

- Chapter 2 -
Contents of the Gītā Summarized

Arjuna submits to Lord Kṛṣṇa as His disciple, and Kṛṣṇa begins His teachings to Arjuna by explaining the fundamental distinction between the temporary material body and the eternal spiritual soul. The Lord explains the process of transmigration, the nature of selfless service to the Supreme and the characteristics of a self-realized person.

TEXT 1

sañjaya uvāca
taṁ tathā kṛpayāviṣṭam
aśru-pūrṇākulekṣaṇam
viṣīdantam idaṁ vākyam
uvāca madhusūdanaḥ

Begins section 1:
More doubts

Sañjaya said: Seeing Arjuna full of compassion, his mind depressed, his eyes full of tears, Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, spoke the following words.

TEXT 2

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
kutas tvā kaśmalam idaṁ
viṣame samuṣṭhitam
anārya-juṣṭam asvargyam
akīrti-karam arjuna

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Arjuna, how have these impurities come upon you? They are not at all befitting a man who knows the value of life. They lead not to higher planets but to infamy.

TEXT 3

*klaibyaṁ mā sma gamaḥ pārtha
naitat tvayy upapadyate
kṣudraṁ hṛdaya-daurbalyaṁ
tyaktvottiṣṭha parantapa*

O son of Pṛthā, do not yield to this degrading impotence. It does not become you. Give up such petty weakness of heart and arise, O chastiser of the enemy.

TEXT 4

*arjuna uvāca
kathaṁ bhīṣmam ahaṁ saṅkhye
droṇaṁ ca madhusūdana
iṣubhiḥ pratiyotsyāmi
pūjārḥāv ari-sūdana*

Arjuna said: O killer of enemies, O killer of Madhu, how can I counterattack with arrows in battle men like Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who are worthy of my worship?

TEXT 5

*gurūn ahatvā hi mahānubhāvān
śreyo bhoktum bhaikṣyam apīha loke
hatvārtha-kāmāns tu gurūn ihaiva
bhuñjīya bhogān rudhira-pradigdhān*

It would be better to live in this world by begging than to live at the cost of the lives of great souls who are my teachers. Even though desiring worldly gain, they are superiors. If they are killed, everything we enjoy will be tainted with blood.

TEXT 6

*na caitad vidmaḥ kataran no garīyo
yad vā jayema yadi vā no jayeyuḥ
yān eva hatvā na jijīviṣāmas
te 'vasthitāḥ pramukhe dhārtarāṣṭrāḥ*

Nor do we know which is better—conquering them or being conquered by

them. If we killed the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, we should not care to live. Yet they are now standing before us on the battlefield.

TEXT 7

*kārpaṇya-doṣopahata-svabhāvaḥ
pṛcchāmi tvām dharma-sammūḍha-cetāḥ
yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṁ brūhi tan me
śiṣyas te 'haṁ śādhi mām tvām praṇanam*

Now I am confused about my duty and have lost all composure because of miserly weakness. In this condition I am asking You to tell me for certain what is best for me. Now I am Your disciple, and a soul surrendered unto You. Please instruct me.

TEXT 8

*na hi praśyāmi mamāpanudyād
yac chokam ucchoṣaṇam indriyāṇām
avāpya bhūmāv asaṇatnam ṛddham
rājyaṁ surāṇām api cādhipatyam*

I can find no means to drive away this grief which is drying up my senses. I will not be able to dispel it even if I win a prosperous, unrivaled kingdom on earth with sovereignty like that of the demigods in heaven.

TEXT 9

*sañjaya uvāca
evam uktvā hṛṣikeśam
guḍākeśaḥ parantapaḥ
na yotsya iti govindam
uktvā tūṣṇīm babhūva ha*

Sañjaya said: Having spoken thus, Arjuna, chastiser of enemies, told Kṛṣṇa, "Govinda, I shall not fight," and fell silent.

TEXT 10

*tam uvāca hṛṣikeśaḥ
prahasann iva bhārata
senayor ubhayor madhye
viṣīdantam idaṁ vacaḥ*

O descendant of Bharata, at that time Kṛṣṇa, smiling, in the midst of both the armies, spoke the following words to the grief-stricken Arjuna.

TEXT 11

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
aśocyān anvaśocas tvaṁ
prajñā-vādāmś ca bhāṣase
gatāsūn agatāsūmś ca
nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ*

Begins section 2:
Don't be foolish. Fight
because there is no
death for the soul.
(jñāna yoga)

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: While speaking learned words, you are mourning for what is not worthy of grief. Those who are wise lament neither for the living nor for the dead.

TEXT 12

*na tv evāhaṁ jātu nāsaṁ
na tvaṁ neme janādhipāḥ
na caiva na bhaviṣyāmaḥ
sarve vayam ataḥ param*

Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be.

TEXT 13

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe
kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā
tathā dehāntara-prāptir
dhīras tatra na muhyati*

As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change.

TEXT 14

*mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino 'nityās
tāms titikṣasva bhārata*

O son of Kuntī, the nonpermanent appearance of happiness and distress, and their disappearance in due course, are like the appearance and disappearance of winter and summer seasons. They arise from sense perception, O scion of Bharata, and one must learn to tolerate them without being disturbed.

TEXT 15

*yaṁ hi na vyathayanty ete
puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha
sama-duḥkha-sukhaṁ dhīraṁ
so 'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

O best among men [Arjuna], the person who is not disturbed by happiness and distress and is steady in both is certainly eligible for liberation.

TEXT 16

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo
nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ
ubhayor api dṛṣṭo 'ntas
tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

Those who are seers of the truth have concluded that of the nonexistent [the material body] there is no endurance and of the eternal [the soul] there is no change. This they have concluded by studying the nature of both.

TEXT 17

*avināśi tu tad viddhi
yena sarvam idaṁ tatam
vināśam avyayasyāsya
na kaścit kartum arhati*

That which pervades the entire body you should know to be indestructible. No one is able to destroy that imperishable soul.

TEXT 18

*antavanta ime dehā
nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ
anāśino 'prameyasya
tasmād yudhyasva bhārata*

The material body of the indestructible, immeasurable and eternal living entity is sure to come to an end; therefore, fight, O descendant of Bharata.

TEXT 19

*ya enam vetti hantāraṁ
yaś cainaṁ manyate hatam
ubhau tau na vijānīto
nāyaṁ hanti na hanyate*

Neither he who thinks the living entity the slayer nor he who thinks it slain is in knowledge, for the self slays not nor is slain.

TEXT 20

*na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin
nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*

For the soul there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.

TEXT 21

*vedāvināśinaṁ nityaṁ
ya enam ajam avyayam
kathaṁ sa puruṣaḥ pārtha
kaṁ ghātayati hanti kaṁ*

O Pārtha, how can a person who knows that the soul is indestructible, eternal, unborn and immutable kill anyone or cause anyone to kill?

TEXT 22

*vāsāmsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya
navāni gṛhṇāti naro 'parāṇi
tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇāny
anyāni samyāti navāni dehī*

As a person puts on new garments, giving up old ones, the soul similarly accepts new material bodies, giving up the old and useless ones.

TEXT 23

*nainam chindanti śastrāṇi
nainam dahati pāvakaḥ
na cainam kledayanty āpo
na śoṣayati mārutaḥ*

The soul can never be cut to pieces by any weapon, nor burned by fire, nor moistened by water, nor withered by the wind.

TEXT 24

*acchedyo 'yam adāhyo 'yam
akledyo 'śoṣya eva ca
nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ sthāṇur
acalo 'yam sanātanaḥ*

This individual soul is unbreakable and insoluble, and can be neither burned nor dried. He is everlasting, present everywhere, unchangeable, immovable and eternally the same.

TEXT 25

*avyakto 'yam acintyo 'yam
avikāryo 'yam ucyate
tasmād evaṁ viditvainam
nānuśocitum arhasi*

It is said that the soul is invisible, inconceivable and immutable. Knowing this, you should not grieve for the body.

TEXT 26

*atha cainam nitya-jātam
nityam vā manyase mṛtam
tathāpi tvam mahā-bāho
nainam śocitum arhasi*

If, however, you think that the soul [or the symptoms of life] is always born and dies forever, you still have no reason to lament, O mighty-armed.

TEXT 27

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur
dhruvam janma mṛtasya ca
tasmād aparihārye 'rthe
na tvam śocitum arhasi*

One who has taken his birth is sure to die, and after death one is sure to take birth again. Therefore, in the unavoidable discharge of your duty, you should not lament.

TEXT 28

*avyaktādīni bhūtāni
vyakta-madhyāni bhārata
avyakta-nidhanāny eva
tatra kā paridevanā*

All created beings are unmanifest in their beginning, manifest in their interim state, and unmanifest again when annihilated. So what need is there for lamentation?

TEXT 29

*āścarya-vat paśyati kaścīd enam
āścarya-vad vadati tathaiiva cānyaḥ
āścarya-vac cainam anyāḥ śṛṇoti
śrutvāpy enam veda na caiva kaścīd*

Some look on the soul as amazing, some describe him as amazing, and some hear of him as amazing, while others, even after hearing about him, cannot understand him at all.

TEXT 30

*dehī nityam avadhyo 'yaṁ
dehe sarvasya bhārata
tasmāt sarvāṇi bhūtāni
na tvam śocitum arhasi*

O descendant of Bharata, he who dwells in the body can never be slain.
Therefore you need not grieve for any living being.

TEXT 31

*sva-dharmam api cāveksya
na vikampitum arhasi
dharmyād dhi yuddhāc chreyo 'nyat
kṣatriyasya na vidyate*

Begins section 3:
Don't be foolish. Fight
because as a ksatriya it is
your duty and nature.
(*sakāma karma yoga*)

Considering your specific duty as a kṣatriya, you should know that there is no better engagement for you than fighting on religious principles; and so there is no need for hesitation.

TEXT 32

*yadṛcchayā copapannaṁ
svarga-dvāram apāvṛtam
sukhinaḥ kṣatriyāḥ pārtha
labhante yuddham iḍṛśam*

O Pārtha, happy are the kṣatriyas to whom such fighting opportunities come unsought, opening for them the doors of the heavenly planets.

TEXT 33

*atha cet tvam imaṁ dharmyaṁ
saṅgrāmaṁ na kariṣyasi
tataḥ sva-dharmam kīrtim ca
hitvā pāpam avāpsyasi*

If, however, you do not perform your religious duty of fighting, then you will certainly incur sins for neglecting your duties and thus lose your reputation as a fighter.

TEXT 34

*akīrtiṁ cāpi bhūtāni
kathayiṣyanti te 'vyayāṁ
sambhāvitasya cākīrtir
maraṇād atiricyate*

People will always speak of your infamy, and for a respectable person, dishonor is worse than death.

TEXT 35

*bhayād raṇād uparataṁ
maṁsyante tvāṁ mahā-rathāḥ
yeṣāṁ ca tvaṁ bahu-mato
bhūtvā yāsyasi lāghavam*

The great generals who have highly esteemed your name and fame will think that you have left the battlefield out of fear only, and thus they will consider you insignificant.

TEXT 36

*avācya-vādāṁś ca bahūn
vadiṣyanti tavāhitāḥ
nindantas tava sāmartyaṁ
tato duḥkhataraṁ nu kim*

Your enemies will describe you in many unkind words and scorn your ability. What could be more painful for you?

TEXT 37

*hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṁ
jivā vā bhokṣyase mahīm
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya
yuddhāya kṛta-niścayaḥ*

O son of Kuntī, either you will be killed on the battlefield and attain the heavenly planets, or you will conquer and enjoy the earthly kingdom. Therefore, get up with determination and fight.

TEXT 38

*sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā
lābhālābhau jayājayau
tato yuddhāya yujyasva
naivam pāpam avāpsyasi*

Do thou fight for the sake of fighting, without considering happiness or distress, loss or gain, victory or defeat—and by so doing you shall never incur sin.

TEXT 39

*eṣā te 'bhihitā sāṅkhye
buddhir yoge tv imāṁ śṛṇu
buddhyā yukto yayā pārtha
karma-bandham prahāsyasi*

Begins section 4:
Fight, but with
detachment (*niṣkāma
karma yoga*)

Thus far I have described this knowledge to you through analytical study. Now listen as I explain it in terms of working without fruitive results. O son of Pṛthā, when you act in such knowledge you can free yourself from the bondage of works.

TEXT 40

*nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti
pratyaavāyo na vidyate
sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya
trāyate mahato bhayāt*

In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear.

TEXT 41

*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir
ekeha kuru-nandana
bahu-śākhā hy anantāś ca
buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām*

Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.

TEXTS 42-43

*yām imām puṣpitām vācam
pravadanty avipaścitaḥ
veda-vāda-ratāḥ pārtha
nānyad astīti vādinaḥ*

*kāmātmānaḥ svarga-parā
janma-karma-phala-pradām
kriyā-viśeṣa-bahulām
bhogaiśvarya-gatiṁ prati*

Men of small knowledge are very much attached to the flowery words of the Vedas, which recommend various fruitive activities for elevation to heavenly planets, resultant good birth, power, and so forth. Being desirous of sense gratification and opulent life, they say that there is nothing more than this.

TEXT 44

*bhogaiśvarya-prasaktānām
tayāpahṛta-cetasām
vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ
samādhau na vidhīyate*

In the minds of those who are too attached to sense enjoyment and material opulence, and who are bewildered by such things, the resolute determination for devotional service to the Supreme Lord does not take place.

TEXT 45

*traī-guṇya-viśayā vedā
nistraī-guṇyo bhavārjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho
niryoga-kṣema ātmavān*

The Vedas deal mainly with the subject of the three modes of material nature. O Arjuna, become transcendental to these three modes. Be free from all dualities and from all anxieties for gain and safety, and be established in the self.

TEXT 46

*yāvān artha udapāne
sarvataḥ samplutodake
tāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu
brāhmaṇasya vijānataḥ*

All purposes served by a small well can at once be served by a great reservoir of water. Similarly, all the purposes of the Vedas can be served to one who knows the purpose behind them.

TEXT 47

*karmaṇy evādhikāras te
mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr
mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmaṇi*

You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty.

TEXT 48

*yoga-sthaḥ kuru karmāṇi
saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya
siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā
samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*

Perform your duty equipoised, O Arjuna, abandoning all attachment to success or failure. Such equanimity is called yoga.

TEXT 49

*dūreṇa hy avaram karma
buddhi-yogād dhanañjaya
buddhau śaraṇam anviccha
kṛpaṇāḥ phala-hetavaḥ*

O Dhanañjaya, keep all abominable activities far distant by devotional service, and in that consciousness surrender unto the Lord. Those who want to enjoy the fruits of their work are misers.

TEXT 50

*buddhi-yukto jahātīha
ubhe sukṛta-duṣkṛte
tasmād yogāya yujyasva
yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*

A man engaged in devotional service rids himself of both good and bad reactions even in this life. Therefore strive for yoga, which is the art of all work.

TEXT 51

*karma-jaṁ buddhi-yuktā hi
phalaṁ tyaktvā manīṣiṇaḥ
janma-bandha-vinirmuktāḥ
padaṁ gacchanty anāmayam*

By thus engaging in devotional service to the Lord, great sages or devotees free themselves from the results of work in the material world. In this way they become free from the cycle of birth and death and attain the state beyond all miseries [by going back to Godhead].

TEXT 52

*yadā te moha-kalilaṁ
buddhir vyatitariṣyati
tadā gantāsi nirvedaṁ
śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*

When your intelligence has passed out of the dense forest of delusion, you shall become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard.

TEXT 53

*śruti-vipratipannā te
yadā sthāsyati niścalā
samādhāv acalā buddhis
tadā yogam avāpsyasi*

When your mind is no longer disturbed by the flowery language of the Vedas, and when it remains fixed in the trance of self-realization, then you will have attained the divine consciousness.

TEXT 54

*arjuna uvāca
sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā
samādhi-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kim prabhāṣeta
kim āsīta vrajeta kim*

Begins section 5:
How to become *stitha-prajña*, fixed in
consciousness.

Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, what are the symptoms of one whose consciousness is thus merged in transcendence? How does he speak, and what is his language? How does he sit, and how does he walk?

TEXT 55

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prajahāti yadā kāmān
sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ
sthita-prajñas tadocyate*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Pārtha, when a man gives up all varieties of desire for sense gratification, which arise from mental concoction, and when his mind, thus purified, finds satisfaction in the self alone, then he is said to be in pure transcendental consciousness.

TEXT 56

*duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ
sukheṣu vigata-sprhaḥ
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ
sthita-dhīr munir ucyate*

One who is not disturbed in mind even amidst the threefold miseries or elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady mind.

TEXT 57

*yaḥ sarvatrānabhisnehas
tat tat prāpya śubhāśubham
nābhinandati na dveṣṭi
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

In the material world, one who is unaffected by whatever good or evil he may obtain, neither praising it nor despising it, is firmly fixed in perfect knowledge.

TEXT 58

*yadā samharate cāyaṁ
kūrmō 'ṅgānīva sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

One who is able to withdraw his senses from sense objects, as the tortoise draws its limbs within the shell, is firmly fixed in perfect consciousness.

TEXT 59

*viṣayā vinivartante
nirāhārasya dehinaḥ
rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya
param dṛṣṭvā nivartate*

The embodied soul may be restricted from sense enjoyment, though the taste for sense objects remains. But, ceasing such engagements by experiencing a higher taste, he is fixed in consciousness.

TEXT 60

*yatato hy aṅgī kaunteya
puruṣasya vipaścitaḥ
indriyāṅgī pramāthīni
haranti prasabhaṁ manaḥ*

The senses are so strong and impetuous, O Arjuna, that they forcibly carry away the mind even of a man of discrimination who is endeavoring to control them.

TEXT 61

*tāni sarvāṇi saṁyamya
yukta āsīta mat-paraḥ
vaśe hi yasyendriyāṇi
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

One who restrains his senses, keeping them under full control, and fixes his consciousness upon Me, is known as a man of steady intelligence.

TEXT 62

*dhyāyato viṣayān puṁsaḥ
saṅgas teṣūpajāyate
saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmaḥ
kāmaṭ krodho 'bhijāyate*

While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises.

TEXT 63

*krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ
sammohāt smṛti-vibhramaḥ
smṛti-bhramśād buddhi-nāśo
buddhi-nāśāt praṇaśyati*

From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool.

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.258)

TEXT 64

*rāga-dveṣa-vimuktais tu
viṣayān indriyaiś caran
ātma-vaśyair vidheyātmā
prasādam adhigacchati*

But a person free from all attachment and aversion and able to control his senses through regulative principles of freedom can obtain the complete mercy of the Lord.

TEXT 65

*prasāde sarva-duḥkhānām
hānir asyopajāyate
prasanna-cetaso hy āśu
buddhiḥ paryavatiṣṭhate*

For one thus satisfied [in Kṛṣṇa consciousness], the threefold miseries of material existence exist no longer; in such satisfied consciousness, one's intelligence is soon well established.

TEXT 66

*nāsti buddhir ayuktasya
na cāyuktasya bhāvanā
na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir
aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham*

One who is not connected with the Supreme [in Kṛṣṇa consciousness] can have neither transcendental intelligence nor a steady mind, without which there is no possibility of peace. And how can there be any happiness without peace?

TEXT 67

*indriyāṇām hi caratām
yan mano 'nuvidhīyate
tad asya harati prajñām
vāyur nāvam ivāmbhasi*

As a strong wind sweeps away a boat on the water, even one of the roaming senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence.

TEXT 68

*tasmād yasya mahā-bāho
niḡrhitāni sarvaśaḥ
indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyas
tasya prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*

Therefore, O mighty-armed, one whose senses are restrained from their objects is certainly of steady intelligence.

TEXT 69

*yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām
tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni
sā niśā paśyato muneh*

What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.

TEXT 70

*āpūryamāṇam acala-pratiṣṭham
samudram āpaḥ praviśanti yadvat
tadvat kāmā yaṁ praviśanti sarve
sa śāntim āpnoti na kāma-kāmī*

A person who is not disturbed by the incessant flow of desires—that enter like rivers into the ocean, which is ever being filled but is always still—can alone achieve peace, and not the man who strives to satisfy such desires.

TEXT 71

*vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān
pumāṁś carati niḥspṛhaḥ
nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ
sa śāntim adhigacchati*

A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and is devoid of false ego—he alone can attain real peace.

TEXT 72

*eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha
nainām prāpya vimuhyati
sthitvāsyām anta-kāle 'pi
brahma-nirvāṇam ṛcchati*

That is the way of the spiritual and godly life, after attaining which a man is not bewildered. If one is thus situated even at the hour of death, one can enter into the kingdom of God.

*Thus end the Bhaktivedanta Purports to the Second Chapter of the Śrīmad
Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of its Contents.*