

# **SRIMADBHAGAVADGITA**

**Summary on  
Seventh Chapter**

**by**

**Swami Paramarthananda**

## SUMMARY (SEVENTH CHAPTER)

- Note: 1. Portions in brackets are supplied ideas.  
2. Numbers in brackets indicate the verses.

[In the first six chapters of the *Gītā*, Lord *Kṛṣṇa* discussed the nature of the individual, *karmayoga*, etc. predominantly. In the following six chapters, the Lord will predominantly discuss the nature of God, worship of God with attributes (*upāsanā*), etc. The individual effort was emphasised in the previous section. It will be the grace of God that will be emphasised hereafter. In short, all these are necessary to achieve the goal of liberation.]

In the first three verses, *Kṛṣṇa* introduces the topic and its glory. Surrendering to God, whoever worships Him along with His attributes will ultimately discover the attributeless God (1). The knowledge of God with attributes, as different from oneself is called *jñānam* and the knowledge of God as identical with oneself is called *vijñānam*. This is the highest knowledge because, the intellectual quest of a person finds its fulfilment in this knowledge (2). The very fact that the number of people who attempt and succeed in gaining this knowledge is very small shows the subtlety and rarity of this knowledge (3).

From the 4th to the 11th verse, *Kṛṣṇa* talks about the nature of God. God has two aspects known as the higher nature (*parā-prakṛti*) and the lower nature (*aparā-prakṛti*). The lower nature has eight divisions — five subtle elements, cosmic ego, cosmic intellect, and the unmanifest (4). [This is called ‘lower’ because it is changing, inert, finite and dependently existent.] The higher nature is the consciousness behind every body and that alone sustains the entire creation (5). [This is called ‘higher’ because it is changeless, conscious, infinite, and independently existent.] From this God alone comes the entire creation which consists of conscious and inert aspects (*jīva* and *jagat*). He alone sustains the creation and resolves

it (6). In fact there is no creation different from Him and He alone is the very essence of everything (7 to 11). Being the material cause of everything, God is independent of everything and everything is dependent on Him (12).

In the 13th verse, the Lord traces the cause of all problems (*samsāra*). Being deluded by the creation which is the product of three *guṇas* (of *aparā-prakṛti*) one fails to know the higher nature (*parā-prakṛti*) of the Lord.

The divine *māyā* (power of delusion) consisting of three *guṇas* cannot be conquered by anyone by one's own effort. Hence the Lord gives the only solution possible— "Only those who surrender to Me cross over this *māyā*." (14).

In the next two verses, *Kṛṣṇa* divides the entire humanity into five groups. The lowliest of them are those non-believers who do not accept or pursue the Lord. Leading a life governed by their own desires and taking to devilish nature, such people are completely lost in *māyā*. The others, though they are devotees, worship Lord with different attitudes due to different levels of maturity. Thus *ārta* is one who worships the Lord when he is in distress. *Arthārthī* is one who worships the Lord for material prosperity. *Jiñāsu*, who is discriminative enough to discern the limitation of everything else, seeks the Lord through knowledge. *Jñānī* is one who has reached the destination of his life's journey by discovering his identity with the Lord (15,16).

In the next three verses, the Lord talks about the superiority of the wise-devotee. His devotion is permanent and undivided. He loves the Lord as himself because he does not have the dualistic notion. Naturally, the Lord also loves the devotee as Himself (17). Then the Lord promises the highest goal for the wise man of non-dualistic vision, [because fullness is possible only in non-duality] (18). Such a vision is achieved by preparing oneself through many births and rare are those blessed ones (19).

## SUMMARY

In the following four verses, the Lord talks about other devotees who worship the Lord but seek various ephemeral ends. They look upon the Lord as the bestower of health, wealth, power, etc., and they seek those ends through rituals and vows (20). Still the Lord, out of compassion, fulfils their prayers (21,22). But the Lord warns that everything except God is finite (23).

Then the Lord reveals His true nature [which is identical with the seeker's nature and which is to be gained in terms of knowledge]. He is ever evident, imperishable, unsurpassed, (24) and unborn. Still people, deluded by *māyā*, mistake the Lord as a person subject to birth, etc. (25). Being of the nature of one non-dual awareness, God alone knows everything belonging to the past, present, and future. God never becomes the object of knowledge (26).

Concluding this topic, *Kṛṣṇa* mentions the stages of devotion. Because of the fundamental self-ignorance no one can avoid desires in the initial stage of life. Naturally he will be *ārta* or *arthārthī* (27). When he worships the Lord, his mind becomes purified and slowly desires become less. He becomes a *jijñāsu* (28). Now, his attention turns towards knowledge and he pursues it, surrendering to the Lord. Soon he becomes a *jñānī* knowing all about *Brahman*, *karma*, *adhyātma*, *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva*, and *adhiyajña*. [He knows both the *parā-prakṛti* and *aparā-prakṛti* of the Lord.] Being established in this knowledge, he does not lose sight of the Lord even at the time of death (29,30). [Thus *jñāni-bhakta* enjoys both *jīvanmukti* and *videhamukti*.]

The main topics of this chapter are:

1. Introduction to the knowledge of God and the glory of that knowledge.....1 to 03
2. Nature of God.....4 to 12
3. Cause of *saṃsāra* ..... 13

## SUMMARY

4. *Bhakti*, the remedy for *saṃsāra*.....14 to 19
5. *Sakāma-bhakti* (devotion for material ends).....20 to 26
6. *Niškāma-bhakti* (devotion for spiritual end).....27 to 30

Since the knowledge of *saguṇa-īśvara (jñānam)* and that of *nirguṇa-īśvara (vijñānam)* are highlighted in this chapter, it is called *jñānavijñāna-yoga*.

-----