivered them to the wife of the devotee saying that they were sent by his master, the lady's husband. That boy had a long blackish gash on his forehead, wherefrom blood was oozing out. On being enquired by the lady, he replied that this was due to the punishment inflicted by his master for his tardiness. On the return of her husband she took him to task for his unkind treatment of such a lovely boy. The devotee was shocked and stoutly denied having sent any provisions through a boy. He was overwhelmed with grief when he understood that it was Lord Krishna himself who had personally come as a boy to prove the truth of his guarantee in Bhagavad Gita



and that the wound must have been caused by his merciless cutting of the words by a charcoal piece. The author of this commentary had several similar personal experiences in his life as a wandering monk and they are described by him in his book (Fragrant flowers) as also in his biography by Dr. S.Rohini.

This verse indirectly refers to the ultimate sadhana namely complete surrender to the Lord. If we completely surrender ourselves including our mind solely to God, all our requirements to carry on our life in this world will be provided by the Divinity.

□ □ □



**(32) Teshām Jnāni nityyuktah Eka
bhaktir visishyate I**

**Priyo hi Jnānino (a) tyartham aham
sa ca mama priyah II**

(VII - 17)

Out of the four categories of devotees (Bhaktas), the man of knowledge (Jnani) who is ever united with me and has an exclusive single-pointed devotion towards me the Supreme Lord is highly distinguished. I (Supreme Lord) am extremely dear to the Jnani and he is also extremely dear to me.

The Lord had categorized his Bhkatas (devotees) into four categories –
“The afflicted (tired of the miseries of the



world), the person with a mind of enquiry (scientist) who wants to know the ultimate truth, the seeker after worldly possessions (wealth, promotion etc.) and lastly a man of knowledge.” Then a question may arise as to who among them can be considered as the most beloved of the Lord. So far as the Jnani is concerned, as he remains as the Supreme Self (Paramatman), naturally he is at the top.

“There is no jnana as it is commonly understood. The ordinary ideas of Jnana and Ajnana are only relative and false. They are not real and therefore not abiding. The true state is the non-dual self. It is eternal and abides whether one is aware or not.” (Talk No 499)

In other words, Jnani’s name is included in the category of Bhaktas to make the common ignorant people understand. Otherwise Jnani is himself the Absolute Self



or Supreme Being and it is not correct to categorise him as a Bhakta. Being the Absolute Self, the question of his being dear to the Self also does not arise. The language of this verse is the language of ignorance to enable a lay man to understand.





(33) Bahoonām janmanāmante
jnānavān mām prapadyate ।

Vāsudevah saravamiti sa
mahātma sudurlabhah ॥

(VII - 19)

*At the end of many a birth, only the man
of knowledge is enabled to reach me by
realizing that all this is God (Vasudeva).
Such a great soul is very rare indeed.*

This verse is in praise of a Jnani (man of knowledge). It is after doing sadhana (spiritual practice) for innumerable births and accumulating the right conditioning that a seeker is able to get the mature knowledge that no object in this world is apart from the



Self. He perceives directly that all the objects are nothing but the Supreme Self called 'Vasudeva'. Such a person is extremely rare indeed as nobody can equal such a Jnani or excel him. In other words the Jnani remains as the very Self and there is no world apart from the Self.

“A Jnani does not find anything different or separate from the Self. All are in the Self. It is wrong to imagine that there is the world, that there is a body in it and you dwell in the body. If the Truth is known, the universe and what is beyond it will be found to be only in the Self.” (Talk No. 106)

“There is no being who is not conscious and therefore who is not Siva. Not only is he Siva but also all else of which he is aware or not aware. But if he sees his Self he is not aware of his separateness from the universe; in fact his individuality and the other entities



vanish although they persist in all their forms. Siva is seen as the Universe.” (Talk No. 450.) Here Bhagavan Ramana has replaced the word ‘Vasudeva’ by ‘Siva’. It is all one and the same thing.

There is an interesting episode that happened in the presence of Bhagavan Ramana. Krishna Prem Maharaj (Ronald Nixon) asked Bhagavan as to his opinion about the afore -discussed verse “Vāsudevah sarvamiti -----”. Bhagavan Ramana quipped back: - “Yes it is a very good attitude. But if everybody is Vāsudeva then it also means that the seeker should be also Vāsudevah. When once the seeker himself is Vāsudeva (the Absolute Self) there is nothing further required or remains to be achieved.”

□ □ □



(34) Prajahāti yadā Kāmān sarvān
pārtha manogatān |

Ātmanyevātmanā tushtah
sthithapṛjanas tadochyathe ||

(II-55)

“Oh Arjuna, when once a person thoroughly renounces all his desires which are based in the mind and is content in his own Self through the joy of the Self, he is called as one steadfast in his mind.”

Other religions including Buddhism are unanimous in denouncing desires as the prime factor responsible for our sufferings and unhappiness. Desire includes from wanting a ball



pen to lust, passion etc. and also a craving for wealth, name and fame. Ashtavakra denounces the desire for money and sex in no uncertain terms.

So one has to renounce all desires by resorting to satsang, prayers, japa etc. and also by invoking Guru's grace. The desires keep a person in a restless condition and the mind remains constantly agitated.

“The more the desires are fulfilled, the deeper grows the samskara. They must become weaker before they cease to assert themselves.” (Talk No. 495.)
“Therefore prevent the rise of the ego. This can be done by remaining in your own real nature, then lust, anger etc. are conquered.” (Talk No. 575)

If desires are our main enemies, where are they coming from? Is it from outside or are they imbedded in our



body-mind complex. All desires are thoughts. Hence they reside in the mind. They are products of our imagination. They are not real at all. When once we recognize that the desires are all imaginations, we should be able to renounce them as we are the Self. The Self has nothing to do with desires. The Kathopanishad goes to the extent of saying that when once a mortal gets rid of his desires he becomes immortal and attains the Brahman (the Supreme Being) here and now. When all desires for worldly objects go away, one remains always content in oneself without depending on any external objects for one's satisfaction.





(35) Vihāya Kāmān yah sarvān
pumānscharati nisprīhah ।

Nirmamo nirahamkārah sa
sāntimadhigachchati ॥

(॥-7१)

The one, who having abandoned all desires moves about without any attachment, without any ego (I) and without any sense of possession (mine, mine-attitude) is bestowed with the ultimate peace (which is known as liberation)

This verse can be called as a one sentence moksha capsule. The necessity for leaving off all desires can never be over-emphasised. What is



the basic cause for all the desires? It is the ignorance of who we are and wrongly considering the body as ours. As we begin to be attached to the body as 'I', anything or anyone connected with the body viz; the family members, property, other possessions become objects of our love and attachment. This attitude gives rise to desires either to possess and enjoy more of them or a desire to keep those possessions safe. Any ailment to a person's son or wife or a loss to the property keeps his mind agitated.

“How does the desire arise? Because the present state is unbearable. Why? Because it is not your true nature. Had it been your real nature no desire would disturb you. How does the present state differ from your real nature? You are spirit in truth. However that spirit is wrongly identifying itself with the gross body. The



body has been projected by the mind; the mind itself has originated from the spirit. If the wrong identification ceases, there will be peace and permanent untellable bliss.” (Talk No. 396)

This Gita verse is an echo of a similar idea expressed in Kathopanishad (II-6-14)

**Yadā sarve pramuchyante kama
yasya hr̥di sthitah |**

**Atha marthyo (a) mr̥to bhavatyatra
brahma samasnute ||**

The meaning is: - When once all desires, which have their base in the heart, leave a person, such a mortal becomes immortal and attains the Supreme Self (Brahman) here and now.

□ □ □



**(36) Yasmān nodvijate loko
lokān nodvijate ca yah I**

**Harshāmarsha bhayodvegair mukto
yah sa ca me priyah II**

(XII - 15)

The one from whom the world does not get disturbed, the one who does not get disturbed by the world and the one who has rid himself of exultation, intolerance, fright and agitation, is very dear to me (the Supreme Lord).

Normally, especially in the modern days, our ego is so high that we are very reactive or sensitive about what others say about us or their conduct towards us. We imagine



insult where there is none. We get perturbed by others' indifference towards us also. But for a seeker in the spiritual path no words, no actions and no conduct of others should cause even a ripple of perturbation. Similarly an evolved person will not utter any words, conduct himself or do any act which could cause perturbation or provocation to others. For instance when once Bhagavan Ramana was to leave the room where he was sitting with various devotees in the Ashram he found the exit door blocked by a number of people sitting there. When the attendant was about to ask all of them to move out and give way for Bhagavan to leave, Bhagavan bade him to be quiet and not to distract them. He himself walked out through another door in the room even though it was a circuitous way and he had to walk more. Similarly even when



some of the questioners were aggressive in their attitude and put questions in a rude manner, Bhagavan never lost his equanimity and equipoise. When once a person virtually lacks any reaction to others' being indifferent or aggressive towards him or when they conduct themselves in an insulting manner and similarly is very careful not to cause any offence or any mental disturbance to anybody in the world, such a person who neither gets disturbed by anybody nor causes mental disturbance to others can be considered as having reached the end of the spiritual journey.





(37) Mānāpamānayos tulyah
tulyo mitrāripakshayoh ।

Sarvārambha parityāgi
gunātītah sa uchyate ॥

(XIV-25)

The one who is alike to honour and dishonor, alike to friends and foes and has left off all actions (except those needed for keeping the body alive) is called as one who has transcended all the three modes (Gunas).

As a Jivanmukta remains as the absolute Self and as nothing else exists apart from his Self, the question of anybody else honouring him or dishonouring him and anybody else being



a friend or enemy does not arise. There is no activity to be done by him as there is nothing to be achieved. Adi Sanakra has interpreted the term “Samarambha” as all worldly activities as also those meant for attaining heaven (swarga). The word ‘parityāgi’ means the one who does total renunciation of all activities including the form and not ‘doer - ship alone.

The word Gunātītā (one who has transcended three gunas) and ‘Jivanmukta’ (liberated while living) are both synonymous.

The final verses of Chapter XIV of “Bhagavad Gita” speak of Gunātīta (one who has transcended Gunas). That is the final stage.

The earlier stages are asuddha satva (impure being), misra satva (mixed being) and suddha satva (pure being).



Of this, the impure being is when overpowered by rajas and tamas, the mixed being is that state in which the being – satva – asserts itself spasmodically, the suddha satva overpowers rajas and tamas. After these stages there comes the state transcending gunas.” (Talks No. 73)

The characteristic of a Gunatita given, being objective, we cannot find out by applying them to examine whether a person is Gunatita or not. As many people imagine that they had reached the final state, this is a check list for oneself to find out whether these qualities exist or not.

□ □ □



(38) Yastvātma-rati-reva syāt
ātma trptascha mānavah ।
Ātmanyeva ca santushtah
tasya kāryam na vidyate ॥

(III- 17)

*For the one who takes delight in the Self,
who is gratified with his Self and is content
in the Self, there is no duty left to be
performed.*

The one who is established in the knowledge of his Self, has his Self only and does not take delight in any worldly objects or possessions. He is satisfied by his Self alone and he does not depend on food, drinks etc., to get



satisfied. Normally one gets happiness through external objects but the knower of the Self is happy and content to remain in the Self without any expectation from external objects. Such a one has no duty left to be performed but is absolutely free. No injunctions apply to him.

According to Ashtavakra, a Jivanmukta is like a leaf which has fully dried up. A dry leaf cannot shrink further nor make any movement whatsoever. When once the wind blows it may make that dry leaf fly and fall down at another place. So when the wheel of Samsara (the phenomenal world) moves, the wind emanating therefrom may move the Jivanmukta and it will look as if he is engaged in some activity.

□ □ □



(39) Naiva tasya kriterānthah
nākriteneha kaschana I

Na chāsya sarva bhooteshu
kaschidārtha vyapāsrayah II

(III-18)

For such a realised soul, no purpose is served by performing any activity; nor is there any purpose served by not doing any action. He has no dependence on any being for any purpose whatsoever.

As a realised soul remains as the Absolute Self and as there is nothing apart from the Self, he has no desires. As such he has no purpose to be achieved by doing any activity. In the scriptures there are some compulsory



daily activities like morning worship etc. which are prescribed for some categories. By performing these activities no punya or merit or other gain accrues. But the non-performance of these actions result in a sin called “Pratyavaya”. In the case of a realized soul, by non – performance of these activities no sin accrues. There is no purpose served by non - doing of actions. A person dependant on other being for any purpose may have to undertake some activity in connection with his expectation from others. A Jivanmukta is not dependant on anybody else for any purpose what - so - ever. He is absolutely free.

□ □ □



(40) Yadrchchā lābha santushto
dvandvātito vimatsarah I

Samah siddhāvasiddhou ca
krtvāpi na nibadhyate II

(IV-22)

The yogi who is content with whatever he gets by chance, who has transcended the pairs of opposites (e.g. pleasure and pain), is free from envy and equal in success and failure, does not get bound even by performing any work.

A yogi does not make effort to go in search of food, shelter etc. He is happy with whatever comes his way by chance. We exult when we get a nice dish to eat while we get pain when there is a



stomach ache. Such pleasure and pain, heat and cold etc., are called concomitant pairs of opposites (dvandvas). A yogi has no reaction to either. It is told in Champu Ramayanam that when Rama was informed that he was to be coronated as a king the next day, he did not show any signs of elation. Similarly when he was informed within 24 hours that not only he was not to be made a king but he was being banished to a forest life for 14 years, there were no signs of discomfiture or disappointment. This is the characteristic of a yogi.

**“Prasannatām yo na gatobhishekatah
Tathā na mamle vanavāsa (te)
dukhatah!!”
(Bhoja's Champu Ramayanam)**

If such a person gets his food or does not happen to get any food at all, either way, he does not get happiness or sorrow.



Even when he does the minimum work of begging for food to keep his body alive, he has no sense of doership as he remains as a witness to his various senses like hands, legs etc. doing their respective functions. So, such an action counts as akarma (non - action) and no result accruing out of it affects him as all karmas (actions) have been reduced to ashes by the fire of knowledge. (Sloka no. 24 of this Gitasarah refers).





(41) Eesvarah sarvabhootānām
hrddese (a)rjuna tishthati |

Bhrāmāyan sarvabhootāni
yantrāroodhāni māyayā ||

(XVII -61)

*Oh Arjuna, the Lord abides in the heart
centre of all beings and makes them
revolve by his illusive power as though
they are puppets mounted on a machine.*

It is the one Lord who is seated in the heart centre of all beings that makes them act according to His Will. Bhagavan Ramana himself told one of his devotees who asked about free- will that “ Without His will not an atom can move.” The entire waking life is a second dream whose drama



script has already been pre-written by the Lord. Not a single gesture nor a dialogue nor an event can happen unless it is in the pre-written script. But if an actor in the drama, while acting as per the script is thinking of his wife at his home, no director can detect that. So, the only free will is in the mind. While acting out this life drama as per Lord's Will, nothing can prevent your thinking of either this world or God. We should utilize this free-will. For those not capable of going by Self-enquiry, complete surrender to the Lord is the best method. This verse indirectly indicates that as all events in our life are shaped by Lord's Will alone, surrender to the Lord is the best alternative to get out of the miseries and sufferings of this life. This position is confirmed by the very next verse.

For seekers who are more mature, Bhagavan Ramana's advice is: - "Let the Body act as may suit it. Why are you



concerned with it? Why do you pay attention to it? Free-Will and Destiny last as long the body lasts. But wisdom (jnanam) transcends both. The Self is beyond knowledge and ignorance.” (Talk No. 193)

“Man owes his movements to another Power, whereas he thinks that he does everything himself- just like a lame man bluffing that were he helped to stand up, he would fight and chase the enemy -----. His ego owes its origin to a Higher Power on which its existence depends. Why then prattle ----- ‘I do, I act, or I function?’” (Talk No . 210)

“Find out to whom Free- Will or destiny matters. Abide in it. Then these two are transcended. That is the only purpose of discussing these questions. To whom do these questions arise? Find out and be at peace.” (Talk No. 426)





(42) Tameva saranam gachcha
sarvabhāvena Bhārata ।

Tatprasādāt parām sāntim sthānam
prāpsyasi sāsvatam ॥

(XIII-62)

*Oh Arjuna, surrender to Him alone with
all your being. You will attain supreme
peace (moksha or liberation) and also the
abode eternal by His Grace.*

In order to attain the highest goal of liberation, for those who are not able to pursue the path of Self-enquiry, Bhagavan Ramana has suggested 'surrender' as the other alternative.

“Surrender unreservedly. One of the things must be done. Either surrender



because you admit your inability and also require a Higher Power to help you or investigate into the cause of misery, go into the source and merge into the Self. Either way you will be free from misery. God never forsakes one who has surrendered.” (Talk No. 363)

Surrender can be either to a Personal God like Siva, Vishnu etc. or to the Supreme Self. Bhagavan Ramana has also advocated surrender to the Personal God- “Surrender the mind to Perumal (God). ----- Render unto Him what is His and be happy. ----- Whenever thoughts arise remember they are all modes of Perumal and they cannot be otherwise, this is enough, this is the surrender of the mind. Can anything exist independent of Perumal? All is Perumal alone. He acts through all. Why worry ourselves? (Talk No -360) (Note: - Perumal is a Tamil name for Maha Vishnu)



The full significance of surrender has been elaborately explained by Bhagavan Ramana who holds that surrender is also the best way to remove the greatest terror namely death.

“In the effort to overcome birth and death man looks up to the Supreme being to save him. Thus are born our faith and devotion to the Lord. How to worship Him? The creature is powerless and the Creator is All-powerful. How to approach Him? To entrust oneself to His care is the only thing left for him, total surrender is the only way. Therefore he surrenders himself to God. Surrender consists in giving up oneself and one’s possessions to the Lord of Mercy. Then what is left over for the man ----- Nothing ----- neither himself nor his possessions. ----- The birth and death cannot strike terror. The cause of fear was the body; it is no longer his;



why should he fear now? Or where is the identity of the individual to be frightened?

The Self is realised and Bliss results -----
This is the highest good to be gained. Surrender is synonymous with Bliss itself.” (Talk No. 567). This Bliss is liberation (Moksha). This surrender is also Bhakti (Talk No. 450). Saranagati Tatwa is held by the Vaishnavite followers of Sri Ramanujacharya as one of the three top secrets of their cult known as Rahasya thrayam (the other two being two mantras of Lord Narayana). Saranagati is the Sanskrit word for surrender.

Bhagavan Ramana has also given another interpretation linking it with the self - enquiry method too:-

“Surrender is to give yourself up to the original cause of one’s being. Do not delude yourself by imagining such source to be some God outside you. One’s source is within



yourself. Give yourself up to it, which means that you should seek the source and merge in it.” – Talks No 208. “There is no difference between Jnana and surrender.” (Talk No. 462)

In this verse Krishna addressed Arjuna as ‘Bhārata’. It has special significance. Even though outwardly it means a scion of the lineage of King Bharata, it also means a person who is engaged in attaining knowledge (Bhāyām ratah). ‘Bha’ means the light of knowledge and ‘ratah’ means fully devoted to or engaged in it.

The word ‘sarva bhavena’ indicates that the surrender should be unconditional and there should be no reservations. If any condition is attached to it then there is no ‘surrender’ at all.

This unconditional surrender has been elaborated in a sacred scripture known as Arhabudhnya samhita. It is told that surrender consists of six limbs:-



- (1) **Accepting totally events happening by God's will**
- (2) **Not rebelling and trying to undo the events emerging out of Lord's will (e.g. trying to get a transfer order posting to a distant place cancelled)**
- (3) **A strong faith that the Lord will definitely protect the devotee.**
- (4) **Specifically praying and calling on God to protect the devotee.**
- (5) **Completely putting one's entire body and all possessions at the mercy of the Lord.**
- (6) **Remaining in utter helplessness solely dependent on the Lord.**



**“Ānukoolyasya sweekaro,
Prāthikoolyasya varjanam ।**

**Rakshishyateeti visvaso,
rakashane varanam tatha ।**

**Atmanikshepa karpanyou
shadvidha saranagatih ॥”**

May the Lord’s grace and compassion of
Bhagavan help us to have Self- realisation and
Absolute Bliss in this very birth.

□ □ □



Complete list of books/documents available on website
(<http://www.scribd.com/vedavita>)

1. Books authored by H.H. Swami Purushottamananda ji

Sr.	Title of Book	Year of Publication
1	Autobiography in Malayalam	1956
2	Autobiography in English	1994
3	Autobiography in Hindi	2007
4	Updeshamrit	1979
5	Nectar of Spiritual Instructions	1986
6	A Peep into the Gita	1990
7	Gita ki ek Jhalak	2000
8	Adhyatma Varta	2000
9	Spiritual talks	1990
10	Guide to Spiritual Aspirants	1986

All the books were published by Shri Purushottamananda Trust, Vasishtha Guha Ashram, Goolar Dogi, District Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, India

2. Books authored by His Holiness Swami Shantananda Puri ji

Sr.	Title of Book	Year of Publication
1	Commentary on Sri Siva Sahasranama Stotram (As per Linga Purana) with new preface	1991
2	Srimad Bhagavatam : Its message for the Modern Man	1998
3	Sadhanas in Bhagvad Gita	1999
4	Srimad Bhagvat - Adhunik Manav ke Liye Iska Sandesh	2000
5	Srimad Bhagvad Gita ki Adhyatmik Sadhanayein (In Hindi)	2001
6	Fragrant Flowers: Soul-elevating Reminiscences of a Himalayan Monk	2002
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3. Other documents authored by H.H. Swami Shantananda Puri

1	Message on 82nd Birthday of Revered Swamiji	2010
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His Holiness Sri Shantananda Puri Maharaj of Vasishtha Guha (Himalayas), born in 1928, is a disciple of Parama Poojya Sri Swami Purushottamananda Puri Maharaj of Vasishtha Guha, Himalayas.

Swamiji is a scholar par excellence in Vedic Scriptures as well as in Puranic texts. His deep knowledge and lucid exposition of Srimad Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita and Ashtavakra Gita have made him a popular guide to spiritual aspirants. His simplicity, transparent deep faith in the Divine force and absolute surrender to the Supreme have made him an ideal combination of Jnana, Bhakti and Vairagya.

Swamiji's prodigious learning and deep devotion to the tenets of Indian philosophy and culture have reflected themselves in all his works, which are practical guides for inner personal experience and to raise oneself to a higher level of being. His emphasis has always been on 'Practise, practise, practise'.

This book is a succinct exposition of the core message of the Bhagavad Gita, which is universally acclaimed as the repository of the supreme spiritual knowledge. The spiritual aspirants are often hampered in comprehending its true message mainly due to the seemingly confusingly diversified interpretations by commentators - all of which may be true at various levels of the Sadhakas.

Revered Swamiji has given here practical hints as to how to adopt these teachings in day to day life and reach the state of a Liberated Jnani.