

CHAPTER 12

|| BHAKTIYOGA ||

(O grace of My Master), you are known to be pure and generous and ever ready to give joy to your disciple, Glory to you! The fainting fit, which results from the bite of a snake, in the form of sense-objects, does not abate without your help. If the waves of your kindness come in floods, who will suffer from the pangs of misery or worldly sorrow? O mother, it is through you, that the disciple enjoys the bliss resulting from Yoga, and his strong desire to become one with the Absolute is also satisfied by you. You keep him on the lap of the Serpent-Power of the *Muladhara* and placing him in the cradle of the region of the heart, you swing the cradle (1-5). You wave the light of self-knowledge before him, providing him with toys of self-restraint and breath-control and adorn him with child's bliss. You give him nectar to drink from the seventeenth phase of the moon and singing a lullaby of the unstuck sound (*Anahata*), you lull him to sleep after acquainting him with the bliss flowing from *samadhi*. You are the mother of the seekers, and all lores spring from your feet. Therefore, I shall never leave your cool shelter. O grace of my Master, one to whom you show mercy, becomes the founder of all lores. Therefore, O magnanimous mother, who are the wish-yielding tree to your devotees, give me leave to unfold this literary work (6-10). Oh mother, pray help me to create oceans of the nine sentiments, mines of figures of speech and cliffs of imports of the *Gita*. Let me open up in the land of the *mother-tongue*, mines of gold and cultivate rows of creepers, in the form of thoughts. Let there be laid out always, dense orchards of topics of knowledge, laden with the fruits of discussions. Let the dens of atheists and the crooked ways of wranglers be destroyed and the beasts of prey in the form of evil thinkers, be driven away. Endow me, with the capacity to sing the praise of Lord Krishna and secure for the hearers the kingdom of bliss, by hearing it (11-15). Let there be abundance of Divine Knowledge in the city of Marathi language and let the world have dealings, only in the bliss of knowledge. O mother, if you will take me under the wing of your love, I will launch this literary work. Hearing this entreaty of the disciple, the *Guru* gave him a gracious glance and said, 'Now start your discourse on the *Gita* without any further talk'. *Jnanadeva* said, "Very well, this is indeed a great favour from you. I am highly pleased and shall continue the discourse. Please lend me your ears."

Arjuna said:

1. *The devotees who, absorbed in you, worship you in this manner, and those who (meditate) on the Imperishable, of them who are more versed in Yoga?*

Then the heroic son of *Pandu* (*Arjuna*), the very banner of victory of the *Kuru* race, said (16-20), O Lord, have you heard what I said? I was frightened of your marvelous cosmic vision. I took refuge in your human form, as I was accustomed to it. But you warned me that I should not do so. Undoubtedly you exist both in the manifest and the unmanifest form, the former being attainable through devotion and the latter through the practice of Yoga. These are the two pathways, which lead one to the threshold of the manifest and unmanifest forms. But the purity of a bar of gold weighing hundred *tolas*, also belongs to a piece of that bar weighing

three *gunjas* (a red berry forming the smallest weight of a jeweler). Therefore, the worth of the limited manifest form and the all-pervading unmanifest form is the same (21-25). The power, which subsists in the ocean of nectar (to grant immortality), exists in a sip of nectar. My mind has already reached this definite conclusion. But I wish to know whether the universal form assumed by you for a moment, is your true nature or is only your Divine play. You have devotees who perform all actions for your sake, hold you to be the highest object of worship and surrender all their desires to you. Then there are some that worship you, by cherishing your unmanifest form in their mind (26-30), which is indescribable and beyond the *Om* *kara*, which is imperishable and not like anything else. They meditate upon this form, which is super-sensuous, imperceptible and not limited by time and space, with the conviction that 'we are that *Brahman*'. Tell me, who between the two, have apprehended the essential nature of Yoga? Overjoyed at this query from Arjuna, the blessed Lord, the friend of all said "O Arjuna, you know well how to ask a question."

The blessed Lord said:

2. *Those I deem the best yogis, who imbued with supreme faith, fix their minds on Me and worship Me with constant contemplation.*

O Partha, just when the sun goes behind the western horizon, all his rays follow him (31-35), or as a river begins to swell in the rainy season, so the faith (of my devotees) goes on increasing, as they continue to worship Me. Their devotion increases, like the tidal flow of the river Ganga, which flows in its full force all through, before it joins the sea. These devotees fixing their minds on Me, worship Me day and night and dedicate their whole life to Me. I consider such devotees as the best knowers of Yoga.

3. *But those who worship My unmanifest form, which is all-pervading, beyond comprehension, unchanging, immovable, eternal, and the ineffable Supreme Self,*
4. *And who controlling all their senses, and treating everyone alike, remains devoted to the good of all beings, they reach Me too.*

O Arjuna, the *Jnanis* try to realise the imperishable *Brahman* without form (36-40). How can the senses penetrate, that in which the mental activity comes to a stop and which even reason cannot enter? Since this *Brahman* is not to be found at one place, it is inaccessible even to profound meditation. Since it is without form and exists in all forms at all places, the mind finds it difficult to contemplate upon it and becomes non-plussed. It was never born nor will it ever take birth. One cannot say whether it exists or does not exist; so no means can be found to attain it. It neither moves nor stirs, it neither ends nor gets soiled. The *Jnanis* have brought this *Brahman* under their control, through their *yogic* power (41-45). They have consigned legions of sense-objects to the fire of dispassion and have brought with great fortitude, their parched senses under control. Then they withdraw the senses (from the external objects), holding them in leash through self-control and confine them in the cave of the heart. After closing the exit of the out-breath, they erect the tower of *Mulabandha*, after adopting a proper posture and *Mudra*. They snap the bonds of hope, blast the cliffs of fears and completely dispel the darkness of ignorance. Burning the seven fluids (*dhatu*) of the body, by the flames of the *Mulabandha* posture, they offer in sacrifice all the diseases in the body, to the six plexuses

(*chakras*) (46-50). Then erecting the torch of the *Serpent-Power* on the *Muladhara* they make way for it, in the spinal column right up to the head. Then closing the nine gates (of the senses), by means of crossbars, in the form of self-restraint, they open up the way in the *Sushumna nadi*. They kill rams in the form of desires and buffaloes in the form of their minds and offer their heads as oblations to the goddess *Durga* in the form of the power of the vital breath. After combining the breath passages *Ida* and *Pingala*, they speedily win the nectar in the seventeenth phase of the moon, in the loud acclamation of the unbeaten (*anahata*) sound. Then they ascend the flight of steps carved out in the passage of the *Sushumna nadi* and reach the *Brahmarandhra*, the aperture in the head (51-55). After mounting the difficult stairs of the *ajnacakra* and clasping in their arms, the sky-region of the head, they become united to the *Supreme Brahman*. In this way, they, imbued with equanimity of the mind, resort to the strenuous path of Yoga, in order to attain *Brahman*. Those that have attained in this manner, the unmanifest *Brahman*, in exchange of their individual life, also come to Me. Do not think that they gain something more on the strength of this Yoga; if any thing it is toil, which falls into their lap.

5. *The toil is greater for those whose minds are set on the Unmanifest; for the goal, which is not manifest, is hard to attain by embodied persons.*

There are others who wish to attain without devotion the supportless unmanifest *Brahman*, which does well to all living beings. But they succumb to the temptations such as lordship of heaven and desire of prosperity and supernatural powers, which come in their way. They have to face many hurdles such as desire and wrath. Then will they not feel that they have toiled in vain? They have to suppress hunger and thirst and they have to keep the wind stirring with both hands. They have to sleep in the sun during daytime, to derive pleasure from self-restraint and to form friendship with trees. They have to expose their bodies to heat and cold and live in the rain (61-65). Thus this Yoga is like entering the funeral pyre, by a faithful wife everyday, without having a husband. They have to carry on a continuous struggle with death, without any purpose such as serving a master or following a family custom. Can anyone take a draught of poison, which is hot and pungent? O Partha, will not his mouth get torn in swallowing a hill? Therefore, those who resort to Yoga are destined to share only misery in life. Just consider, if a toothless person were compelled to eat gram of steel, will that satisfy his hunger or put him to death (66-70)? Has anyone swum across the sea with only the help of his arms, or has anyone ever been able to walk in the sky? Has anyone been able to ascend the steps of sun's abode, without receiving a single wound on the battlefield? Therefore, O Arjuna, just as a cripple cannot enter into contest with the wind, so it is difficult for an embodied person to attain the formless God. Those who, with this intense longing to attain *Brahman*, work hard for it, have necessarily to suffer great afflictions. But those who resort to the path of devotion, do not have to endure such misery (71-75).

6. *But as for those who surrender all actions to Me, being solely devoted to Me, and who meditate upon Me with exclusive Yoga (of devotion),*

Such devotees perform willingly, with their organs of actions, all the works falling to their lot according to their caste and stage of life. In performing such works, they follow the scriptural injunctions, shun prohibited actions and burn all actions by dedicating the fruits of actions

to Me. In this way, by surrendering all their works to Me, they annihilate their actions. And whatever natural tendencies they possess, whether of the body, speech or mind, are not directed anywhere except to Me. In this way, they worship Me, without interruption and become My dwelling-place through meditation (76-80). Leaving their poor and helpless clients, namely sensuous pleasures and salvation, they enjoy having dealings with Me. In this way, they surrender to Me their body, mind and soul, through exclusive devotion and love. How can I tell you what I do for them? I do whatever they wish for.

7. *Lift them up from the ocean of the cycle of deaths speedily, O son of Kunti (Arjuna), their minds being fixed on Me.*

What more can I say? O Arjuna, how dear is the child to its mother? So My devotees of whatever kind, are dear to Me. I have undertaken the work of relieving them of their miseries, in this *Kali-yuga* (age). Why should My devotees feel anxious about the cycle of births and deaths? Will a rich man's wife ever have to face the situation of having to eat uncooked food (81-85)? These devotees are like My dear friends. So if they have to face any adverse times, is it not a blot on My honour? I feel distressed at seeing this created world engulfed in the waves of the ocean of mortal life. Who is not frightened of the turbulent sea of life? Therefore to save them from this fright, I hasten to their places from time to time, by assuming different incarnations. I have delivered them out of this sea of life by constructing boats, in the form of thousand names (vtz. *Vishnu Sahasranama*) (86-90). For those who are single and unencumbered, I settle them in meditation; for those who are fond of domestic life, I provide for them boats, in the form of My names. I provide life belts of my love to some devotees and take them to the other shore of salvation. For those who call themselves My devotees, be they quadrupeds, I make them fit for the throne of *Vaikuntha*. Therefore, there is no cause of anxiety for My devotees. I am their saviour, ever ready to protect them. When My devotees dedicate all their mental functions to Me, at that very moment, they have made Me predisposed towards them (91-95). Therefore, O winner of wealth, I give you this *mantra* that you should take to the path of devotion.

8. *Fix your mind on Me alone, in Me repose your intellect; then you shall dwell in Me alone hereafter, without any doubt.*

O Arjuna, you fix your mind and intellect in Me with determination. You will attain to Me if you combine these two and enter My heart. Once your mind and intellect dwell in Me, then how can the notion of duality exist between us? Just as light ceases, when the lamp is put out, or the daylight vanishes, when the sun sets (96-100), so when the life-breath leaves the body, the ego automatically goes out with the mind and the body. Therefore, fix your mind and intellect on My essential nature and then you will become all pervasive and one with Me. This I declare to you on oath, that this is the truth, without exception.

9. *If you cannot concentrate your mind finally on Me, then seek to reach Me, O winner of wealth, by repeated Yoga.*

Or if you are not able to devote your mind, heart and intellect, in their entirety to Me, then dedicate your mind to Me for a moment everyday (101-105). The moment you experience the joy of communion with Me, that very moment, you will become averse to sensual pleasures.

Then, as the water in the river dries up with the advent of winter, so your mind will become free from the bonds of worldly existence. Just as the moon wanes day by day, from the full moon night to the new moon night and then disappears, so you will become free from the sensuous enjoyments and slowly enter My being and ultimately become one with Me. Know that this is what is called the Yoga of practice. There is nothing, which cannot be attained with its help (106-110). Among those who practice this Yoga, some roam in the sky, some tame fierce beasts such as tigers and snakes and some digest poison, while some walk on the sea. Through this practice, some have made even the *Vedas* look insignificant. Therefore, there is nothing, which is difficult to secure by this yogic practice. Therefore, try to attain to Me through the practice of Yoga.

10. *If you are not capable of this repeated Yoga, then be intent on working for Me; performing actions for My sake alone, you will attain to perfection.*

If you do not possess the capacity to take up this Yoga of practice, then keep your life-style as it is. Do not restrain the senses, do not scale down your sensual enjoyment and do not give up the pride of your caste (111-115). Follow your family customs, observe the rules laid down by the scriptures and shun actions prohibited by them. Then you are free to follow your own course of action. But whatever work you do, by means of the body, speech and mind, do not say, 'I am doing this'. The Supreme Being, under whose authority, all the worldly affairs are carried on, knows what is action and what is non-action. If a work is not completed, then do not brood over it but adopt the style of life, which conforms to your caste. Just as water follows the course as devised by the gardener, you also perform your action, renouncing egoistic feeling (116-120). Then your intellect does not have to bear the burden of deciding what one ought to do or avoid doing, so that the heart remains fixed on Me, without interruption. O Arjuna, does the carriage ever bother about whether the road is straight or crooked? Therefore, whatever work you do, whether it is perfunctory or perfect, dedicate it to Me quietly. In this manner, O Arjuna, if you perform actions with devotion, you will attain the highest form of liberation, namely identification with Me.

11. *If you are incapable of resorting to disinterested action for My sake also, then relinquish the fruit of all actions, being self-restrained.*

O Partha, should you not be able to perform actions for My sake then think along these lines (121-125). If you think it difficult to dedicate your action to Me, before you resolve to do it or after, before you undertake it or later, then leave it alone. Even if I have pressed you to perform actions for My sake and dedicate them to Me, you need not do so. Restrain your intellect and whenever you undertake any actions, abandon all thought about their fruit. Just as the trees and creepers drop down their fruits, you should also relinquish the fruits of the actions performed by you. You need not resolve to undertake such actions and perform them for My sake, but let them go into the void (126-130). Like the rain fallen on a rock, a seed sown in fire or a dream seen in sleep, let all such actions be fruitless. O Partha, Just as a father does not entertain lewd desire for his daughter, be you desireless for the fruits of your actions. Let your actions become void, as the flames go waste in the sky. O Arjuna, renunciation of fruit may appear to you as an easy path, yet it is the foremost among the Yoga's. Just as a bamboo tree becomes barren once it yields fruit, so the actions do not sprout on the

relinquishment of their fruit (131-135). Then even in the present life, physical activities come to a stop and there is an end to the cycle of births and deaths. O Arjuna, one attains knowledge through study and meditation, then the different mental states become merged in meditation, after which all actions stop of their own accord. With the stoppage of activity, renunciation of fruit automatically comes, resulting in peace of mind. This is the only course open, O Partha, to attain serenity of mind; therefore you should undertake scriptural study first (136-140).

12. *Better indeed is knowledge than scriptural study; better than knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is renunciation of the fruit of action; from renunciation results instantaneous peace.*

O Partha, knowledge is more profound than scriptural study and meditation is still more incomprehensible than knowledge. Renunciation of fruit of actions is superior to meditation, while the peace of mind, which comes after it, is matchless. O heroic Partha, by following this path My devotee attains peace through these stages.

13. *He who is non-hostile, friendly and compassionate to any creature, free from possessiveness and pride, forgiving and equable in sorrow and happiness,*

As the all-pervading Consciousness does not distinguish between what is one's own and another's, so he does not entertain hatred towards any creature. Just as Mother Earth does not think of giving support only to a superior and denying it to an inferior person (141-145), or the merciful life-breath does not say that it will only dwell in the body of a prince and not in that of a pauper, or water does not think of quenching the thirst of cattle and turn itself into poison to kill tigers, so he is equally friendly with all creatures and looks after them like an affectionate nurse. He does not entertain the thought of 'me' and 'mine' and is never affected by happiness or misery. He is forgiving like the earth and joy lives happily in its lap (146-150).

14. *Who is ever content practicing Yoga, self-controlled and of firm conviction, devoted to Me with his mind and intellect - such a devotee is dear to Me.*

Just as the sea is ever full of water even without rains, he is full of contentment, without any formal devices. He restrains his mind, taking a vow to do so, and his determination remains firm, till the end. The individual Self and the Supreme Self, dwell in his heart, in perfect unison. Endowed with abundant Yoga, he also dedicates his mind and intellect to Me and becoming purified both internally and externally, worships me with devotion and love (151-155). O Arjuna, he alone is a devotee, a *yogi* and a liberated soul. I am so fond of him, as if he were My spouse - nay he is dear to Me as My own Self is. But even this simile falls short of conveying My true feeling about him. This account of a loved one, is like a magical spell, which cannot be expressed in words. I had to give expression to it because of your strong faith. I had to give the simile of husband and wife to denote this love; otherwise how can one describe it? O Arjuna, leave this alone. My love for the devotee is redoubled, when I speak about him (156-160). And if a dear hearer happens to be near, with what can you measure the joy that one feels? Therefore, O Arjuna, you are a loving devotee as well as a dear hearer, and so I am giving vent to My feelings, about a loving devotee, as the occasion required it. This combination of a devotee and hearer in you, became a happy occasion for this enjoyable conversation. Saying this, the Lord began to swing backward and forward.

He added, 'Please get to know the characteristics of the devotee, whom I give a place in My heart'.

15. *He whom the world does not vex, and who does not vex the world, and who is free from joy, irritation, fear and vexation, such a one is dear to Me.*

A stormy sea does not create fear in the aquatic animals and does not itself become tired of them (164-165). In the same way, he does not become bothered, because of the rude world, nor is the world troubled because of him. O Arjuna, just as the body is not tired of its limbs, he does not become weary of the living creatures. This is because he knows, that I am the life, which dwells in all of them. As he looks upon the world as his own body, all thoughts of people being dear or disagreeable to him, leave him. In this way, the notion of duality leaves him and he does not feel joy or anger. I am enamoured of him, who becomes free from the pairs of opposites such as pleasure and pain or fear and sorrow and worships Me. How can I describe to you, how I feel attracted to him? In short, he lives only for My sake (166-170). He, who is satiated by the bliss flowing from Self-knowledge, and who has attained the highest aim of life, becomes wedded to perfection.

16. *He who expects nothing and is pure, adroit, indifferent and without worry, and who has renounced every undertaking, such a devotee of Mine, is dear to Me.*

O Arjuna, he is free from all expectations and his mind is full of increasing happiness. The holy place of *Kashi*, is known for its generous gift of salvation, but for that, one has to part with his body there. Our sins are washed off in the Himalayas, but one has to risk his life, in going there. However the purity in the saints, is not dangerous like that. The sacred water of the Ganga removes all sins and mental afflictions, but one is likely to get drowned there (171-175). Like the water of the Ganga, the knowledge of the saints is deep and fathomless. But the devotee does not sink in their company; instead he becomes liberated even while living. The river Ganges gets rid of its sins, by coming into contact with the saints (when they bathe in it). How superior in purity must be this contact of the saints? A saint by his purity lends support, even to holy waters and drives away sinful thoughts from the minds (of those who come in contact with him). He is as clean and spotless in and out, as the sun itself, and attains the experience of *Brahman* in the same way as a person born with his legs foremost, sees a treasure buried under the earth. Just as the sky is all-pervasive and unattached, so his mind, while pervading all, is detached (176-180). Like a bird, which has escaped from the hands of a hunter and has shed fear, he becomes desireless and free from the anxiety of worldly life. He is ever blissful and does not feel the pricking of any worldly thing, like a dead body, which is not ashamed of its nakedness. He does not suffer from egoism, while performing any work. Just as fire is extinguished when it is not fed with firewood, he attains peace and his name is recorded on the checkerboard of liberation. In this way, he who has attained union with the Supreme Self reaches the other shore transcending duality (181-185). Dividing himself into two parts and designating one as the devotee and the other as God, he experiences the bliss of devotion and demonstrates to a non-devotee the proper way of devotion. I am fond of such a devotee and he becomes the object of My meditation. In short, I find great satisfaction, when I come across such a devotee. Incarnating Myself I come to this world for his sake and he is so dear to Me, that I wave My life as a lamp before him.

17. *He who does not rejoice or resent, who does not grieve or crave, and who renounces good and evil, such a devotee is dear to Me.*

He does not value any thing as good as the realisation of the Self and so he does not derive any pleasure from sensual enjoyments (186-190). Since he has become fully conscious that he himself is the universe and got rid of the notion of duality, he does not entertain any feeling of hatred for anyone. He is fully convinced, that his true nature will remain indestructible even at the end of the epoch, and so does not lament the loss of anything. Since he has himself become *Brahman*, beyond which there is nothing, he has no desire for anything. Just as the night and day do not exist for the sun, he does not distinguish between good and bad things. Although he has attained the state of uninterrupted knowledge, he still remains lovingly devoted to me (191-195). I say on oath, that no one else is so truly dear to Me, as this devotee.

18. *He who is alike to friend and foe, as also in honour and dishonour, the same in heat and cold, in happiness and sorrow, free from attachment,*

O Arjuna, he does not have even a trace of hostile feeling and so treats equally both a friend and an enemy. Just as a lamp, does not think of giving light only to the inmates of the house and withhold it from strangers, or a tree gives shade without distinction, to one who has planted it or one who has come to cut it, or sugarcane is not sweet to one who grows it or bitter to one who extracts juice from it squeezing it in a press (196-200), so O Arjuna, he behaves evenly with friend and foe alike and regards honour and dishonour with the same feeling. Like the sky, which remains the same in all seasons, he treats equally heat and cold. Just as the *Meru* mountain remains unmoved, while facing the southern or the northern wind, he remains unaffected by pleasure or pain. He treats all living beings equally like the moonlight, which gives equal pleasure to a prince and a pauper. Just as the entire world craves for water, so, all the three worlds are fond of him and like to have him as their own (201-205). Thus my devotee sheds love and attachment for sensuous pleasures and remains in solitude, fixing his mind on My essential nature.

19. *Who is equable in praise or blame, silent and content with whatever comes, homeless and firm of mind, such a devotee is dear to Me.*

He is not distressed by hearing slander or elated by praise. As the sky remains unaffected by its contact with the clouds, he treats evenly both slander and praise and moves with an even temper in public and in solitude. (As his mind is free from desires) whatever he hears, whether true or false does not affect his silence and he does not become satiated while experiencing the *Brahmin* State, beyond the mind. Just as the sea never dries up, in the absence of the rains, he never feels joy at any gain nor is he dejected at any loss (206-210). Like the wind who never remains at one place and is constantly on the move everywhere, he does not resort to a house and regards the whole world as his home. He is fully convinced, that the entire universe is his home - nay, he has himself become the entire universe, both movable and immovable. Even in this state, he remains still zealously devoted to Me. I treat such a one, as My crown and place him on My head. It is no wonder, that one should bend one's head before such an exalted person. So all the three worlds honour him, by taking the holy water of his feet (211-215). One should make *Lord Shiva* as his *Guru* and learn from him, how to show respect to the object of one's faith. But leave this alone. To praise *Lord Shiva*,

is really to indulge in self-praise and so this is not an apt illustration. I wish to reiterate, that I bear My devotee on My head. Even when My devotee has secured in his hand liberation, the fourth object of man's existence, he still follows the path of devotion and sets an example to the world. As a priest of emancipation, he decides who should get liberation and who should not, and yet he remains lowly like water (216-220). Therefore, I bow to him, hold him on My head and bear the mark of his heel on My chest. I embellish My speech, by singing his praise and adorn My ears by hearing his encomiums. Though without eyes, I acquire vision to satisfy My strong longing, to gaze at him. I worship him, by offering him the lotus in My hand and take on two more arms in order to clasp him, in a close embrace. Though I am formless, I have assumed a body in order to enjoy his companionship. In short, I am so fond of him, that I cannot describe My feeling for him, by an appropriate simile (221-225). I feel somewhat strange in calling him, My bosom friend. Those who praise him, after hearing his life-story are also as dear to Me, as my life. O Arjuna, the Yoga that I have described to you so far, from the start, is none other than the Yoga of devotion. This devotee is so great that I shower My love on him, meditate upon him and bear him on My head.

20. *Those who partake of this elixir of duty as is taught herein with faith, being solely absorbed in Me such devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.*

Those who hear this talk of Yoga, which is sweet like a shower of nectar and combines it with duty and turns it into self-experience (226-230), develop an expanding faith and respect for Yoga and practice it, after holding it securely in their heart. If they have attained a state of mind as described by me, they realise its fruit as from the best seed sown in a fertile field. But only those who bear loving devotion towards Me and regard Me, as their all-in-all and as their ultimate goal, are My true devotees and *yogis* and it is for them, that I feel a strong longing. Those who are fond of hearing tales of devotion, are the holy waters, the sacred places and the holy ones (231-235). I meditate on them, they are the objects of My worship, and I hold none else as superior to them. I am extremely fond of them, who are our treasure and I find great satisfaction in meeting them. But, O Arjuna, I esteem those who take delight in recounting the tales of devotees, as great gods.

Thus spoke *Mukunda*, the primal seed of the universe, the giver of joy to his devotees, said *Sanjaya* to *Dhritarashtra*. He added: O King, the Lord of *Vaikuntha* who is pure and perfect, merciful to the people, protector of those who have surrendered to Him and are fit for such surrender (236-240), whose constant sport is to render help to gods, to cherish and protect the worlds and those who have submitted to him, who is famous as the saviour of religion, who is the same to all because of his boundless generosity, who although powerful, became the bondman of Bali, who is compassionate to his devotees and frank with those who love him, who is the bridge which goes straight to the Truth, and the very treasure-house of arts, is speaking and lucky Arjuna is listening. Now I shall continue the tale, which Lord Krishna will recount to Arjuna, so said *Sanjaya* to *Dhritarashtra* (241-245). *Jnanadeva* says, listen to the same story, which will be translated in Marathi. I have been taught by my *Guru Nivrittinatha* to render this service to you (246-247).

