

CHAPTER 2

|| SANKHYA AND YOGA ||

Sanjaya said,

1. *To whom thus overwhelmed by pity, with troubled eyes, full of tears and despairing, Krishna spoke these words.*

Then *Sanjaya* said listen, O king, Partha was there overcome with grief and was lamenting. When he saw his family before him, there arose in him a strange affection, and his heart melted with the warmth of feeling. Even as salt melts in water, or a cloud is dispersed by the wind, so his courageous heart was touched in a tender spot. He was overcome by compassion and looked wan like a swan stuck in a swamp. Seeing that, Arjuna was afflicted by great delusion, hear what Lord Krishna said to him (1-5).

The blessed Lord said:

2. *When has come upon you at this critical juncture this infamous dejection, not followed by the noble nor leading to heaven?*

O Arjuna, does this behaviour become you on this occasion? Think what you are and what you are up to? What's the matter with you? Do you lack anything? Has anything remained to be done? What grieves you? You never thought of improper things nor lost courage. Your very name scares away failure to the end of the quarters. You are the abode of valour, the prince among warriors; all the three worlds stand in awe of your valour. You conquered *Lord Shiva* in war and dispatched the *Nivatakavacha* demons and made the *Gandharvas* sing your praises (6-10). The world looks small in comparison with you, so great are your qualities, O Partha. It is strange that losing your heroic spirit, you are lamenting with face downcast. Think for yourself, O Arjuna, how wretched you are with this compassion: Tell me, has darkness ever swallowed the sun? Does the wind ever fear the cloud or does nectar ever suffer death? Do you think that the firewood can smother the fire? Can the salt ever melt water? Can the deadly poisonous *kalakoota* die of poisoning? Tell me, can a frog swallow a cobra (11-15)? Has a fox ever wrestled with a lion? Have such queer things happened before? But you have made such things seem possible. Therefore, O Arjuna, do not think of such things. Take courage and come quickly to your senses. Give up this folly, arise and take the bow in hand. Of what avail is this compassion on the field of battle? O Arjuna, you are a clever fellow; why don't you think now? Tell me, is compassion proper at the time of war? It will ruin your present reputation and spoil your chances of going to heaven, so said Lord Krishna to Arjuna (16-20).

3. *Yield not to impotence, O Partha; this does not become you. Cast off this gross weakness of the heart and stand up, O Arjuna.*

Therefore, O Arjuna, rid yourself of this grief and take courage. Stop this unseemly wail of

woe, O son of *Pandu*. The reputation you have built so far will cease; think now at least what is good for you. This clemency will not help you on this occasion. Have you realised only now that they are your kinsmen? Did you not recognise this before? Did you not know them to be your relations? Then why are you making now this fuss about nothing? Is such a war new to you in your life? There has always been between you sufficient motive for war (21-25). It is beyond my understanding, but O Arjuna, what you have done is wrong. If you stick to this delusion, you will lose your present reputation and forfeit the joys of heaven, as also of this world. Faintheartedness is not good on such an occasion. It brings disgrace to a warrior in battle. The merciful Lord thus counseled Arjuna in many ways. Now listen to what Arjuna said after hearing it.

Arjuna said:

4. *How shall I fight with arrows Bhishma and Drona in battle, when they deserve our homage, O slayer of foes?*

Lord, there is no cause for you to say all this; pray, think for yourself about this war (26-30). This is not a war but a blunder on our part. Our engagement in it will be disastrous, involving the slaughter of our elders. We should be serving our parents and giving them joy in every way. Instead, how can we slay them with our own hands?

Lord, we should bow down to the holy men, and if possible, worship them. How then could we go on caviling at them? These are our elders who deserve respect at all times. Moreover, we are indebted to *Bhishma* and *Drona* in many ways. When we cannot even dream of enmity with them, how can we think of attacking them face to face (31-35)? What's wrong with everybody? Woe upon our life that we should use against them the military skills learnt from them! it is the pupil of *Drona* who taught me the science of archery. Shall I then return this favour by slaying him? Am I demon *Bhasmasura* that I should betray those who have granted us favours and blessings?

5. *It should be far better to live on alms in this world without slaying these high-souled elders. By killing these elders, even though money-loving, I should only be tasting joys smeared with their blood.*

We hear that the sea is calm, but it is only on the surface, similarly agitation does not affect *Drona's* mind at any time. This limitless sky is capable of being measured some time, but *Drona's* heart is unfathomably deep (36-40). Nectar may turn sour or the diamond may break some time, but his mental balance will not shake even if provoked. They say that the mother has true love for her child, but the mind of *Drona* is kindness incarnate. *Drona* is the fount of compassion, the mine of all virtues, the limitless sea of learning, so said Arjuna. He is not only eminent, but also kind; how then can we think of killing such a person? That we should kill our elders in battle and enjoy royal pleasures does not seem right to me, even if I have to part with my life (41-45). This is such a heinous crime; even if their death brings us greater joys, I would rather go without them and start begging. I would even lay down my life for their sake or resort to a mountain cave, rather than take up arms against them. O Lord, how can we strike them in their vital parts with newly sharpened arrows and enjoy royal pleasures? What do we gain thereby? How can we enjoy these blood-stained pleasures? I therefore do

not appreciate your reasoning. Please give thought to this, so said Arjuna to Krishna. But Krishna did not at all like what he heard (46-50). When Arjuna divined this, he became afraid and said, "O Lord, why don't you listen to what I say?"

6. *Nor do I know which is better for us, that we conquer them or they conquer us. Those after killing whom we should not care to live, the Kauravas stand in array before us.*

I have told you whatever is in my mind. But you know what is best for me to do in this matter. They, for whom we would fain lay down our lives, rather than be hostile to them, are standing here with the object of fighting us. I cannot make up my mind what is better for us, to slay them or withdraw from here.

7. *My nature is stricken with fault of pity, and my mind is confused about my duty, Pray tell me for certain what is better; I am your disciple, guide me, who am your suppliant.*

I do not know what is proper for me to do; I am so bewildered by reason of this delusion (51-55). When the sight is enveloped by darkness, it cannot see even things close to it, such is my state. My perplexed mind cannot decide what is good for me. O Krishna, consider this and tell me what is proper in this case. You are our friend; you are all in all to us. You are our teacher, brother, father and also our favorite God. You have always been our protector in adversity. The teacher does not at all forsake his disciple, as the sea does not part from the river, which joins it (56-60). If a mother abandons her child, how will it survive? O Lord, you are our only friend, more so than to others, and if what I said does not appeal to you, then tell me quickly, O Supreme Person, what is proper for me to do, which is not contrary to *dharmā*.

8. *Indeed I see nothing that might dispel this sorrow that dries up my senses, even if I were to obtain the kingdom on earth, unrivalled and rich, or even the over-lordship of gods.*

The grief that I feel at the sight of these kinsmen will not be relieved without your instruction. Even if I were to gain the world or the abode of *Indra*, this delusive pity of mine will not abate (61-65). Just as a roasted seed, planted in a fertile soil, will not grow even when watered properly, or even as medicine is of no use to a person whose days are numbered, but nothing but nectar can help him, so neither royal pleasures nor prosperity can enliven my mind, but only, O merciful Lord, your affection will sustain me.

(*Jnanadeva* says) so said Arjuna as if he was freed from delusion; but instantly he was seized by the sudden impulse of delusion. On second thought I feel that this was not a sudden impulse, but that he was bitten by the deadly snake in the form of delusion (66-70). When he saw that Arjuna's heart was overflowing with pity, it hit him in his vital parts causing repeated spasms of grief. In this difficult situation Lord Krishna, the snake-charmer, was there to counteract the poison with his compassionate gaze. As the Lord happened to be close by agitated Arjuna, he will easily protect him in his kindness. With this in view I had stated that Arjuna was bit by the snake in the form of delusion. Arjuna was enveloped by delusion as the sun is covered with clouds (71-75). Even as in summer the mountain is scorched by conflagration, so Arjuna, the supreme archer, had become torn with grief. Therefore, Lord Krishna, overflowing with the nectar of pity, turned towards him like a blue cloud, with his flashing teeth looking like lightning and his sonorous speech like rumbling thunder. Now hear how that generous

cloud (Krishna) will pour and soothe the mountain (Arjuna) and produce shoots of wisdom in him. Listen to this story for the solace of your mind, so says *Jnanadeva*, disciple of *Nivriddhi* (76-80).

Sanjaya said:

9. *Having thus addressed Krishna, O scorcher of the foes, Arjuna said to Govinda (Krishna), "I shall not fight" and became silent.*

Sanjaya said, O king, listen to what the grief-stricken Partha said. He said to Lord Krishna, "Pray, do not press me further, I will not fight; about this my mind is settled." Saying this all at once, he remained silent. Lord Krishna was amazed to see him in that condition.

10. *Then smiling, as it were, O Bharata, Krishna spoke to him, who was grieving, these words in the midst of the two armies.*

Then the Lord said to himself, "What is Arjuna up to now? He does not seem to understand. What can one do to make him see reason and restore his courage? Just as an exorcist appraises one possessed by a ghost (81-85), or a physician prescribes an antidote for an incurable disease, so Lord Krishna standing in the midst of the two armies, began to think of a plan to rid Arjuna of his obsession. Divining its cause, he began to speak in a somewhat angry tone. Just as a mother's anger is full of affection for the child, or even a bitter medicine contains the *ambrosial* power of healing, which is not apparent but is seen from the result, so he began his speech with apparent unconcern but full of affection within (86-90).

The blessed Lord said:

11. *You grieve and yet spout words of wisdom. Neither for the dead nor for the living the wise men grieve.*

Then he said to Arjuna: I am really surprised by what you propose to do in the midst of war. You call yourself clever, but you are not conscious of your ignorance. Well, if I wish to enlighten you, you raise various moral issues. When a person blind from birth becomes mad, he runs helter-skelter; your cleverness seems to me like that. You are ignorant of your Self and grieve for the *Kauravas*. This is what amazes me over and over again. Tell me, O Arjuna, do you support these three worlds? Do you think that this beginningless creation of the world is untrue (91-95)? When we talk of God as the originator of all creatures in the world, is it a mere empty talk? Is it the case that you have created birth and death and the *Kauravas* will meet death only if you kill them? Or tell me, if you, deluded by egoism, refuse to slay them, will they live in eternity? Do not delude yourself that you are the one who kills, and they are the ones to get killed. All these things happen as ordained from time without beginning. Why should you then grieve over it without reason (96-100)? Not knowing this, you think the unthinkable out of folly and on top of it profess to give us lessons in morality. The discriminating do not grieve over birth and death, as all our thinking about them is due to delusion.

12. *Never was there a time when I was not, nor you nor these kings; nor shall we ever cease to exist hereafter.*

Now listen, as regards ourselves and all these kings and others who have gathered here, it is not true to say that they will live long or meet with sure death. If you get rid of your delusion, you will realise that it is not so. What we see as birth and death are due to illusion, *Maya*; otherwise the entity which really exists is indestructible (101-105). Look, if the wind produces ripples on the water, can we say that something is really produced? And when the wind ceases and the water becomes flat, what is it that has ceased? Think over it.

13. *Even as the Self has in this body, childhood, youth and old age, so he passes into another body. A wise man is not bewildered thereby.*

Consider this, although the body is the same, it becomes different with age. Perception itself is the source of knowledge for this. First we see childhood, which changes to youth. But the body does not perish with childhood. In the same way the conscious Self assumes many bodies. Whoever knows this does not suffer from the sorrow of delusion (106-110).

14. *The sense contacts, O Arjuna, give rise to heat and cold, pleasure and pain; they come and go and do not last, endure them, O Bharata.*

Man does not know this, because he is a slave to the senses. His mind is attracted by the senses and so he becomes deluded. When the senses perceive an object, and experience pleasure and pain, his mind becomes attached to the sense-objects. The senses lack definite relationship with their objects, and so they sometimes feel pleasure, sometimes pain. Now censure and praise belong to the sphere of the word, which, when heard, gives rise respectively to hatred and fondness. Soft and hard are the two qualities of touch; and its contact with the body produces joy and sorrow (111-115). Likewise ugly and beautiful are the two qualities of form, which produce through sight pleasant and unpleasant sensations. So also fragrance and stink are the two forms of smell, and their contact with the nose gives rise to pleasure and pain. Likewise taste is also of two kinds according as it produces liking and nausea. Attachment to the sense objects corrupts a person. Those who depend upon the senses suffer heat and cold and are bound by pleasure and pain. The senses find delight only in the sense-objects and nothing else; this is the peculiar nature of the senses (116-120). What then is the nature of the sense-objects? They are like the mirage or like the elephants seen in a dream, so never become attached to them; ignore them, O Arjuna.

15. *For a wise person whom they vex not, O Arjuna, and to whom sorrow and happiness are the same, is fit for immortality.*

He who is not entangled by the sense-objects does not feel pleasure and pain and does not become involved in rebirth. That which does not come under the sway of sense-objects is eternal; know this, O Arjuna.

16. *The non-existent does not exist, nor the existent ceases; the nature of both is discerned by seers of truth.*

Arjuna, listen, I shall now talk of another matter, which those who think know well (121-125). (All philosophers acknowledge that) Latent in these conditioning factors, there is an all-pervading Self. Even when milk is thoroughly mixed with water, the swan separates them from each other, or one (the goldsmith) segregates the pure gold by heating the alloy

(in a crucible), or one takes out butter skillfully by churning the curds, or one separates, by winnowing the grain from the chaff (126-130); so when the wise cogitate upon the creation, the world disappears and there remains only the Self. Therefore, they do not ascribe existence to the transient things, as they have already determined the essence of both.

17. *Know that to be indestructible on which this whole world is strung; nor can anyone bring about the destruction of this immutable self.*

If you think over it, you will realise that what is inessential is illusory, and what is essential is eternal by nature. That from which these three worlds have sprung, is not marked by name, colour or form. It is all-pervasive and transcends birth and death; even if one wishes to destroy it, it cannot be destroyed (131-135).

18. *What are said to be perishable are these bodies of the Self, which is indestructible, inscrutable and eternal. Therefore, fight O Arjuna.*

Thus, Arjuna, only these bodies are by nature destructible, therefore fight.

19. *He who thinks this (Self) to be the killer and he who thinks this killed, both of them do not know; this Self neither kills nor is it killed.*

You identify yourself with your body and others with their bodies and think that you will kill and the *Kauravas* will be killed, without knowing the truth. If you think properly, you will realise that you are not the killer and they are not the ones to be killed.

20. *He is never born nor does he die; nor having been, he will ever cease to be. Unborn, eternal, everlasting and ancient, he is not killed when the body is killed.*
21. *He who knows him (i.e. the Self) to be indestructible, unborn, eternal and immutable, how can such a person, O Partha, kill anyone or have anyone killed (through somebody).*

What we see in a dream, we think that true in sleep; but when we wake up, nothing that we saw in sleep lasts. Likewise all this is an illusion, and you are unnecessarily confused. Just as if you strike the shadow of a person, you do not hit his body (136-140), or if you break an earthen jar filled with water, the sun's reflection in it disappears, but the sun is not destroyed with it; or even if the monastery is pulled down, the space inside it, which is of the same form, remains intact in its original form; likewise even if the body is destroyed the Self does not perish. Therefore, O friend, do not be deluded by mere appearance.

22. *As a person casts off worn out clothes and takes on new ones, even so the Self discards worn out bodies and enters into new ones.*

Even as a person throws away his old clothes and dons new ones, so the Lord of intelligence takes on another body.

23. *Weapons do not cleave him nor does fire burn him; water does not wet him, nor does wind parch him.*
24. *He cannot be cut, burnt, or made wet or dry. He is eternal, all-pervading, stable, unmoving and constant.*

The Self is beginningless and everlasting, without limiting conditions and pure, so he cannot be cut by weapons etc. (141-145). He is not drenched in the water of the deluge, nor burnt by fire nor parched by the wind. So, Arjuna, the Self should be realised as eternal, unmoving and constant, existing everywhere at all times and perfect.

25. *He is said to be unmanifest, incomprehensible and changeless; therefore, knowing him as such, you should not grieve.*

He is not comprehended by reason, O Arjuna. Meditation is ever yearning to meet him. He is inaccessible to the mind and unattainable by any means. This Supreme Person is beyond limit, O Arjuna. He is devoid of the three qualities, and is without beginning and change. He is devoid of form, but present in all forms (146-150). In this way, O Arjuna, he is the inner controller of all beings. When you realise this, you will become free from sorrow.

26. *And even if you think him to be constantly born and constantly dying, for him, O mighty-armed Arjuna, you should not grieve.*

But if, not knowing thus, you think him to be perishable, even then, O Arjuna, you ought not to grieve. Origination, continuity and end form a continuous process like the uninterrupted flow of river water. The river has an origin and it meets the sea in the end; but its flow in between appears to be continuous. Know that these three states belong to all beings and do not leave the creatures at any time (151-155). So there is nothing for you to grieve about, as this world process is naturally without beginning. Even if this does not appeal to you, you should see that every creature is subject to birth and death, which are inevitable; so there should be no cause for grief.

27. *For death is certain for one who is born and birth is certain for one that dies. Therefore, you should not grieve for that which is inevitable.*

Whatever is born dies and whatever dies comes to life; thus this wheel of life revolves continually. Just as the sun rises and sets without interruption, so birth and death are difficult to avoid (155-160). All the three worlds perish at the time of dissolution, and therefore, origination and end are inevitable. If you accept this, why do you lament? Since you know it, why don't you grasp it fully? If you look at it from any angle, you will realise that there is no cause for grief.

28. *Beings are unmanifest in their beginnings; they become manifest in the middle, O Bharata; and they become unmanifest after death. So why grieve over them?*

All these creatures were formless before birth; they come to possess form only after they are born. When they perish they do not certainly enter a new form, but revert to their original state (161-165). But whatever form is seen in-between is like a dream. So this world is a superimposition on reality due to *Maya*. Even as water touched by breeze takes the form of ripples, or gold worked by a goldsmith turns into ornaments, or the sky becomes covered by a layer of clouds, so all the creatures are products of *Maya*. Why do you weep and wail over what is not there. Think only of immutable conscious self. By yearning for it and experiencing it the saints discard sense-objects, hermits on their part become indifferent to the worldly pleasures (166-170) and the great sages take the vow of chastity etc. and practice austerities.

29. *Someone regards him as marvelous; another speaks of him as marvelous; and yet, no one knows him.*

Some turned their inward eye to the Self and gazing at him lost sense of the world. Many others who sang his praises attained dispassion and became ever immersed in him beyond limit. Others, content to hear about him, lost consciousness of the body and became one with him through spiritual experience. Just as the currents of the rivers join the sea and return not, even if they are not merged with it (171-175), so the minds of *yogis* who have become one with him, do not attain rebirth through discriminating knowledge.

30. *The self is not subject to death in anyone's body O Bharata, therefore, you should not grieve for anyone.*

That which exists everywhere in all the bodies and cannot be destroyed, that is the conscious Self which dwells in everyone. By their very nature all material things come to birth and die. Then why should you grieve over it? O Arjuna, I do not know why you cannot understand such a simple thing. This sorrow of yours is unseemly in many ways.

31. *Further having regard to your duty you should not falter, there is nothing better than a lawful war for a warrior.*

Why don't you even now, consider it carefully? What are you thinking now? You seem to have become totally forgetful of your duty, which alone can save you (176-180). Even if something worse were to happen to the *Kauravas* or to yourselves, or even if this world cycle were to come to an end now, there is still your duty, which you should not renounce at any cost. Do you think that this compassion will save you? O Arjuna, that your heart should melt with compassion now, is improper at the time of war. If cow's milk, which is good, is not prescribed as part of a diet, it may work like poison to a patient suffering from enteric fever. So if one takes a wrong step at the wrong time, one will go to ruin. So be on your guard (181-185). Why do you worry for no reason? Attend to your duty. If you perform your duty, no blame will attach to you. If a person walks on a beaten track, he will not come to harm; nor is a person who walks in day-light is likely to trip. If a person, O Partha, is firm in the performance of his duty, he will accomplish all his desires without effort. If you consider it this way, there is nothing more proper for you warriors than a battle like this. You should therefore face your enemies, free from guile. Need I say more, this is so self-evident (186-190).

32. *This war has come by chance as an open door to heaven, O Partha; happy are the warriors who come by a war like this.*

This war has come to you, O Arjuna, by a stroke of good luck - nay, the treasure of all righteousness has appeared in that form. How can you call it a war? Your heroism has brought down the heaven in the form of this war. Or having heard the world praise your virtues, renown has come to choose its mate with intense love. When a warrior earns great merit, he comes by a war like this. Even as a person, while walking, comes across philosopher's stone, or a person, while yawning suddenly finds that nectar drops have fallen into his mouth, so this war has come to you as your best opportunity (191-195).

33. *If, however, you will not carry on this lawful war, then failing in your duty and honour, you will incur sin.*

If you withdraw now from this war and grieve for nothing, you will cause harm to yourself. If you throw down you weapons in this war, you will defile the fame of your forefathers, lose your present repute and incur the censure of the world. Then all human foibles will seek you out and possess you. Even as a woman deserted by her husband becomes the object of scorn all along, such will be your state if you abandon your duty. Or just as vultures gnaw at a corpse on the battlefield from all sides, so if you fail in your duty, all human frailties will encircle you (196-200).

34. *Besides men will recount endlessly your infamy and to one held in high esteem, dishonour is worse than death.*

Therefore, if you neglect your duty, you will incur sin; and this disgrace will not be effaced even at the end of the world cycle. A wise man should live only so long as he does not suffer infamy. Besides tell me how you propose to get away from here. Even if you were to leave this place out of kindness and without malice, this action of yours will not carry conviction to the *Kauravas*. They will surround you from all sides and when they shower arrows upon you, your kindness will not save you. Even if you manage to get away unscathed, your after-life will be worse than death (201-205).

35. *The great warriors will think that you have retreated from war out of fear; and you, who are held in esteem by them, will incur their disrespect.*

You have not considered another thing. You have come here ready and eager to fight. And if you now leave the battleground out of kindness, will your wicked enemies appreciate your motive?

36. *And your enemies will utter many unspeakable words, decrying your prowess. Could anything be sadder than that?*

They will shout, 'Arjuna has fled from here in fright'. If this public opprobrium persists, will that be good for you? People win fame, O Arjuna, with great effort, even at the risk of their life. You have earned without effort and obstacles, fame which is unlimited like the sky (206-210). You have gained unbounded and unparalleled reputation, and your virtues are regarded as excellent by the three worlds. Even far-off kings sing your praises like bards; and after hearing them even the God of death is alarmed. Your great glory is as pure as the water of the Ganges; and its report astounds the great warriors of the world. After hearing your marvelous prowess, the *Kauravas* have lost all hopes of survival. Just as after hearing the lion's roar, even rutting elephants think the world-dissolution to be near, so you inspire dread in the minds of all *Kauravas* (211-215). As the mountain rates the thunderbolt or the snake the eagle, so the *Kauravas* appraise you likewise. If you now withdraw from this war without fighting, you will lose all your greatness and lower yourself in their eyes. Even if you wish to run away from here, they will prevent you from doing so. They will seize you, dishonour you and malign you in every way. Instead of letting your heart split in shame at that time, why not put up a brave fight now and enjoy the kingdom of the world by conquering them?

37. *Slain, you will attain heaven; victorious, you will enjoy the earth. Therefore, stand up, O Arjuna, resolved to fight.*

If you lay down your life fighting in the battle, you will enjoy the peaceful pleasures of heaven (216-220). Now don't brood too much over this matter, O Arjuna. Stand up with the bow in your hand and fight with valour. When a person performs his duty, all his faults become dissolved. How did you come to be deluded that you will incur sin by performing your duty? Tell me, will a person who crosses a river in a boat get drowned? Will a person walking straight on a highway stumble? But he who does not know how to walk properly will miss his footing. If a person drinks milk mixed with poison, he will surely die; likewise a person incurs sin if he does his duty with the motive of gain. Therefore, if you perform your duty as a warrior and fight disinterestedly, then it is not sinful (221-225).

38. *Hold alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, and get ready for battle; then you will not incur sin.*

A person should not be elated by pleasure or depressed by pain, nor should he mind gain or loss. He should not feel anxious about victory in war or about loss of his life on the battlefield. While discharging his duty, he should bear patiently what falls to his lot. When his mind attains to this state, he does not incur sin. So you must carry on the fight without anxiety.

39. *What has been told to you so far is the Sankhya view. Imbued with this knowledge, O Partha, you will cast off the bonds of action.*

So far I have described to you in a nutshell *Sankhyayoga*; now listen to *Buddhiyoga* as settled (226-230). When a person masters this Yoga, he does not suffer bonds of *karma*, even as a victor wearing a hard armour can bear the rain of arrows, unscathed.

40. *In this there is no loss of effort nor lapse by non-performance. Even a little of this Yoga, saves one from great fear.*

By this Yoga one does not miss worldly pleasures nor liberation. If it is interrupted in the middle, it remains intact. One should live performing actions, but without an eye on their fruits. Even as an exorcist is not possessed by a ghost, so a right-minded and selfless person is not affected by external conditions (231-235). This right-mindedness is not affected by merit nor by sin; it is subtle, constant and untainted by the three qualities. Even if a little of this right-mindedness is acquired through merit, it illumines the mind of a person, and he loses all fear of worldly existence.

41. *In this, O joy of Kurus, there is resolute insight; but the thoughts of the irresolute are many-branched and endless.*

Even as a small flame of a lamp gives abundant light, one should not under-rate right-mindedness, even though meagre. The wise, O Partha, aspire for it very much, but this right-mindedness is difficult to attain by everyone. Even as the philosopher's stone is not easy to obtain like ordinary stones, or a drop of nectar becomes available only by a stroke of good fortune (236-240), so this right-mindedness which leads to God-realisation is difficult to attain. Just as the river *Ganga* ends only in the sea, so this insight is the only knowledge which aims at nothing but God. Everything else is perverse reasoning, which is ever changing, and non-

discriminating persons always take delight in it. The latter O Arjuna, attain only heaven, earth or hell, and do not get even a glimpse of the bliss of self-realisation.

42. *These ignorant men, O Partha, taking delight in Vedic utterances, say that there is nothing else and utter this flowery speech,*

They speak on the authority of the *Vedas* and endorse the *Vedic* rites; but when they do so they are attached to their fruits (241-245). They say, "One should be born in this world and perform sacrifices and other rites and enjoy the delectable pleasures of heaven. Other than these celestial pleasures, there is naught else, which conduces to constant joy", so say these persons of dull wit.

43. *Abounding in a variety of rites, resulting in actions, fruition and rebirth as the means to enjoyment and power, being full of desire and intent on heaven.*

Overcome by desire, they perform works in order to indulge in sensuous enjoyments. They undertake many rites strictly according to religious precepts and perform their religious duty with dexterity.

44. *As for those who cling to sensuous enjoyment and power, with their wits carried away (by that flowery speech), their single-pointed mind does not remain fixed in contemplation.*

But, O Arjuna, they do a wrong thing in that, they long for heaven and forget God, who is the enjoyer of sacrifices (246-250). Even as one collects *camphor* and sets fire to it, or one cooks sweet dishes and mixes poison in them, or one kicks a jar full of nectar found by a stroke of luck, in the same way they lose merit through the motive of gain. Tell me, after making this great effort, why do they run after worldly pleasures? But what can one do? They are ignorant in this matter. Just as a house-wife were to cook good dishes and sell them, similarly thoughtless persons lose merit for the sake of worldly pleasures. Hence, O Arjuna, bear in mind that those who take delight in the letters of *Veda*, have a perverse mentality (251-255).

45. *The Vedas have the three gunas as their subject; be above the three qualities, O Arjuna. Free from the pairs of opposites, be firmly established in purity, and not caring for gain and preservation, be possessed of the Self.*

Know for certain that the *Vedas* are pervaded by the three qualities. All the *Upanishads* and the like are endowed with the quality of goodness. Other religious texts are imbued with passion and darkness, as they speak of rites which lead to heaven, O Arjuna. Knowing that they only cause pleasure and pain, do not entertain them in your mind. Forsake this triad of qualities and give up the sense of 'Me' and 'Mine', and do not for a moment forget the bliss flowing from the self.

46. *Whatever use a well has in a place flooded with water, that much use there is in the Vedas for an enlightened person.*

Though the *Vedas* speak of a variety of religious rites, we should accept only those that are conducive to our benefit (256-260). When the sun rises, many roads come in sight; but tell me, can a person take all of them? Or even if the earth is flooded with water, we take that

much as will satisfy our thirst. So also the wise men reflect on the meaning of the *Vedas* and accept only the eternal truth.

47. *You have the right to action alone and never for its fruit; do not have the fruit of action as a motive, or attachment to action.*

O Arjuna, listen. If you consider it this way, it is best that you should perform your duty. After full consideration, I have come to this view that you should not give up your prescribed duty (261-265). But without hankering after the fruit of action or resorting to wicked deeds, you should perform only good deeds disinterestedly.

48. *Engaged in Yoga, cast off attachment and perform actions, O Arjuna, remaining even-minded in success or failure; this equanimity is called Yoga.*

So, Arjuna, adopting Yoga and giving up attachment to the fruit of action, you should perform actions with diligence. Don't be elated too much, if you are lucky to finish the work undertaken; but do not become frustrated, if, for some reason, you are not able to see it through. If the work is finished, it has achieved its purpose; but even if it remains incomplete, it is edifying (226-270). Whatever action you undertake, you should dedicate it to God. Then you should rest assured that it is rendered perfect. This equanimity of the mind in regard to good and bad deeds is praised as the *yogic* state by eminent men.

49. *Inferior by far is mere work to this Yoga of discernment. Take refuge in right-mindedness. Wretched are those who seek reward.*

50. *One possessed of right-mindedness discards both good and evil deeds; therefore, devote yourself to Yoga. Yoga is skill in action.*

O Arjuna, know that this equanimity of mind is the essence of Yoga, in which the mind becomes possessed of discernment. Compared to *buddhiyoga*, the path of action seems far inferior to it. But only if you perform action, you will attain to this Yoga, culminating in the *yogic* state (271-275). Therefore, O Arjuna, keep your mind steady on this potent *buddhiyoga* by giving up desire for the fruit of actions. Those who pursued this Yoga crossed over the worldly existence and went beyond the bondage of merit and demerit.

51. *Wise men, possessed of knowledge, by giving up the fruit of actions, are freed from the bonds of birth and reach the abode beyond evil.*

Even if the wise men perform actions, they are not affected by their results; and so they escape the vexations of death and rebirth. When, O Arjuna, they become endowed with *buddhiyoga*, they attain to the eternal state of bliss.

52. *when your mind passes beyond the maze of delusion, then you will become indifferent to what has been heard and what is yet to be heard.*

You will reach this state, when you will get rid of delusion and make room for dispassion in your mind (276-280). Then you will attain spotless and deep knowledge of the self and your mind will become desireless of its own accord. Then O Arjuna, your desire for more and more knowledge or the need to remember to your former knowledge will come to an end.

53. *When your mind, bewildered by hearing, will become unshakeable and steady in contemplation then you will attain to Yoga.*

Then the mind which wanders after the senses becomes steady in the contemplation of the self. When your intellect becomes steady in the joy of contemplation, you will achieve this full *yogic* state.

Arjuna said:

54. *What is the mark of sthitaprajna steadfast in samadhi, O Krishna, how does a person of steady wisdom talk, how does he sit, how does he walk?*

There upon Arjuna said, 'I am going to ask you what is in my mind, O compassionate Lord, please reply to it (281-285)'. Krishna replied, 'Arjuna please be free to ask whatever thoughts occur in your mind'. Hearing these words Arjuna asked, O Krishna, please tell me how one should recognise a person of steady wisdom. Who is said to be a man of steady wisdom? By what marks is he to be known, who constantly enjoys the joy of contemplation? In what state does he remain? How does he appear? O Lord of wealth, tell me all this. Then Lord Krishna, who is God incarnated and the ground of the four virtues, began to speak (286-290).

The blessed Lord said:

55. *When a person abandons all desires which enter his mind and remains satisfied in his Self alone, O Partha, then he is called a man of steady wisdom.*

He said: "O Arjuna, listen. This inordinate desire of the mind becomes an obstacle in the realisation of the bliss. Even a person who is happy and contented is caught in the snares of the sense-objects because of attachment. When a person rids himself permanently of this desire and remains immersed in the joy of self, he is known as a man of steady wisdom."

56. *He whose mind is unperturbed in sorrow and has no craving for pleasures, and who is free from passion, anger and fear is called a sage of steady wisdom.*

A person of steady wisdom is not disturbed when assailed by misery, nor is he frustrated by blind hope of happiness. He is not easily affected by desire and anger, and since he has become perfect, he does not know fear (291-295). When a person becomes free from limiting conditions and distinctions, he should be known as a man of steady wisdom.

57. *He who has no attachment and who, meeting with good or evil, does not welcome the one or hate the other, his wisdom is well-poised.*

He is the same to everybody like the full moon, which gives light without distinguishing between the good and the wicked. In this equal treatment and compassion to all creatures, his mind undergoes no alteration at any time. He does not become elated if he gains something good nor does he become dejected if he comes by something bad. Know that person to be a man of steady wisdom, who is full of the knowledge of the Self and feels neither joy nor sorrow (296-300).

58. *And when he withdraws from all sides his senses from the sense-objects, even as a tortoise (draws in) its limbs, then his wisdom is well-poised.*

Even as the tortoise extends or withdraws its limbs at will, so his senses remain under his control and function according to his will. Know then that his wisdom has become steadfast.

59. *The sense-objects turn away from an abstemious person except the taste; this too turns away after he sees the Supreme.*

Further, I should like to tell you another strange thing. The seekers, who give up the sense-objects through self-restraint and restrain their senses but not the sense of taste, become entangled in the sense-objects in thousand ways. If you pluck the leaves from the tree externally and water its roots, how will you destroy it (301-305)? Even as the tree spreads sideways by that watering, so also sense-enjoyment is nourished through the sense of taste. The objects of the other senses may cease, but it is difficult to restrain the sense of taste, as without it human life cannot be sustained. A person can, however, restrain the sense of taste also, if he attains the experience of *Brahman*. When conviction dawns upon him that he is *Brahman* himself, then the consciousness of the body ceases, and the senses think no more of their objects.

60. *For the rebellious senses of a wise person, O Arjuna, even while he is striving otherwise, forcibly carry away his mind.*

Moreover, O Arjuna, if persons continue to restrain their senses, it is difficult to bring them under control by any means (306-310). If they restrain the mind by *yogic* practice, fencing it with religious observances, they have to suffer agony; such is the might of the senses. Just as a female spirit casts a spell on an exorcist, so these sense-objects come in the guise of supernatural powers, and sway a person's mind through contact with the senses. If his mind is caught in their snare he stops *yogic* practice; such is the power of the senses.

61. *Holding them all in check, the yogi should remain fixed in Yoga, intent on me. For when his senses are under control, his wisdom is well poised.*

Listen, O Partha, he who conquers his senses, abandoning desire for sense-objects (311-315) is alone fit for dedication to Yoga; for his mind is not beguiled by the senses. As he possesses always the knowledge of the Self, he does not forget me. Even if a person keeps aloof from external sense-objects but remains constantly brooding over them, he still remains engrossed in worldly life. Even as a little drop of poison if taken, spreads all over the body, so the smallest trace of desire in man destroys his discriminating power completely (316-320).

62. *When a person broods over the objects of sense, attachment to them grows in him. From attachment springs desire, from desire anger.*
63. *From anger arises delusion, from delusion confused memory, from confused memory loss of reason, and from loss of reason he perishes.*

The mere recollection of sense-objects gives rise to attachment in a disinterested person, and with attachment desire makes its appearance. From frustrated desire springs anger, and from anger delusion. Recollection is impaired by delusion, as the flame is extinguished by the wind. Just as at sunset night swallows daylight, such is the state of a person who is deprived of recollection. When his reason becomes blinded by the darkness of ignorance, it produces confused understanding. As a person blind from birth runs helter-skelter, so delusion overtakes

his understanding. With the loss of recollection, his intellect becomes muddled, and all his knowledge melts into thin air. What condition the body assumes with the loss of life, his condition becomes similar to that with the loss of reason. Therefore, listen, O Arjuna, as a spark fallen on firewood suffices to consume all the three worlds, so even if the mind perchance broods over the sense-objects, doom seeks him out and overtakes him (326-330).

64. *But if a self-possessed person enjoys the sense-objects without desire and hatred, keeping his senses under control, he attains to serenity.*

Therefore you should expel all thoughts of sense-objects from your mind, so that passion and hatred are stamped out; then even if the senses indulge in sense-objects, they would cause no harm. Even as the sun touching the world with his rays, does not become tainted by that contact, so a person remains indifferent to the sense-objects, when he is free from desire and anger and engrossed in the bliss of the Self. When he comes to perceive that the sense-objects are not different from him, how can they bring harm to him (331-335)? If water can drown itself or fire can burn itself, then a perfected person can become overwhelmed by sense-contacts. In this way, if a person becomes completely absorbed in Self, then know without doubt that his wisdom has become steady.

65. *And from serenity results cessation of all suffering. For in a person with a serene mind wisdom becomes firmly set.*

Listen, when the mind remains serene without break, all the sorrows of the world do not enter it. Even as hunger and thirst do not affect a person who has a spring of nectar in his belly, how can sorrow affect him whose mind is tranquil? His understanding remains of itself absorbed in the supreme Self (336-340). Just as the flame of a lamp does not flicker in a windless place, so the wisdom of a *yogi* remains steady in the Self.

66. *He who is not imbued with Yoga has neither knowledge nor meditation. For the unmeditative there is no peace, for the unpeaceful whence happiness?*

He is surely caught in the net of the sense-objects, in whose mind the thought of Yoga has not taken root. The wisdom of such a person, O Partha, never becomes steady, and the desire for such steady wisdom does not arise in his mind. When he does not have even the desire for steadiness, how can he attain to peace, O Arjuna? As he has no abiding interest in peace, happiness does not flow into him even by chance (341-345), as there can never be salvation for a sinner. If seeds roasted in fire sprout, happiness will accrue to a man without peace. Thus a mind undisciplined by Yoga is the source of misery, and for this reason it is best to control the senses.

67. *For the mind which yields to the wandering senses loses his wisdom, as a ship on waters caught in a gale.*

Persons who do what the senses desire, do not at all cross over the sea of worldly existence. Just as the boat, which is caught in a storm when about to reach the shore, has to face a mishap which it had escaped till then, so if an enlightened person indulges fondly his senses, he is overcome by the misery of worldly life (346-350).

68. *Therefore, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), of him whose senses are completely restrained, his wisdom is well set.*

Hence, O Arjuna, if the senses come under one's control, can there be anything more beneficial than that? Even as a tortoise spreads his limbs in joy and withdraws them when it so desires, so when a person's senses remain under his control and do whatever he wishes, know that his wisdom has attained steadiness. And I shall now describe to you the secret mark of a person who has attained fulfillment.

69. *The man of self-control keeps awake in that which is night to all creatures. And that in which the creatures keep awake is night to the discerning sage.*

That (self-knowledge) in regard to which the ordinary persons are in the dark is like dawn to the *yogi*; The *yogi* remains as if asleep (i.e. indifferent) to that (sense-enjoyment) in regard to which they are wide awake (351-355). Such a person, O Arjuna, is free from limiting conditions and steady in wisdom; know him to be a great sage free from all limitations.

70. *Even as the waters flow into the sea, which, though ever being filled, remains unaffected, so he, in whom all desires enter, attains peace, and not one who hankers after objects of desire.*

O Partha, there is another way by which such a person can be known. Just as the sea remains calm without interruption, and even when the river waters in spate join the sea in the rainy season, it does not swell even a bit and transgress its limit, or when in the summer all rivers go dry, the sea, O Partha, is not diminished at all, so he is not elated after obtaining miraculous powers, nor does he become depressed when he does not achieve them (356-360). Tell me, does the sun's abode get lit up by the flame of a wick, and if the wick is not lighted, will he remain in darkness? In the same way, he is not conscious of the miraculous powers even when they come and go; his mind is so completely engrossed in the bliss of the Self. How can one who spurns *Indra's* mansion, preferring his beautiful home, live in a tribal hut? Just as one who finds fault with nectar does not eat gruel, so after attaining the knowledge of Self one does not enjoy miraculous powers. Moreover, O Partha, when one does not care for celestial pleasures, will it surprise you, if such a one considers miraculous powers as trifling (361-365)?

71. *The man who forsakes all desires and goes about free from craving, possessiveness and pride, attains to peace.*

He who delights in the knowledge of the Self and thrives on Supreme bliss, know him to be truly steady in wisdom. He gets rid of egoistic feeling and all desires and roams in this world, becoming one with it.

72. *This, O Partha, is the brahmi state; after achieving it, no one is deluded. Abiding therein at the time of death, he remains absorbed in Brahman.*

This, O Arjuna, is the limitless state of *Brahman*, which selfless persons experience and attain to *Brahman*. When they realise the Self, the agony of death does not stand in their way. *Sanjaya* said, "In this way did Lord Krishna describe to Arjuna in his own words the *brahmi* state (366-370)."

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Then Arjuna said to himself, 'This reasoning suits me well. If the Lord negates all action, his advice that I should fight cancels itself'. Thus Arjuna became overjoyed to hear this speech of Lord Krishna. This occasion is sweet, being the abode of religion or the unlimited sea of *ambrosial* thoughts. Now I, *Jnanadeva*, disciple of *Nivritti*, shall recount what the omniscient Lord declared to Arjuna (371-375).

