srimad bhagavad gita

the holy song of god

arranged for singing

by

śwami nirmalananda giri
Dhritarashtra said:
Assembled there on dharma’s field–
    Kurukshetra–desiring war,
What did my sons and the Pandus?
    Do tell me now, O Sanjaya.  

Sanjaya said:
There then the King Duryodhana,
    Seeing the Pandav forces ranged–
Ready for battle–did approach
    His teacher, Drona, and did say:  

“Behold, O Teacher! here arrayed
    This great army of Pandu’s sons,
Assembled by Drupada’s son¹
    Who is thine own gifted pupil.  

“Here are heroes, mighty archers,
    Bhima and Arjuna’s equals,
The great warriors Yuyudhana,
    Virata and Drupada, too.  

“Drishtaketu, Chekitana,
    And the valiant king of Kashi,
Purujit and Kuntibhoja,
    And Shaibya–all the best of men.  

“And courageous Yudhamanyu,
    And valorous Uttamaujas–
Shubhadra’s and Draupadi’s sons–
    All who are mighty car warriors.²  

¹ Arjuna
² A great-car-warrior (maharatha) was a commander of eleven thousand bowmen as he rode in his chariot.
“Hear, too, O best of the twice-born,  
Those distinguished among ourselves.  
The leaders of my army here:  
These now I recount unto you.  

“Yourself and Bhishma and Karna  
And Kripa, victorious in war;  
Ashwattama, Vikarna, and  
Somadatta’s son: all are mine.  

“Also many other heroes,  
Who now risk their lives for my sake,  
Discharging various weapons,  
All very skilled in waging war.  

“Impossible to count is this  
Army defended by Bhishma,  
But that army led by Bhima  
Is very easy to number.  

“Stationed in your proper places,  
Whatever be your positions,  
Do you now all give your support  
And protection unto Bhishma.”  

That powerful, oldest Kuru,  
Bhishma, the grandsire, blew his conch  
And sounded loud a lion-roar  
That he might cheer Duryodhana.  

Following Bhishma, suddenly  
Conches, kettledrums, cymbals, drums  
And trumpets were sounded aloud,  
So the uproar was tremendous.
Then Madhava\(^3\) and Pandava,\(^4\)
   In the great chariot standing
That was yoked with the white horses,
   Sounded forth their divine conches. \(14\)

Sri Krishna blew Panchajanya,
   Arjuna blew Devadatta,
And Bhima of ferocious deeds,
   Blew upon his great conch, Paundra. \(15\)

King Yudhishthira, Kunti’s son,
   Blew on Anantavijaya,
Nakula and Sahadeva:
   Sughosha, Manipushpaka. \(16\)

The supreme bowman, Kashi’s king,
   And the great warrior Shikhandi,
Dhrishtadyumna and Virata,
   And invincible Satyaki. \(17\)

O Lord of Earth! then Drupada,
   All the sons of Draupadi, and
Subhadra’s son, the mighty-armed,
   Each one blew upon his own conch. \(18\)

Then throughout heaven and the earth
   Resounded the terrific noise
Which rent asunder all the hearts
   Of those in Dhritarashtra’s ranks. \(19\)

Then seeing Dhritarashtra’s ranks
   Standing marshalled, about to fight,
The monkey-ensigned\(^5\) Pandava,
   Was impelled to take up his bow \(20\)

\(^3\)Krishna
\(^4\)Arjuna
\(^5\)Arjuna’s standard was a flag with Hanuman, the monkey-devotee of Rama, depicted on it.
And speak unto Hrishikesha,\textsuperscript{6}  
O Lord of earth, these fateful words:

\textit{Arjuna said:}

Achutya,\textsuperscript{7} place my chariot  
In the midst between the armies \textsuperscript{21}

So from that place I may observe  
Those who are here prepared for war–  
Desiring to begin battle–  
And know with whom I have to fight. \textsuperscript{22}

For I desire to observe those  
Who are assembled here for fight,  
Wishing to please Duryodhana  
By taking his side in this war. \textsuperscript{23}

\textit{Sanjaya said:}

Commanded thus by Arjuna,  
O Bharata, then Krishna drove  
That grandest of all chariots  
Between the two hosts, and there stopped. \textsuperscript{24}

Thus facing Bhishma, Drona, and  
The rulers of the whole vast earth,  
“Behold, O Partha,\textsuperscript{8} then He said,  
“All the Kurus assembled here!” \textsuperscript{25}

Then Pritha saw assembled there  
Fathers, grandfathers, teachers, sons,  
Maternal uncles, brothers, and  
Grandsons as well as friends of his. \textsuperscript{26}

The son of Kunti, seeing there  
In both the armies relatives,  
Fathers-in-law, and companions,  
Stood and contemplated them all. \textsuperscript{27}

\textsuperscript{6} Bushy-haired One–Krishna  
\textsuperscript{7} Imperishable One–Krishna  
\textsuperscript{8} The Son of Pritha–Arjuna
Then filled with infinite pity,
And filled with despondence, he spoke:

Arjuna said:
Krishna, I see my own kinfolk
Desiring to fight approaching. 28

Through sorrow my limbs now fail me,
My mouth is parched with grief and woe.
My body now is shivering,
My hair is standing up on end. 29

My bow is slipping from my hand,
My skin is burning as with fire.
Nor can I even stand upright,
My mind is reeling and confused. 30

Inauspicious omens I mark,
And not good fortune do I see,
O Keshava,9 if I destroy
My own kinsmen in this battle. 31

Nor do I desire victory–
No, not kingship nor yet pleasures–
Kingship, enjoyments surely mean
Nothing to us, O Govinda.10 32

Those for whose sake we should desire
Kingship, enjoyments, and pleasures,
Array before us in battle,
Abandoning life and riches. 33

Teachers, fathers, sons, grandfathers,
Maternal uncles, and grandsons,
Fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law,
And many other kinsmen, too. 34

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9 Beautiful-haired one–Krishna.
10 Cowherd–Krishna
Even if they wish to kill me,
I never could wish to kill them—
Not even to rule the three worlds,
So how much less for rule of earth? 35

Indeed, what pleasure could be ours,
From killing Dhritarashtra’s sons?
Sin only could take hold of us
If we should slay these aggressors. 36

We are not justified to kill
Our kinsmen—Dhritarashtra’s sons—
How, having killed our own people,
Could we be happy, Madhava? 37

Their thoughts overpowered by greed,
They see no wrong in destruction
Of family or even in
Wreaking treachery upon friends. 38

Yet why should we, Janardana,11
Who clearly see the evil caused
By such destruction of our kin,
Not turn away from this fell sin? 39

On destruction of families,
Their rites of dharma then die out,
From the destruction of dharma,
Adharma overwhelms them all. 40

Overpowered by adharma
The family’s women then are
Corrupted, and from corruption
The confusion of castes arise. 41

From caste confusion families
And their destroyers fall to hell;
Ancestors also fall without
Offerings of rice and water. 42

11 Agitator of Men (an epithet of Vishnu)—Krishna
The family’s destroyers’ wrongs
   Produce the confusion of caste,
Then observance of caste duties
   And family laws are destroyed. 43

Have we not heard, repeatedly,
   That indefinite time in hell
Accrues to those whose fam’ly laws
   Have been wiped out, Janardana? 44

Ah! Alas! we are now resolved
   To do great evil with our greed
For royal pleasures for whose sake
   We intend to kill our own kin. 45

If the sons of Dhritarashtra
   With weapons armed should now slay me
Though unarmed, yet that still would be
   A greater happiness for me. 46

Sanjaya said:
In the midst of the battlefield
   Thus speaking, Arjun’ cast away
His bow and arrows and sank down,
   His mind overcome with sorrow. 47

Om Tat Sat
Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the first discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Despondency of Arjuna.
Sanjaya said:
To him who was thus overcome
   By pity, and whose eyes were filled
With tears, downcast and despairing,
   Madhusudana\textsuperscript{12} spoke these words:
\begin{enumerate}
\item Whence has come this faintheartedness
   Of yours in the time of danger
\item Ignoble, not leading to heav’n,
   But to disgrace, O Arjuna?
\item At no time should you entertain
   Such cowardice–unsuitable.
 Abandon this faintheartedness
   And stand up, O Scorcher of Foes!
\item But how can I in battle fight
   With arrows, Madhusudana,
 Against Bhishma and Drona, too,
   Who are worthy of reverence?
\item Better that I eat the food of beggary
   Instead of my slaying these great-souled gurus.
 If I kill them my enjoyments in this world
   Of wealth and desires will all be stained with blood.
\item Indeed, I cannot tell which will be better,
   That we should conquer them or they conquer us.
 The sons of Dhritarashtra stand facing us–
   After whose slaying we would not wish to live.
\end{enumerate}

\textsuperscript{12} Destroyer of the Demon Madhu (properly an epithet of Vishnu)–Krishna
Weakness and pity overcome my being,
   With mind in confusion I supplicate You,
O say decidedly what is my duty.
   I am Your disciple, do You direct me.  

I see nothing that can remove this sorrow
   That dries up my senses, though I should attain
The unrivalled and prosperous dominion
   Over the earth, and mast’ry over the gods.  

_Sanjaya said:_

Having said this to Govinda,
   Arjuna, scorcher of his foes,
Then further said “I shall not fight,”
   And fell into a silence deep.  

To him who thus was despondent
   In the midst of the two armies,
O Bharata, as though smiling
   Hrishikesha then spoke these words:

_The Holy Lord said:_

You have been mourning for those who
   Should not be mourned for, though you speak
Words of wisdom–for the wise grieve
   Not for the living or the dead.  

Truly there never was a time
   When I was not, nor you, nor these
Lords of men–nor in the future
   A time when we shall cease to be.  

As to the embodied childhood,
   Youth and old age arise in turn,
So he gets another body–
   The wise are not confused by this.
Truly material contacts
Produce cold, heat, pleasure, and pain.
Impermanent, they come and go,
Learn to endure them, Bharata. 14

He whom these things do not afflict,
The same in pain or in pleasure,
That wise one, O Leader of Men,
Is fit for immortality. 15

The unreal never comes to be,
The real does never cease to be.
The certainty of both of these
Is known to those who see the truth. 16

That by Which all is pervaded—
Know That is indestructible.
There is none with the power to
Destroy the Imperishable. 17

These bodies inhabited by
The eternal embodied Self
Are declared to come to an end.
Therefore now fight, O Bharata.13 18

He who thinks the Self is slayer
And he who thinks the Self is slain—
Neither of the two understands;
The Self slays not, nor is it slain. 19

Neither is the Self slain, nor yet does it die,
Nor having been will it e’er come not to be,
Birthless, eternal, perpetu’l, primeval,
It is not slain whene’er the body is slain. 20

13 Literally: “These bodies inhabited by the eternal, indestructible, immeasurable, embodied Self are said to come to an end. Therefore fight, Bharata!”
In what way can he who knows this—
   Indestructible, eternal,
Birthless and imperishable—
   Slay or cause another to slay?  

Even as a man casts off his worn-out clothes
   And then clothes himself in others which are new
So the embodied casts off worn-out bodies
   And then enters into others which are new.  

This self by weapons is cut not;
   This self by fire is burnt not;
This self by water is wet not;
   And this self is by wind dried not.  

This self cannot be cut, nor burnt,
   Nor wetted, nor dried: 'tis changeless,
All-pervading and unmoving,
   Immovable, eternal self.  

Unmanifest, unthinkable,
   This Self is called unchangeable.
Therefore, knowing this to be such,
   You surely ought never to mourn.  

And if you think this self to have
   Constant birth and death—even then,
O mighty-armed, you should not be
   Impelled for this reason to grieve.  

Of that which is born, death is sure,
   Of that which is dead, birth is sure.
Over the unavoidable,
   Therefore you never should lament.  

All beings are unmanifest
   In their beginning, Bharata,
Manifest in their middle state,
   Unmanifest then in their end.  

\[\text{To maintain the meter, there was no room for the final phrase: “What lamentation can there be over this?”}\]
Someone perceives this self as being wondrous,
   Another speaks of it as being wondrous,
Another hears of it as being wondrous,
   And another, hearing, does not understand. 29

This indweller in all bodies
   Is ever indestructible.
Therefore you should not, Bharata,
   Ever mourn for any creature. 30

And looking at your own dharma,
   You surely ought never waver,
For there is nothing better than
   A righteous war for Kshatriyas. 31

Fortunate are those Kshatriyas,
   Who thus are called, O Arjuna,
To fight in a battle like this,
   That comes to them as heaven’s gate. 32

But if you refuse to engage
   In righteous warfare, Arjuna,
Then forfeiting your own dharma
   And honor you shall incur sin. 33

The world will also ever hold
   You as a craven reprobate.
To the honored such disrepute
   Is surely worse even than death. 34

The great car-warriors will believe
   You shrink back from battle through fear.
And you will be lightly esteemed
   By those who have thought much of you. 35

Your enemies, then cavilling
   At your great prowess, then will say
Of you things not to be uttered.
   What could be greater pain than this? 36
By dying you attain heaven;
   Conquering, you enjoy the earth.
Therefore, O son of Kunti, rise,
   In strength of heart resolved to fight. 37

Make pain and pleasure, gain and loss,
   victory and defeat the same,
Then engage now in this battle.
   This way you shall incur no sin. 38

This buddhi yoga\textsuperscript{15} by Sankhya\textsuperscript{16}
   Is now declared to you—so heed!
Joining this insight to your will,
   You shall be rid of karma’s bonds. 39

In this no effort is wasted,
   Nor are adverse results produced.
E’en a little of this dharma
   Protects you from the greatest fear. 40

There is a single, resolute
   Understanding here, Arjuna.
The thoughts of the irresolute
   Are many-branched, truly endless. 41

They, the ignorant ones, proclaim
   Their flow’ry speech, O Pritha’s son,
Delighting in the Veda’s word,
   And saying: “There is nothing else.” 42

Filled with desires, intent on heav’n,
   Off’ring rebirth as actions’ fruit,
Addicted to so many rites,
   Whose goal is enjoyment and pow’r. 43

\textsuperscript{15} Buddhi Yoga is the Yoga of Intelligence which later came to be called Jnana Yoga, the Yoga of Knowledge.

\textsuperscript{16} Sankhya: One of the six orthodox systems of Hindu philosophy whose originator was the sage Kapila, Sankhya is the original Vedic philosophy, endorsed by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. (Gita 2:39; 3:3,5; 18:13,19. Also, the second chapter of the Gita is entitled: Sankhya Yoga.). The Ramakrishna-Vedanta Wordbook says: “Sankhya postulates two ultimate realities, Purusha and Prakriti. Declaring that the cause of suffering is man’s identification of Purusha with Prakriti and its products, Sankhya teaches that liberation and true knowledge are attained in the supreme consciousness, where such identification ceases and Purusha is realized as existing independently in its transcendental nature.” Not surprisingly, then, Yoga is based on the Sankhya philosophy.
Attached to pleasure and power
Their minds are drawn away by this
Speech, and to them is not granted
The insight from meditation.  44

The Vedas deal with the gunas;
Free yourself from them, and be free
From the pairs of opposites, and
Eternally fixed in the self.  45

For the Brahmin who knows the self
The Vedas are of no more use
Than a reservoir of water
When there is a flood ev’rywhere.  46

Your right is to action alone,
Not to its fruits at any time.
Never should they move you to act,
Or be attached to inaction.  47

Then being steadfast in yoga,
Without attachment do actions
Heedless of success and failure–
Evenness of mind is yoga.  48

Action’s inferior by far
To Yoga of Intelligence.  18
Seek refuge in enlightenment,
Abhor action done from desire.  49

Joined to enlightenment, cast off
In this world good and evil deeds;
Therefore to yoga yoke yourself!
For skill in action is yoga.  50

17 “The Vedas deal with the three gunas. Be free, O Arjuna, from the triad of the gunas, free from the pairs of opposites, ever-balanced, free from [the thought of] getting and keeping, and established in the Self.”

18 Buddhi yoga
Those whose minds are joined to wisdom,
    Having abandoned action’s fruit,
Are freed from bondage to rebirth
    And go to the place free from pain. 51

When your intelligence crosses
    Beyond delusion’s confusion,
Then you shall be indifferent
    To the heard and the to-be-heard. 52

When your intellect stands, fixed in
    Deep meditation, unmoving,
Disregarding Vedic doctrine,
    You’ll attain self-realization. 53

*Arjuna said:*
What, Krishna, is the description
    Of the man of steady wisdom,
Steadfast in deep meditation–
    How does he speak, or sit, or walk? 54

*The Holy Lord said:*
When he completely casts away
    All the desires of the mind,
His self satisfied by the self,
    He is called “of steady wisdom.” 55

Unshaken by adversity,
    And freed from desire for pleasures,
Free from passion, fear, and anger,
    Steady in thought–such is a sage. 56

Without attachment on all sides,
    In the pleasant or unpleasant
Not rejoicing or disliking,
    His wisdom is seen to stand firm. 57
And when he withdraws completely
    The senses from the sense-objects,
As the tortoise draws in its limbs,
    His wisdom is established firm. 58

Sense-objects turn away from the
    Abstinent, but the taste for them
Remains, but that, too, turns away
    From him who has seen the Supreme. 59

Know this indeed, Son of Kunti:
    The turbulent senses carry
Away forcibly the mind of
    E’en the striving man of wisdom. 60

Restraining all senses, he should
    Sit disciplined, intent on Me;
He whose senses are thus controlled–
    His wisdom stands steadfast and firm. 61

Dwelling on objects of senses
    Engenders attachment to them;
From attachment desire is born;
    And from desire\(^{19}\) anger is born. 62

From anger ’rises delusion;
    From delusion, loss of mem’ry;
From loss of mem’ry, destruction
    Of intelligence: All is lost. 63

Desire and loathing banishing,
    Moving amongst objects of sense,
By self-restraint, the self-controlled
    Thus attains to tranquility. 64

In tranquility all sorrows
    Cease to arise for him, indeed;
For the tranquil-minded at once
    The intellect becomes steady. 65

\(^{19}\) That is, thwarted desire.
For the undisciplined there is
No wisdom, no meditation,
For him who does not meditate
There is no peace or happiness. 66

When the mind is guided by the
Wandering senses, it carries
Away the understanding, as
The wind a ship on the waters. 67

The wisdom of him whose senses
Are withdrawn from objects of sense
On all sides, O mighty-armed one,
Will be found firmly established. 68

The man of restraint is awake
In what is night for all beings;
That in which all beings awake
Is night for the wise one who sees. 69

As the ocean, becoming full,
Yet remains unmoving and still,
He in whom all desires enter
And yet remains, unmoved, has peace. 20 70

He who abandons all desires
Attains peace, acts free from longing,
Indifferent to possessions
And free from all egotism. 21 71

This is the divine state–having
Attained this, he’s not deluded.
Fixed in it at the time of death,
He attains Brahmanirvana. 22 72

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20 The literal translation is: “Like the ocean, which becomes filled yet remains unmoved and stands still as the waters enter it, he whom all desires enter and who remains unmoved attains peace; not so the man who is full of desire.”

21 Pronounce as four syllables: e-go-tis-m.

22 Nirvana is the state of liberation from the bondage of karma and the wheel of birth and death that comes from knowing Brahman. Brahman is the Supreme Reality, the Absolute Consciousness that is God.
Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the second discourse entitled: Sankhya Yoga.
Arjuna said:
If you believe that knowledge is
   Better than action, Keshava,
Then how is it you urge me to
   Engage in terrible action?

With speech that seems equivocal
   You confuse my intelligence.
Tell me surely this one thing: How
   Should I attain the highest good?

The Holy Lord said:
In this world there is a two-fold
   Basis taught by Me long ago:
Knowledge: the yoga of Sankhyas,
   And action: yoga of yogins.

Not by abstention from actions
   Does a man pass beyond action,
And not by renunciation
   Alone approach to perfection.

No one for even a moment
   Exists without doing action;
Each is forced to perform action–
   E’en against his will—by gunas.23

He who restrains action’s organs
   While yet revolving in his mind
Thoughts of objects of the senses,
   Is deluded, a hypocrite.

23 “By the gunas born of prakriti.” Prakriti: Causal matter; the fundamental power (shakti) of God from which the entire cosmos is formed; the root base of all elements; undifferentiated matter; the material cause of the world. Also known as Pradhana.
He who by the mind controls the
    Senses, and yet is unattached
While engaging action’s organs
    In action, is superior. 7

Perform your duty, for action
    Is far better than non-action.
Even maintaining your body
    Cannot be done without action. 8

The world is bound by the actions
    Not done for sake of sacrifice;
Hence for sacrifice, Arjuna,
    You should act without attachment. 9

In the beginning with mankind
    Prajapati24 made25 sacrifice,
Said: “By this shall you multiply:
    This shall be granter of desires. 10

“May you foster the gods by this,
    And may the gods then foster you;
Then, each the others fostering,
    You shall attain highest welfare. 11

“The gods, fostered by sacrifice,
    Will give you desired enjoyments;
But he who enjoys the gods’ gifts
    Without offering is a thief.” 12

Eating sacrificial remains,
    The good are freed from all evils;26
The wicked eat their own evil
    Who cook food only for themselves. 13

24 Prajapati: Progenitor; the Creator; a title of Brahma the Creator.
25 i.e., created
26 i.e., wrongdoings.
From food all beings are produced:
   And from rain all food is produced:
From sacrifice there comes down rain;
   From action is born sacrifice.

Action arises from Brahma,\textsuperscript{27}
   Brahma from th’ Imperishable.
Hence the all-pervading Brahma
   Is established in sacrifice.\textsuperscript{28}

He who here on the earth does not
   Set in motion, O Arjuna,
This wheel, lives full of sense delights,
   Maliciously and uselessly.

He who is content in the Self,
   Who is satisfied in the Self,
Who is pleased only in the Self:
   For him there is no need to act.

He has nothing to gain by acts;
   Nothing to gain by inaction;
And no need of any being
   For any purpose soever.

Therefore, constantly unattached
   Perform that which is your duty.
Indeed by unattached action
   Man surely attains the Supreme.

Indeed, perfection was attained
   Through action by King Janaka.
For the maintenance of the world,
   As an example you should act.

\textsuperscript{27} Brahma: The Creator (Prajapati) of the three worlds of men, angels, and archangels (Bhur, Bhuwah, and Swah); the first of the created beings; Hiranyagarbha or cosmic intelligence.

\textsuperscript{28} Many translators feel that “Brahma” in this verse can legitimately be rendered “Veda”–Veda in the sense of divine wisdom, Vidya. On the other hand, it is positively believed by all Hindus that Brahma attained his position specifically through the performance of sacrifice (yajna). So “Brahma” is quite logical here.
Whatever the best of men does—
   This and that—thus other men do;
Whate’er the standard that he sets—
   That is what the world shall follow.  

I have no duty, Pritha’s son,
   Whatsoever in the three worlds,
Nor anything that must be gained—
   Yet still I continue to act. 

Indeed, if I should not engage—
   Tirelessly—at all in action,
Then all mankind would, everywhere,
   Follow the path set forth by Me. 

Yea, these worlds would perish if I
   Should fail to engage in action,
I would be confusion’s maker,
   And I would destroy these people. 

As the unwise ones act, attached,
   O Descendant of Bharata,
So the wise should act, unattached,
   For maintaining the world’s welfare. 

One should not unsettle the minds
   Of the unwise attached to works;
The wise should cause them to enjoy
   All acts—himself showing the way. 

All actions, in all instances,
   Are done by Prakriti’s gunas;
Those with ego-deluded mind
   Imagine: “I am the doer.”
And yet, the man who knows the truth
About the gunas’ actions thinks:
“The gunas act in the gunas,”$^{29}$
And thinking thus is not attached. 28

Those deluded by the gunas
Of prakriti become attached
To their actions. Let not the wise
Upset these of partial knowledge. 29

Entrusting all actions to Me,
Intent on the Supreme Spirit,
Free from desire and selfishness,
With your fever$^{30}$ departed, fight! 30

Those men who constantly practice
This teaching of Mine, full of faith,
Not contemning, they are released
From the bondage of their actions. 31

But those despising My teaching,
Who thus refuse to practice it,
Turn wisdom into confusion.
Know them to be lost and mindless. 32

Even the wise acts according
To his own nature: prakriti.
All follow their own prakriti;
So what will restraint accomplish? 33

Attraction and aversion rule
When senses contact sense-objects.
One should not come under their pow’r,
They are indeed his enemies. 34

$^{29}$ That is, the gunas as the senses move among and act within the gunas manifesting as the sense-objects.
$^{30}$ The “fever” of delusion and grief.
One’s own dharma, though imperfect,
Is better than another’s done
To perfection. For the dharma
Of another invites danger.

Arjuna said:
Then by what is a man impelled
To commit evil, Varshneya,31
Seemingly against his own will,
As if urged thereunto by force?

The Holy Lord said:
It is desire, it is anger,
That’s born of the rajo-guna:
Of great craving, and of great sin;
Know that to be the enemy.

As fire is enveloped by smoke,
As mirrors are obscured by dust;
As wombs cover the embryos,
So is it enveloped by that.

And knowledge is covered by this,
The constant foe of all the wise,
O son of Kunti, know it as
Desire’s unappeasable fire.

The senses, mind, and intellect
Are said to here be its abode:
These things delude the embodied
By veiling his innate wisdom.

Therefore, controlling the senses
At the outset, O Bharata,
Kill it—the sinful, destroyer
Of knowledge and realization.

31 Clansman of the Vrishnis—Krishna
Above the body are senses;
   Above the senses is the mind;
Above the mind is intellect;
   Above the intellect: the self.  

Thus, knowing Him Who is above
   The intellect, and restraining
The self by the Self, then destroy
   That enemy, that foe: desire.  

Om Tat Sat  
Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the third discourse entitled: The Yoga of Action.
Chapter Four

The Yoga of Wisdom

The Holy Lord said:
This imperishable yoga
I taught to Vivaswat, then he
In turn taught it to Manu, who
Then taught it unto Ikshwaku.

Thus, handed down in succession,
The royal sages knew of it.
This yoga, by long lapse of time,
Was lost here on earth, Arjuna.

This ancient yoga is today
Declared by Me to you because
You are my devotee and friend,
This secret is supreme indeed.

Arjuna said:
O Krishna, later was Your birth,
And Vivaswat’s was earlier.
How then should I understand that
You taught this in the beginning?

The Holy Lord said:
Many the births that I have passed–
Many passed by you, Arjuna.
I have full knowledge of them all,
While you do not, Scorcher of Foes.

Though birthless, imperishable,
Although the Lord of all beings,
Controlling my own Prakriti,
I manifest by my own pow’r.
Whenever dharma decreases,
    O Bharata, and then there is
The arising of adharma,
    Then do I manifest Myself. 7

For protection of the righteous
    And destruction of the wicked,
For establishing of dharma,
    I manifest from age to age. 8

He who thus knows in its true light,
    My divine birth and My action,
Leaving the body, is not born
    Again–but he attains to Me. 9

Freed from attachment, fear, anger–
    Absorbed, taking refuge in Me,
Purified by fire of knowledge,
    Many have attained My Being. 10

In whatever way they resort
    To Me do I thus reward them.
It is My path which ev’rywhere
    All men follow, O Arjuna. 11

Longing for success in action,
    In this world men worship the gods,
Because success from such action
    Is quickly attained in this world. 12

The fourfold caste was made by Me,
    Based on guna and on karma.
Though I am the Maker thereof,
    Know Me as non-doer, changeless. 13

Never do actions taint Me, nor
    Do I thirst for action’s result.
And whosoever knows Me thus
    Is not fettered by his actions. 14
Knowing thus, the ancient seekers
   After freedom performed action.
Do you, therefore, perform action,
   As did the ancients in past times. 15

Even sages are bewildered
   As what is action, inaction.
I shall tell you what action is:
   This knowledge frees you from evil. 16

For you should know the nature of
   Actions enjoined, prohibited,
As well as that of inaction–
   All this is hard to understand. 17

Seeing inaction in action,
   Seeing action in inaction–
Such a man is wise among men:
   A yogi–doing all action. 18

Whose undertakings are devoid
   Of plan and desire for results,
Whose actions are burnt in the fire
   Of knowledge–him the wise call wise. 19

Having abandoned attachment
   For action’s fruit, always content,
Not dependent e’en when acting,
   He truly does nothing at all. 20

Acting with the body alone,
   Without wish, thought and self restrained,
Abandoning all thoughts of gain,
   Though acting he incurs no fault. 21

Content with what comes unbidden,
   Beyond duality, envy,
The same in success or failure,
   E’en though acting, he is not bound. 22
Having gone beyond attachment,
   His mind established in knowledge,
Who acts only as sacrifice:
   His whole karma dissolves away.  23

Brahman is the off’ring and the
   Oblation made by Brahman in
The fire that is Brahman. Who sees
   Thus, by him Brahman is attained. 32  24

Some yogis offer sacrifice
   To gods alone, while some others
Offer the self as sacrifice
   Unto the self in Brahman’s fire.  25

Some offer senses like hearing
   Into the fires33 of restraint;
Some, sound and other sense objects
   Into the fire of the senses.  26

Some offer the senses’ actions
   And the functions of life force in
The yoga-fire of self-control,
   That is enkindled by knowledge.  27

Some offer wealth, austerity,
   And yoga as their sacrifice,
Some, of restraint and stringent vows,
   Offer knowledge as sacrifice.  28

Some offer the outgoing breath
   Into the incoming breath, and
Then stop the course of both the breaths–
   Their breath-control their sacrifice.34  29

32 “Brahman is the offering, Brahman is the oblation poured out by Brahman into the fire of Brahman. Brahman is to be
attained by him who always sees Brahman in action.”
33 Pronounced as two syllables: “fi-yers.”
34 “Others offer inhalation into exhalation, and exhalation into inhalation, restraining the path of inhalation and exhalation,
intent on control of the vital breath (prana).”
While those of regulated food
Offer it to digestive fires.
All these, knowers of sacrifice,
Destroy their sins by sacrifice.  

Eating sacrificial remains,
They go to the Primal Brahman.
Neither this world nor the others
Are for the non-sacrificing.  

Sacrifices of many kinds
Are spread out before Brahman’s face.
All of them are born from action;
Thus knowing you shall be released.  

Better than mere material
Sacrifice is that of knowledge.
All action without exception
Is comprehended in knowledge.  

Know that by prostrating yourself,
By questioning and by serving,
The wise who realized the truth
Will instruct you in that knowledge.  

Know this, and you shall not again
Become deluded, Arjuna.
By this you shall come to see all
Creation in your self and Me.  

Even if you should be the most
Sinful among all the sinful,
Yet you would cross over all sin
By the raft of knowledge alone.  

As fire reduces wood to ash,
In the same way, O Arjuna,
The fire of knowledge does reduce
To ashes all karma—know this.  

That is, contained (encompassed) or completed in knowledge (jnana).
Within this world there is nothing
   So purifying as knowledge.
In time, the perfect in yoga
   Finds that knowledge within his heart. 38

The man of faith, and devoted,
   And the master of his senses,
Attains this knowledge, and having
   Attained quickly finds Supreme Peace. 39

The ignorant man, without faith,
   The doubting, goes to destruction.
The doubter has neither this world,
   Nor yet the next, nor happiness. 40

With work renounced by yoga and
   Doubts rent asunder by knowledge,
Actions do not, Dhananjaya, 36
   Bind him who is poised in the self. 41

Cutting with the sword of knowledge
   This doubt about the self which is
Born of ignorance in your heart,
   Take refuge in yoga: arise! 42

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fourth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Wisdom.

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36 Conqueror of Wealth–Arjuna
Arjuna said:
Renunciation of action
   And yoga\textsuperscript{37}—You praise both of these.
Which is the better of these two?
   Tell this to me decisively.  \hfill 1

The Holy Lord said:
Renunciation and yoga
   Both lead to highest happiness;
Of the two, however, yoga
   Excels mere renunciation.  \hfill 2

He is a constant renouncer
   Who neither likes nor dislikes: for
Free from the pairs of opposites,
   He easily is freed from bonds.  \hfill 3

“Sankhya and yoga are diff’rent,”
   The childish declare—not the wise.
If one is practiced correctly,
   That person finds the fruit of both.  \hfill 4

The place attained by the Sankhyas
   Is also attained by yogis.
Sankhya and yoga are one. He
   Who perceives this truly perceives.  \hfill 5

Without yoga, O Mighty-Armed,
   Renunciation’s hard to gain.
The sage disciplined in yoga
   Quickly attains unto Brahman. \hfill 6

\textsuperscript{37} That is: Karma Yoga, the yoga of detached action.
Yoga-yoked, with self purified,
   With self subdued, senses conquered,
His self the self of all beings,
   He is not tainted when acting.

“I do not do anything;” thus
   Thinks the steadfast knower of truth,
Seeing, hearing, touching, smelling,
   Eating, walking, sleeping, breathing.

Speaking, releasing, and holding;
   Opening and closing his eyes–
Convinced that it is the senses
   That move among the sense-objects.

Offering actions to Brahman,
   Having abandoned attachment,
He acts untainted by evil
   As lotus leaf is not wetted.

Yogis act only with body,
   Mind, intellect, or the senses,
Forsaking attachment to deeds,
   For purifying of their heart.

Well-poised, forsaking action’s fruit,
   They attain peace of steadfastness;
But those led by desire are bound
   By attachment to action’s fruit.

Renouncing all acts with the mind,
   The embodied sits happily
Within the city of nine gates,
   Not acting or causing actions.

Neither agency, nor actions
   Does the Lord create for the world,
Nor union with the fruit of deeds–
   Inherent nature does the deeds.

38 “As the ruler” omitted here to fit the meter.
The Omnipresent takes note of
Neither merit nor demerit.
Ignorance envelops knowledge,
By it people are deluded. 15

But those whose ignorance has been
Destroyed by knowledge of the self–
That knowledge of theirs, like the sun,
Reveals then the Supreme Brahman. 16

With intellect absorbed in That,
Whose self is That, steadfast in That,
And whose consummation is That,
Purified, are freed from rebirth. 39 17

The wise see the same atman in:
A wise Brahmin who’s disciplined,
A cow, an elephant, a dog–
Even in an eater of dogs. 40 18

Those whose minds rest in evenness,
Conquer existence in this world.
Brahman is even and perfect–
So they indeed rest in Brahman. 19

Resting in Brahman, and steady
In intellect, undeluded,
The pleasant does not rejoice him
Nor does the unpleasant grieve him. 20

Unattached to external things,
Finding happiness in the Self,
And one with Brahman through yoga,
He gains unchanging happiness. 21

39 “They whose minds are absorbed in That, whose selves are fixed on That, whose basis is That, who hold That as the highest object, whose evils have been shaken off by knowledge, go to the end of rebirth.”

40 Dogs in India are wild animals related to jackals and hyenas.
Pleasures born of contact, indeed,
    Are wombs of pain, Son of Kunti.
They have beginning and an end;
    The wise does not delight in them.  22

He who can endure here, before
    Liberation from the body,
Desire and anger’s impetus,
    Is a yogi, a happy man.  23

He whose happiness is within,
    Whose delectation is within,
Whose light is within–that yogi,
    One with Brahman, gains nirvana.  24

With imperfections exhausted,
    Doubts dispelled and senses controlled,
Engaged in good for all beings–
    The seer gains Brahma-nirvana.  25

Released from desire and anger,
    With thoughts restrained, those ascetics
Who know the Self, find very near
    The bliss of Brahma-nirvana.  26

Excluding all outside contacts,
    Fixing awareness ’tween the brows,
Balancing both inhaling and
    Exhaling within the nostrils.  27

Controlling sense, mind, intellect;
    With moksha as the supreme goal;
Freed from desire, fear, and anger:
    Such a sage is for ever free.  28

Knowing Me, the Enjoyer of
    Sacrificial austerities,
Mighty Lord of all the world and
    Friend of all creatures, he gains peace.  29
Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fifth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Renunciation of Action.
The Holy Lord said:
He who performs bounden duty
   Without desiring action’s fruit—
He is a renouncer, yogi,
   Not he without fire or action.  

Know that to be karma yoga
   Which also is called renouncement,
None becomes a karma yogi
   Without renouncing inner deeds.  

Desiring to attain yoga,
   The wise use action as the means;
For him who has attained yoga,
   Tranquility becomes the means.  

When he is attached neither to
   The sense objects nor to actions,
And has renounced all purposing,
   He’s said to have attained yoga.  

He should lift himself by the Self;
   He should never degrade himself;
The Self is indeed the self’s friend,
   And the self’s only enemy.  

For him who has conquered himself
   By the Self, the Self is a friend;
But for him who has not conquered
   Himself, the Self remains a foe.  

The highest Self of him who has
   Conquered himself and is peaceful,
Is steadfast in cold, heat, pleasure,
   Pain; and honor and dishonor.
The yogi who is content in
   Knowledge and discrimination,
With senses conquered—unto him
   Earth, stone, and gold are all the same. 8

He attains eminence who looks
   The same on well-wishers, friends, foes,
Neutral to enemies and kin,
   The righteous and the unrighteous. 9

Constantly concentrating on
   The Self, the yogi should remain
Alone, with thought and self controlled,
   Without desires or possessions. 10

Establishing for himself in
   A clean place, not too high or low,
Covered with a cloth and with a
   Antelope skin and kusha grass, 11

With mind one-pointed, thought controlled,
   Senses subdued, let him sit there
On that seat and practice yoga
   For his self-purification. 12

Holding his body, head, and neck
   Erect, motionless and steady,
Looking t’ward the tip of his nose
   Steadfastly, not looking around. 13

With mind quieted, fear banished,
   Firm in the brahmacari’s vow,
With mind controlled, thoughts fixed on Me,
   He should sit, devoted to Me. 14

Always disciplining himself,
   The yogi whose mind is subdued
Goes to nirvana, supreme peace,
   And attains to union with Me. 15
Yoga is not eating too much,  
Nor is it not eating at all.  
Not the habit of too much sleep,  
Nor keeping awake, Arjuna.  

For the moderate in eating  
And in diversion, disciplined,  
Moderate in sleep and waking,  
Yoga destroys all his sorrow.  

When he is absorbed in the Self  
Alone, and with his mind controlled,  
Free from longing, from all desires,  
Then he is known to be steadfast.  

As a lamp in a windless place  
Flickers not—to such is compared  
The yogi with his mind controlled,  
Steadfast in yoga of the Self.  

When the mind comes to rest, restrained,  
By the practicing of yoga,  
Beholding the Self by the self,  
He is satisfied in the Self.  

When he feels that infinite bliss—  
Through his purified intellect—  
Which transcends the senses; then set  
In his true state he is steadfast.  

Having obtained this, he regards  
No other gain better than that,  
And established therein he is  
Not moved by heaviest sorrow.

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41 “For him who is moderate in food and diversion, whose actions are disciplined, who is moderate in sleep and waking, yoga destroys all sorrow.”
Let that which is called yoga be
   Known as the state of severance
From pain, and which should be practiced
   With perseverance, undisturbed. 23

Abandoning wilful desires—
   All of them without exception—
Also completely restraining
   The many senses by the mind. 24

With intellect set in patience,
   With the mind fastened on the self,
He gains quietude by degrees:
   Let him not think of any thing. 25

Whenever the unsteady mind,
   Moving here and there, wanders off,
He should subdue and hold it back—
   Direct it to the Self’s control. 26

The yogi whose mind is tranquil
   With passions calmed, free of evil,
Having become one with Brahman,
   Attains the supreme happiness. 27

Thus constantly disciplining
   Himself, and freed from all evil,
Easily contacting Brahman,
   He attains boundless happiness. 28

He, disciplined by yoga, sees
   The Self present in all beings,
And all beings within the Self.
   He sees the same Self at all times. 29

The one who sees Me ev’rywhere,
   And who sees all things within Me;
I am never lost unto him,
   Nor is he ever lost to Me. 30
He, established in unity,
   Worships Me dwelling in all things,
Whatever be his mode of life,
   That yogi e’er abides in Me. 31

He who judges pleasure or pain
   By the same standard ev’rywhere,
That he applies unto himself,
   That yogi is deemed the highest. 32

_Arjuna said:_
This yoga which is taught by You
   Characterized by evenness,
I do not see how it endures,
   Owing to the mind’s restlessness. 33

The mind is restless, turbulent,
   Strong, and unyielding, O Krishna;
I deem it is hard to control–
   As hard as to control the wind. 34

_The Holy Lord said:_
Without doubt the mind is restless
   And is difficult to control;
But through practice and dispassion
   It may be governed, Kunti’s son. 35

Yoga is hard to be attained
   By one whose self is uncontrolled;
But that one who is self-controlled,
   Striving by right means, attains it. 36

_Arjuna said:_
Possessed of faith, but uncontrolled,
   With mind wandering from yoga,
What is the end of him who fails
   To gain perfection in yoga? 37
Does he not, fallen from both,\(^{42}\) then
Perish, supportless, a torn cloud,
O mighty-armed, deluded in
   The path that leads unto Brahman?  

This doubt of mine, O Keshava,
   You should now completely dispel;
It is not possible for aught
   But You to dispel this my doubt.  

*The Holy Lord said:*
Verily, O son of Pritha,
   There is no destruction for him
Neither here nor hereafter, for
   Doers of good ne’er come to grief.  

He gains the worlds of the righteous,
   And dwells there throughout countless years;
Then the fallen yogi takes birth
   Among the pure and prosperous.  

Or else he will be born into
   A family of wise yogis;
Verily, a birth such as that
   Is hard to obtain in this world.  

There he regains the knowledge which
   He acquired in his former life,
And strives even more than before,
   For perfection, O Kuru’s son.  

His previous practice alone
   Impels him on the yogic path–
He who just asks about yoga
   Rises above the Vedic rites.  

\(^{42}\) Both worlds—here and the hereafter, earth and heaven.
That yogi, striving earnestly,
    Pure from taint, gradually gains
Perfection throughout many births
    And thus reaches the highest goal. 45

The yogi is regarded as
    Superior to ascetics,
And jnanis, or doers of works—
    Then be a yogi, Arjuna! 46

Of all the yogis, he who with
    The inner self merged into Me,
With faith devoted unto Me,
    I deem him as the most steadfast. 47

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the sixth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Meditation.
The Holy Lord said:

With your mind intent upon Me,
    Taking refuge in Me, now hear
How through the practice of yoga
    You shall fully come to know Me. 1

To you I shall explain in full
    Knowledge and realization, 43
Which, being known, nothing further
    Remains to be known in this world. 2

Of thousands of human beings,
    Scarcely one strives for perfection;
And of those adept in striving,
    Scarcely any knows Me in truth. 3

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind,
    Intellect, ego-principle:
These are the eight divisions of
    My prakriti, O Arjuna. 44 4

Such is my lower prakriti,
    Yet know my higher prakriti
Sustains all beings that exist
    And the whole cosmos, Mighty Armed. 5

These two Prakritis should be known
    As the womb of all these beings.
Of this whole universe am I
    The Origin and Dissolver. 6

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43 Pronounced as five syllables: “Re-a-li-za-tion.”

44 I have inserted “Arjuna” in this verse to fill out the meter, just as in the first verse of this chapter I had to omit “Son of Pritha” to maintain it.
Higher than Me, Dhananjaya,
There is absolutely nothing.
All creation is strung on Me
Like strands of jewels on a thread.

I am the taste within water,
The radiance of moon and sun;
I am Om in all the Vedas,
Sound in ether, manhood in men.

I am the fragrance within earth,
And the brilliance within the fire;
The life in all beings, and the
Austerity of ascetics.

Know me as the eternal seed
Of all beings; th’intelligence
Of the intelligent, and the
Splendor of the splendid am I.

I am the strength of the strong, free
From all desire and from passion.
I am the desire in beings
That is according to dharma.

States of being which are sattwic,
Rajasic and tamasic⁴⁵—know
As proceeding from Me, yet I
Am not in them, but they in Me.

All this world is deluded by
The states composed of the gunas.
Thus it perceives Me not, Who am
Eternal and higher than these.

This divine illusion of Mine
Is difficult to go beyond.
Only those devoted to Me
Shall pass beyond this illusion.

⁴⁵ These three states will be discussed in Chapter Fourteen.
But those not devoted to Me—
   Evil-doers, deluded, low—
Deprived by Maya of good sense,
   Follow the way of the demons.  

These four kinds of virtuous men
 Do worship Me, O Arjuna:
The distressed, seekers of welfare,
   Seekers of knowledge, and the wise.  

Of them, the wise man, e’er steadfast,
   Devoted to the One, excels;
Supremely dear am I to him,
   And he is dear to Me, as well.  

All these indeed are exalted,
   But I see the man of wisdom
As My Self. He, with mind steadfast,
   Abides in Me, the Supreme Goal.  

At the end of his many births
   The wise man takes refuge in Me.
He knows: “All is Vasudeva.”  
   How very rare is that great soul!  

Others, deprived of their good sense,
   By “this or that” desire or rite,
Devote themselves to other gods,
   Impelled thus by their own natures.  

Whatever form a devotee
   May seek to worship with full faith—
That faith of his is blessed by Me
   To be steadfast, unwavering.  

Endowed with faith he then receives
   His desires from that worshipped form
Because I have decreed that those
   Desires should be granted to him.  

46 “He who dwells in all things”—the Universal God.
But temporary is the fruit
   For those of small understanding.
To the gods go their worshippers;
   My worshippers come unto Me. 23

The unintelligent think Me
   Manifest, though Unmanifest,
Not knowing My supreme state as
   Unchanging and transcendental. 24

Veiled by illusion born of the
   Combinations of the gunas,
This deluded world knows Me not–
   The Unborn, the Immutable. 25

I know the departed beings,
   Also the living, Arjuna,
And those who are yet to be born;
   But none whatsoever knows me. 26

By desire and hatred rising
   Through duality’s delusion,
At birth all beings fall into
   Delusion, O Scorcher of Foes. 27

But those men of virtuous deeds,
   They whose sin has come to an end,
Freed from the pairs of opposites–
   They worship Me with firm resolve. 28

Those men who take refuge in Me
   Seek freedom from old age and death;
They know Brahman thoroughly, and
   Know the Self and Karma as well. 29

Those who know Me, the Primal One,
   The Primal God, Chief Sacrifice,
They truly know Me with steadfast
   Thought even at the time of death. 30
Om Tat Sat
Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the seventh discourse entitled: The Yoga of Wisdom and Realization.
Arjuna said:
What is Brahman and Primal Self,
    And what is Karma, O Krishna,
What is the Primal Element,
    Also, what is the Primal God?

Who, and in what way, is Primal
    Sacrifice here in this body?
And how are You known at the time
    Of death by the self-controlled ones?

The Holy Lord said:
Deathless is the Supreme Brahman
    The Primal Self that dwells in all;
The sacrificial offering:
    Karma–causing both birth and life.

The Primal Element is the
    Perishable adjunct of this;
The Primal God is Indweller,
    And I the Primal Sacrifice.

And he who at the time of death
    Meditating on Me alone,
Goes forth, and leaving the body,
    Doubtless attains to My Being.

Whatever he remembers when
    Departing from the body, that
Alone is reached by him because
    Of his constant thinking of that.
Therefore, at all times, constantly
   Remember Me, and then do fight:
With mind and intellect absorbed
   In Me, you thus shall come to Me.  

With mind made steadfast by yoga,
   Which turns not to anything else,
To the divine supreme Spirit
   He goes, meditating on Him.  

He who meditates on the Seer, the Ruler,
   The ancient, subtler than the atom, support
Of all, Whose form is inconceivable and
   Radiant like the sun and beyond darkness.  

At the hour of death with his mind unmoving,
   Endowed with devotion and with yoga pow'r,
With the prana ent’ring between the eyebrows,
   He goes unto the divine supreme Spirit.  

That which Veda-knowers call the Eternal,
   Which the ascetics, free from passion, enter;
Desiring which they live as brahmacharins,
   That path I shall explain unto you briefly.  

Controlling all of the senses,
   Confining the mind in the heart,
Drawing pranas into the head,
   Doing yogic concentration,  

Uttering OM, the syllable
   That is God, and intent on Me,
Departing thus from his body,
   He then attains the Goal Supreme.  

He who thinks of Me constantly,
   Whose mind does never go elsewhere,
Yogi of constant devotion–
   For him I am easy to reach.  

47 Or: Imperishable.
Reaching the highest perfection,
   Having attained Me, those great souls
Are no more subject to rebirth–
   The evanescent home of pain.  

All worlds, including Brahma’s realm,
   Are subject to rebirth’s return,
But for him who attains to Me
   There is no rebirth, Kunti’s Son.  

The knowers of true “day” and “night”
   Know Brahma’s Day and Brahma’s Night
Are each a thousand yugas\(^{48}\) long–
   And each one comes unto an end.  

At the approach of Brahma’s Day,
   All manifested things come forth
From the unmanifest, and then
   Return to that at Brahma’s Night.  

Helpless, the same host of beings
   Being born again and again,
Merge at the approach of the Night
   And emerge at the dawn of Day.  

But beyond this unmanifest
   There is the Unmanifested,
Eternal Existence, Which is
   Not destroyed when all beings merge.  

The unmanifest, eternal,
   Is declared as the Supreme Goal,
Attaining Which they return not.
   This is My supreme dwelling place.  

Yea, this is the Supreme Being,
   Attained by devotion alone,
Within Which all beings do dwell,
   By which all this is pervaded.  

\(^{48}\) One thousand yugas—one “day” (or “night”) of Brahma—is 4,320,000,000 years long.
Now I shall tell you, Arjuna,
Of the times in which, departing,
The yogis shall once more return
Or, departing, shall not return. 23

Fire, light, daytime, the bright fortnight,
The six months of the sun’s North Path–
Knowers of Brahman take this path
And thereby go unto Brahman. 24

Smoke, nighttime, and the dark fortnight,
The six months of the sun’s South Path–
Taking this path the yogi gains
The lunar light, and thus returns. 25

Truly these two light and dark paths
The world thinks to be eternal.
By one he goes to non-return;
By the other, returns again. 26

No yogi who knows these two paths,
O Pritha’s son, is deluded.
Therefore, be steadfast in yoga
Throughout all times, O Arjuna. 27

Whatever merit is declared
As gained from Vedas, sacrifice,
Austerity and gifts–yogis
Surpass and gain the Great Abode. 28

Om Tat Sat
Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the eighth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Imperishable Brahman.
The Holy Lord said:
To you who argue not shall I
Declare this most secret knowledge
Which, when joined with realization,
Shall free you from impurity. 1

Royal knowledge, royal secret,
This the supreme purifier,
Readily learned by the righteous,
Easy to practice, eternal. 2

Those without faith in this dharma,
Return, without attaining Me,
To the path of birth in this world–
The realm of death, O Arjuna. 3

All this world is pervaded by
Me in My unmanifest form:
All beings do dwell within Me,
But I do not dwell within them. 4

Nor do beings dwell within Me–
Behold this, My Divine Yoga!
Bringing forth and supporting them,
My Self yet does not dwell in them. 49 5

As mighty winds move ev’rywhere,
Yet always dwell in the ether,
Know, Arjuna, that even so
Do all beings dwell within Me. 6

49 The idea of these two verses is that we draw our being from God; God does not draw His being from us. We are contained in Him, He is not contained in us.
At the end of a kalpa, all
Beings merge in My Prakriti:
At dawn of another kalpa,
I Myself send them forth again. 7

Animating My Prakriti,
I project again and again
This whole multitude of beings,
Helpless under Prakriti’s sway. 8

And yet these acts do not bind Me,
Sitting as one indifferent
And fully unattached to them:
This is the truth, Dhananjaya. 9

Because of My proximity,
Prakriti produces all this,
The moving and the unmoving;
The world revolves because of this. 10

Unaware of My higher state
As the Great Lord of all beings,
The deluded disregard Me
Dwelling within a human form. 11

Of vain hopes, vain deeds, vain knowledge,
Without sense—truly they abide
In the delusive nature of
The rakshasas and asuras. 12

But those great souls that abide in
Their divine nature, Arjuna,
Worship Me single-mindedly,
As their eternal Origin. 13

50 A kalpa is a Day of Brahma—4,320,000,000 years. It alternates with a Night of Brahma of the same length. In the Day of Brahma creation is manifest and in the Night of Brahma is it resolved into its causal state.

51 Rakshasa: There are two kinds of rakshasas: 1) semidivine, benevolent beings, or 2) cannibal demons or goblins, enemies of the gods. Meat-eating human beings are sometimes classed as rakshasas.

52 Asura: Demon; evil being (a-sura: without the light).
Glorifying Me always and
    Striving ever with firm resolve,
Bowing to Me in devotion,
    Always steadfast, they worship Me. 14

And others, sacrificing by
    The sacrifice of pure knowledge,
Worship Me, the All-Formed, as one,
    As distinct, and as manifold. 15

I am the rite, the sacrifice,
    The offering, the offered things,
I am the mantra and the ghee,
    The fire, and act of oblation. 16

Father and Mother of this world,
    Sustainer, Grandfather, the Known,53
Purifier, the Pranava,
    The Rig, Sama, Yajur Vedas. 17

Goal, Supporter, the Lord, Witness,
    Abode, Refuge, Friend, Origin,
Dissolution, and Substratum,
    Storehouse, Seed Imperishable. 18

As the sun I give heat and I
    Withhold and send forth rain; I am
Both immortality and death;
    Being and non-being am I! 19

The knowers of the three Vedas worship Me
    By sacrifice, by drinking Soma, and thus
Made pure from sin pray for passage to heaven;54
    Gain worlds and enjoy pleasures of the Devas. 20

53 The “to be known,” the object of knowledge.
54 Surendralokam—the world of Indra, king of the “gods” who control the forces of nature. This is a comparatively lower
realm of development in the cosmos.
Having enjoyed the heaven-world, with merit
Exhausted, they re-enter the mortal world.
Thus, keeping the injunctions of the Vedas,
Filled with desires, they constantly come and go. 21

Those who direct their thoughts to Me,
Worshipping Me with steadfast mind,
For them I secure what they lack
And preserve that which they possess. 22

Even those who with faith worship
Other gods, also worship Me,
Though with a mistaken approach55–
This is the truth, Son of Kunti. 23

Truly I am the Enjoyer,
And Lord of all sacrifices;
But because they do not know Me
They return, subject to rebirth. 24

To the gods go their devotees;
To fathers go their devotees;
To spirits go their devotees;
And to Me go My devotees.56 25

Whoe’er with devotion offers
A leaf, flower, fruit, or water,
That I accept—the devout gift
Offered by the pure-minded one. 26

55 The words “with a mistaken approach” is the best I can do with avidhipurvakam. It literally means “not according to the rules” or even “without/outside the rules.” The idea seems to be that these people do not know or understand how to worship God because they do not know or understand the nature of God. Other possible terms—ignorantly, incorrectly, mistakenly, improperly, inappropriately, inaptly, ineptly, haphazardly, irregularly—either express a value judgment or add an extra meaning or attitude the Sanskrit does not include.

56 “Gods” (devas) are the demigods presiding over various powers of material and psychic nature. “Fathers” (pitris) are ancestors or other departed human beings. “Spirits” (bhutas) are non-human nature spirits, some of them subhuman (“elementals”), but this classification can also include earthbound human spirits. All of these may be either positive or negative.
Whate’er you do, whate’er you eat,
    Whate’er you sacrifice or give,
Whate’er austerity you do,
    Do that as offering to Me.  

Thus shall you be freed from the bonds
    Of actions–both good and evil;
Steadfast in renunciation
    And freed, you shall come unto Me.  

I am the same to all beings:
    To me none is disliked or dear.
But those worshipping Me, devout,
    Are in Me, and I am in them.  

If even an evildoer
    Worships me single-heartedly,
He should be considered righteous,
    Truly having rightly resolved.  

Quickly he becomes virtuous
    And goes to everlasting peace.
O Son of Kunti, understand:
    My devotee is never lost.  

Women, Vaishyas, also Shudras,
    Even those born of evil wombs,
All those who take refuge in Me
    Also go to the Supreme Goal.  

How much more, then, holy Brahmans
    And devoted royal sages!
Having obtained this transient
    And joyless world, then worship Me.  

____________________
57 At the time of Krishna, and even today in India, some ignorant people, denying the truth of the Self, claim that only Brahmin and Kshatriya males can attain liberation—and they have to be from “good” backgrounds. Krishna denies this.
58 Kshatriya
With mind fixed on Me, devoted,
   Worshipping, bowing down to Me,
Thus made steadfast, with Me as your
   Supreme aim—you shall come to Me.

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the ninth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Kingly Science and Kingly Secret.
The Holy Lord said:
Now hear from Me the supreme word
Which I speak to you, Mighty-Armed,
For you are beloved to Me.
   I speak desiring your welfare.  

Neither the multitude of gods
   Or great seers know My origin.
In truth I am the source of the
   Gods, as well as of the great seers.  

He who knows Me as birthless and
   Beginningless, the world’s Great Lord–
He alone among mortals is
   Undeluded and freed from sins.  

Reason, knowledge, non-delusion,
   Forbearance, truth, restraint of sense,
Calmness, happiness, misery,
   Birth, death, fear, also fearlessness,  

Non-injury, and contentment,
   Austerity, benevolence,
Both good repute and ill repute–
   All these arise from Me alone.  

The ancient Seven Great Rishis
   And Four Manus, with pow’rs like Me,
Were born of My mind, and from them
   Are all the creatures in this world.  

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59 I had to leave out “impartiality” in this line to keep the meter.
60 The Seven Rishis are great Beings who exist at the top of creation and supervise it.
61 The Manus were the progenitors of the human race.
He who knows all these manifold
Manifestations of My pow’r
And glory, becomes established
In yoga—there can be no doubt.

I am the origin of all,
And from Me ev’rything evolves—
Thinking thus, the wise worship Me
With consciousness all filled with love.

With minds and lives intent on Me,
Enlightening one another,
And speaking of Me constantly,
They are content and do rejoice.

To them, the constantly steadfast,
Worshipping Me with affection,
I bestow the buddhi-yoga
By which they shall come unto Me.

Out of compassion for them, I,
Abiding in their hearts, destroy
The darkness born of ignorance
By the shining lamp of knowledge.

Arjuna said:
Supreme Brahman, Supreme Abode,
Supreme Purifier, Divine,
Eternal Person, the First God,
The Birthless and All-pervading—

Thus all the sages declare You:
Narad’, Asita Devala,
And Vyasa—and now do You, too,
Yourself declare it unto me.

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62 This can also mean “awakening” spiritually.
63 Narada: A primeval sage to whom some of the verses of the Rig Veda are attributed.
64 Another ancient sage, composer of some of the hymns of the Rig Veda.
65 Vyasa: One of the greatest sages of India, commentator on the Yoga Sutras, author of the Mahabharata (which includes the Bhagavad Gita), the Brahma Sutras, and the codifier of the Vedas.
I regard all this that You say
   To me as true, O Keshava.
In truth, neither gods nor demons
   Know of Your manifestation. 14

For You know Yourself by Yourself,
   O You, the Supreme Purusha:66
Source of beings, Lord of beings,
   God of gods, Ruler of the world. 15

You should now describe completely
   Your divine manifestations
By which, pervading all these worlds,
   You do abide within all things. 16

How may I know You, O Yogi,
   Always meditating on You?
In what aspects of Your Being
   Are You to be thought of by me? 17

Explain to me in more detail
   Your pow’rs and manifestations.
I am never satiated
   In hearing Your amrit-like67 words. 18

The Holy Lord said:
Listen! I shall tell you of My
   Divine Self-manifestations;
But only the chief ones, because
   There is no end to My expanse. 19

I am the Self abiding in
   The heart of all beings; I am
The beginning, the middle, and
   Also the end of all beings. 20

66 Purushottama. Purusha means “person” in the sense of a conscious spirit. Both God and the individual spirits are purushas, but God is the Adi (Original, Archetypal) Purusha, Parama (Highest) Purusha, and the Purushottama (Best of the Purushas).

67 Amrita: That which makes one immortal.
I am Vishnu⁶⁸ of Adityas;⁶⁹
   The Sun among luminaries;
I am Marichi of Maruts;⁷⁰
   Among the stars I am the Moon. 21

Of Vedas, the Sama Veda;⁷¹
   I am Indra⁷² among the gods;
Of the senses I am the mind;
   Intelligence in all beings. 22

Among the Rudras,⁷³ Shankara;⁷⁴
   Kuber⁷⁵ of yakshas,⁷⁶ rakshasas;
Of Vasus⁷⁷ I am Pavaka;⁷⁸
   And of mountains Meru⁷⁹ am I. 23

And of priests, O son of Pritha,
   Know Me the chief, Brihaspati⁸⁰;
Of generals I am Skanda;⁸¹
   Among the waters, the ocean. 24

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⁶⁸ Vishnu: “The all-pervading;” God as the Preserver.
⁶⁹ Adityas: Solar deities.
⁷⁰ The Maruts are the presiding deities of winds and storms, and Marichi is their chief.
⁷¹ The Sama Veda is a compilation of Rig Veda hymns that have been pointed for singing.
⁷² Vasava: Indra, the king of the lesser “gods” (demigods).
⁷³ The Rudras are Vedic deities of destruction for renewal.
⁷⁴ “The Auspicious One.” A title of Shiva.
⁷⁵ Vittesha: Kubera, the god of wealth.
⁷⁶ Yaksha: There are two kinds of yakshas: 1) semidivine beings whose king is Kubera, the lord of wealth, or 2) a kind of ghost, goblin, or demon.
⁷⁷ The Vasus are eight Vedic deities characterized by radiance.
⁷⁸ Agni: The Vedic god of fire.
⁷⁹ Meru: The mountain, of supreme height, on which the gods dwell, or the mountain on which Shiva is ever seated in meditation. Said to be the center of the world, supporting heaven itself. Obviously a yogic symbol.
⁸⁰ Brihaspati: The guru–priest and teacher–of the gods.
⁸¹ Also known as Subramanya or Karttikeya, the god of war and son of Shiva and Parvati.
Of great Rishis I am Bhrigu;\(^{82}\)
   Of words, the one-syllabled OM;
Of Yajñas,\(^{84}\) the Japa\(^{85}\) Yajña;\(^{86}\)
   Of immovables: Himalayas.  \(25\)

Of trees I am the Ashwattha;\(^{87}\)
   Of Deva-rishis, Narada;
Of Gandharvas,\(^{88}\) Chitraratha;\(^{89}\)
   Among siddhas,\(^{90}\) Sage Kapila.\(^{91}\)  \(26\)

Among horses, Uchchaishravas\(^{92}\)
   Who was born of the Amrita;
Of elephants, Airavata;\(^{93}\)
   And among men I am the king.  \(27\)

Among weapons, the Thunderbolt;\(^{94}\)
   Among cows I am Kamadhuk;\(^{95}\)
The cause of offspring, Kandarpa;\(^{96}\)
   Of serpents I am Vasuki.\(^{97}\)  \(28\)

\(^{82}\) Rishi: Sage; seer of the Truth.
\(^{83}\) Bhrigu: An ancient sage, so illustrious that he mediated quarrels among the gods.
\(^{84}\) Yajna: Sacrifice; offering; sacrificial ceremony; a ritual sacrifice; usually the fire sacrifice known as agnihotra or havan.
\(^{85}\) Japa: Repetition of a mantra.
\(^{86}\) In the context of this verse, japa yajna is the offering or sacrifice of continually repeating Om.
\(^{87}\) Ashwattha: The pipal (sacred fig) tree, the eternal tree of life whose roots are in heaven. The “world tree” in the sense of the axis of the earth and even of the cosmos.
\(^{88}\) Gandharva: A demigod—a celestial musician and singer.
\(^{89}\) Chitraratha: The chief of the gandharvas.
\(^{90}\) Siddha: A perfected being, an adept, a seer, a perfect yogi.
\(^{91}\) Kapila: The great sage who formulated the Sankhya philosophy which is endorsed by Krishna several times in the Bhagavad Gita.
\(^{92}\) Uchchaishravas: The name of Indra’s horse (or the horse of the Sun god, Surya), that was born of the amrita that was churned from the ocean by the gods. The name means “high-sounding” and refers to the power of mantra.
\(^{93}\) Airavata: The white elephant of Indra that was produced by the churning of the ocean.
\(^{94}\) Vajra: the special weapon of Indra, king of the gods.
\(^{95}\) Kamadhenu: Wishfulfilling cow produced at the churning of the milk ocean.
\(^{96}\) A name of Kamadeva, the god of beauty and love.
\(^{97}\) The king of the serpents. He assisted at the churning of the milk ocean.
Of Nagas I am Ananta;  
Of water beings, Varuna;  
Of pitris I am Aryaman;  
Of controllers I am Yama.  

Of demons I am Prahlada;  
Among measurers I am Time;  
Among beasts I am the lion;  
Among birds I am Garuda.  

Of purifiers I am Wind;  
Among warriors I am Rama;  
Of fishes I am the dolphin;  
Of rivers I am the Ganges.  

Of manifestations I am  
Beginning, middle, and the end;  
Of knowledge, knowledge of the Self;  
Of disputants I am logic.

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98 Nagas: Astral beings that often interact with human beings, usually taking the form of snakes. (In Sanskrit naga is the word for snake.)

99 Ananta: The chief of the Nagas, whose coils encircle the earth and who symbolizes eternity (“ananta” means “without end”), and upon whom Vishnu reclines.

100 Varuna: A Vedic deity considered the sustainer of the universe and also the presiding deity of the oceans and water. Often identified with the conscience.

101 Pitri: A departed ancestor, a forefather.

102 Aryaman: Chief of the Pitris.

103 Yama: The Lord of Death, controller of who dies and what happens to them after death.

104 Daityas: Demons who constantly war with the gods. Sometimes “races” or nationalities who acted contrary to dharma and fought against the “aryas” were also called demons (daityas or asuras). This was the case with the people among whom Prahlada was born.

105 Prahlada: A daitya prince who rejected his daitya heritage and became a devotee of Vishnu. His father, the evil Hiranyakashipu, tortured him and attempted his life because of his devotion and his speaking to others of divine matters, yet he remained steadfast.

106 Garuda: A great being who can assume bird form, and therefore considered the king of birds. Often depicted as an eagle, he is the vehicle of Vishnu.

107 Rama: An incarnation of God—the king of ancient Ayodhya in north-central India. His life is recorded in the ancient epic Ramayana.

108 Ganges: The sacred river—believed to be of divine origin—that flows from high up in the Himalayas, through the plains of Northern India, and empties into the Bay of Bengal. Hindus consider that bathing in the Ganges profoundly purifies both body and mind.
Among letters, the letter A;
    Of compounds I am the dual;
I am inexhaustible Time;
    I the Sustainer, the All-formed. 33

I am all-destroying death and
    Origin of all that shall be.
I am fame, prosperity, speech,
    Mem’ry, wisdom, courage, patience. 34

Of chants I am Brihatsaman;109
    Of meters I am Gayatri;110
Of months I am Margashirsha;111
    Of seasons, the season of flow’rs.112 35

The gambling of the fraudulent,
    The splendor of the splendorous;
I am victory and effort;
    I am sattwa of the sattwic. 36

Among Vrishnis,113 Vasudeva;114
    Of Pandavas, Dhananjaya;
Among sages I am Vyasa;
    Among the rishis, Ushanas.115 37

The sceptre of authorities,
    Strategy of the ambitious,
Of secret things I am silence;
    The knowledge of knowers am I. 38

109 A type of chant to Indra in the Sama Veda.
110 The gayatri meter is found only in the Rig Veda and consists of three lines of eight syllables each. It is considered especially appropriate for mantric invocation of deities before worship.
111 A lunar month, roughly the latter half of November and the first half of December. This is the time of ideal weather in India.
112 Kusumakaras, “the season of flowers” is a term for Spring.
113 The ancestral clan of Krishna.
114 Son of Vasudeva-Krishna
115 An ancient seer and poet.
Whate’er the seed of all beings,
    That also am I, Arjuna.
No thing, moving or unmoving,
    Can e’er exist apart from Me.  39

Arjuna, there is no end of
    My divine manifestations.
What I have spoken unto you
    Is but an example of them.  40

Whatever is glorious or
    Prosperous or yet powerful,
Understand that springs from but a
    Fraction of My radiant Pow’r.  41

Of what value is it for you
    To know all this, O Arjuna?
I ever support this whole world
    By just one portion of Myself.  42

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the tenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Divine Glories.
Arjuna said:
In kindness you spoke unto me
Regarding the Supreme Secret
That is known as the Supreme Self.
By this my delusion is gone.

The origin and dissolving
Of beings has been heard by me
In detail from You, O Krishna,
And Your eternal majesty.

And so it is, O Supreme Lord!
As You have declared of Yourself.
Yet still I desire to behold
Your Ishwara\textsuperscript{116}-Form, O Krishna.

Wherefore, O Lord, if You should think
Me capable of seeing It,
Then do You, O Lord of Yogis,
Show to me Your eternal Self.

The Holy Lord said:
Behold now, O Partha, My forms
A hundred fold—a thousandfold—
Various, divine, and also
Of various colors and shapes.

Behold the Adityas, Vasus,
The Rudras, Ashwins\textsuperscript{117} and Maruts;
Behold, O son of Bharata,
Many wonders ne’er seen before.

\textsuperscript{116} Ishwara: “God” or “Lord” in the sense of the Supreme Power, Ruler, Master, or Controller of the cosmos. “Ishwara” implies the powers of omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience.

\textsuperscript{117} Ashwins: Two Vedic deities, celestial horsemen of the sun, always together, who herald the dawn and are skilled in healing. They avert misfortune and sickness and bring treasures.
See now in this My body the
    Whole universe centered in one—
    Both the moving and unmoving—
    And all else you desire to see.  

But you are not able to see
    Me with your own eyes, Arjuna.
I give to you the divine eye—
    Behold My supreme Yoga Pow’r.  

_Sanjaya said:_

    Then having thus spoken, O King,
        Krishna, the Great Lord of Yoga,
    Showed unto the son of Pritha
        His own Supreme Ishwara-Form:  

    With many mouths and many eyes,
        And with many wondrous aspects,
    With many divine ornaments,
        With many divine weapons raised;  

    Wearing divine garlands and clothes,
        With divine perfumes and ointments;
God embodying all wonders,
        The Infinite, Omniscient.  

    If the light of a thousand suns
        Arose together in the sky,
Then that would be like the splendor
        Of that Resplendent Mighty One.  

    There in the body of the God
        Of gods the son of Pandu saw
The universe resting in One
        With its manifold divisions.  

    Then Arjuna, filled with wonder
        And with his hair standing on end,
Bowing down in adoration
        Thus spoke with joined palms unto Him.  

70
Arjuna said:
O God, I see all the gods in Your body,
   And the hosts of all grades of beings in You;
Brahma, the Lord, seated upon the lotus,
   And all the rishis and celestial serpents.  15

I see You of boundless form on ev’ry side
   With Your manifold arms, stomachs, mouths, and eyes;
Neither end, middle, nor beginning of You
   Do I see, Lord, of Your Universal Form.  16

I see You with diadem, club, and discus;
   A mass of radiance shining ev’rywhere,
Very hard to look at, all around blazing
   Like burning fire and sun, and beyond measure.  17

You are the Unchanging, the Supreme Being,
   You are the ultimate resting-place of all;
You are Guardian of Eternal Dharma,
   You are the Primal Purusha, I do ween.  18

You are without beginning, middle, or end,
   Infinite in power, of manifold arms;
The sun and moon Your eyes; burning fire Your mouth;
   Heating the universe with Your radiance.  19

This firmament fixed between heaven and earth,
   And all the quarters are filled by You alone;
Seeing this, Your marvellous and awesome form,
   The three worlds tremble with fear, O Great-souled One.20

Truly, into You enter these hosts of gods;
   Some of which extol You in fear with joined palms;
“May it be well!” thus saying, the bands of great
   Rishis and Siddhas praise You with splendid hymns.21
The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas,\textsuperscript{118} and Vishwa-Devas, Ashwins, Maruts, Ushmapas,\textsuperscript{119} Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras, and Siddhas—
All these are looking at You, quite astounded. 22

Having seen this Your immeasurable form—
With very many mouths, eyes, arms, thighs, and feet,
Many stomachs, and fearful with many tusks—
All the worlds are terrified, and so am I. 23

On seeing You touching the sky, and blazing
With many a color, with mouths wide open,
With large and fiery eyes: I am terrified
At heart, and find no courage nor peace, Vishnu. 24

Having seen Your mouths, fearful with tusks, blazing
Like Pralaya-fires, I know neither the four
Quarters, nor do I find peace; have mercy, then,
O Lord of Gods, Abode of the universe. 25

And all these sons of evil Dhritarashtra,
With the multitudinous hosts of monarchs,
Among whom are numbered Bishma, Drona, and Sutaputra, with the warrior chiefs of ours, 26

Enter precipitately into Your mouth,
Terrible with tusks and fearful to behold.
Some are found sticking in the gaps ’tween Your teeth,
And some with their heads completely pulverized.27

Verily, as the many torrents and streams
Of all the rivers flow towards the ocean,
So do all these heroes of the world of men
Now enter into Your fiercely flaming mouths. 28

\textsuperscript{118} Sadhyas: A group of celestial beings with exquisitely refined natures thought to inhabit the ether.

\textsuperscript{119} Ushmapas: A class of ancestors (pitris) which live off subtle emanations or vapors.
Just as moths precipitately rush into
    A blazing fire, although only to perish,
In like manner so do these creatures also
    Rush into Your mouths though only to perish. 29

Swallowing all the worlds on every side
    With Your flaming mouths, You are licking Your lips.
Your fierce rays, filling the world with radiance,
    Are blazing, burning, consuming, O Vishnu! 30

Tell me who You are–You Who are fierce in form.
    Salutations, O Supreme God: have mercy!
I desire to know You, O Primeval One.
    I know not indeed Your doings or purpose. 31

_The Holy Lord said:_
I am, indeed, mighty world-destroying Time,
    Here made manifest for destroying the world.
Even without you, none of the warriors here
    Arrayed within the hostile armies shall live. 32

Therefore do you arise and thus acquire fame.
    Conquer, and enjoy unrivalled dominion.
Truly, by Myself are they already slain;
    Be merely an apparent cause, Arjuna. 33

Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna, and
    Others already killed by Me, do you kill.
Be not distressed with fear; but fight, and surely
    You shall conquer your enemies in battle. 34

_Sanjaya said:_
Having heard this speech of Krishna, Arjuna
    With joined palms, and trembling, prostrated himself,
And addressed Krishna in a faltering voice,
    Bowing down to Him, and overwhelmed with fear.35
Arjuna said:
It is fitting, Hrishikesha, that the world
Is delighted and rejoices in Your praise,
That rakshasas fly in fear to all quarters,
And siddhas bow to You in adoration. 36

Why should they not bow to You, O Great-souled One,
The Great and Primal Cause of even Brahma,
Infinite, Lord of gods, Source of the cosmos?
Unchanging—Being, Non-being, beyond both. 37

You the Primal God, the Ancient Purusha;
You are Supreme Refuge of this universe,
Knower, the One Thing to be known; Supreme Goal;
By You is the whole universe pervaded. 38

You are Vayu,120 Yama, Agni,121 Varuna,
Chandra,122 Prajapati, and Great-grandfather.123
I bow, yea, I bow to You a thousand times,
Again and again I bow, I bow to You! 39

Salutation to You before and behind,
Salutation on every side, O All!
You, infinite in power and in prowess,
Pervadest all these things; wherefore You are All.40

Whatever I have presumptuously said
From carelessness or love, addressing You as
“O Krishna, O Yadava, O Friend,” speaking
As a friend, unconscious of this Your greatness— 41

However I may have been disrespectful
To You in jest, walking, reposing, sitting,
Eating, alone, with others, I implore You,
Immeasurable One, to forgive all this. 42

120 Vayu: The Vedic god of the wind.
121 Agni: Vedic god of fire.
122 Chandra: Presiding deity of the moon or the astral lunar world (loka).
123 Prajapati and Pitamaha (Grandfather, or Great Father) are titles of Brahma, the Creator.
The world’s Father—of the moving, unmoving—
   You are the worshipful Guru of gurus.
There is no one Your equal in the three worlds.
   Who can excel You, Mighty beyond compare? 43

Prostrating in adoration, do I crave
   Forgiveness: as a father forgives his son,
A friend his dear friend, and a lover his love—
   Thus even so should You forgive Me, O God. 44

Overjoyed am I, seeing Your form, and yet
   My mind is distracted with terror. Show me,
In mercy Lord, only Your previous form—
   O Lord of gods, Abode of the universe. 45

Diademed, bearing the mace and the discus,
   I wish to see You as before. Assume then
That same beloved four-armed form of Yours, O
   You of thousand arms, of universal form. 46

_The Holy Lord said:_
Graciously have I shown to you, Arjuna,
   This Form Supreme, by My own Yoga Power—
Form resplendent, infinite, universal,
   Which has not been seen before by aught but you.47

Not by Vedic study or by sacrifice,
   By gifts, rites, or by severe austerities
Am I seen in such Form in the world of men,
   By any other than you, O Arjuna. 48

Be not afraid or bewildered, having seen
   This Form of Mine, so awesome, so terrible
With your fears dispelled and with your heart gladdened,
   Now see once again this former Form of Mine. 49
Sanjaya said:
Krishna, having thus spoken to Arjuna,
    Showed once again His usual manlike form;
Thus the Great-souled One, assuming His gentle
    Four-armed form pacified him, the terrified.  50

Arjuna said:
Now having seen this, Your gentle
    Man-like form, O Janardana,
My thoughts are now composed, and I
    Am now restored to my nature.  51

The Holy Lord said:
Verily, hard indeed it is
    To behold this great form of Mine
Which you have seen. Even the gods
    Ever long to behold this form.  52

Not by Vedic study, nor by
    Austerity, nor by gifts, nor
By sacrifice can I be seen
    As on this day you have seen Me.  53

By single-minded devotion
    I may be known in this true form,
Seen in reality, also
    Entered into, Scorcher of Foes.  54

He who does work for Me alone,
    Devoted to Me as his goal,
Freed from desire, without ill will
    To any, enters into Me.  55

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the eleventh discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Vision of the Cosmic Form.
Arjuna said:
Those devotees who worship You,
    And those also who do worship
The Changeless, the Unmanifest–
    Which are better versed in yoga? 1

The Holy Lord said:
Those who, fixing their mind on Me,
    Worship steadfast, with supreme faith,
It is My opinion that they
    Are thus the best versed in yoga. 2

They worship the Unperishing,
    Unspeakable, Unmanifest,
Omnipresent, Unthinkable
    Unchangeable, Immovable– 3

Having subdued all the senses,
    And even-minded ev’rywhere,
Engaged in the welfare of all–
    Verily they reach Me alone. 4

Greater is their trouble whose minds
    Are set on the Unmanifest;
For the Unmanifest is hard
    For the embodied ones to reach. 5

Those who worship Me, resigning
    All action, deeming Me as the
Supreme Goal, meditating on
    Me with single-minded yoga– 6
To these whose mind is set on Me,
   Verily, I become ere long,
O Pritha’s son, their Savior from
   The sea of mortal samsara.  

Fixing your mind on Me alone,
   Placing your intellect in Me,
Then doubtless you shall evermore
   Live in Me, here and hereafter.  

If you are unable to fix
   Your mind on Me in steadiness,
By constant practice of yoga
   Seek to reach Me, Dhananjaya.  

But if you are unable to
   Constantly practice yoga, be
Intent on acting for My sake.
   Even that leads to perfection.  

If you cannot do even this,
   Then by taking refuge in Me,
Abandon the fruits of action,
   Becoming this way self-controlled.  

Better is knowledge than practice;
   Meditation than mere knowledge;
Renouncement\textsuperscript{124} than meditation;
   Instant peace comes from renouncement.  

He hates no one, and is friendly
   And compassionate towards all,
Free from feelings of “I” and “mine,”
   Even-minded and forbearing.  

Always content, balanced in mind,
   Self-controlled, firm in conviction,
Mind and intellect fixed on Me,
   Devoted to Me, dear to Me.  

\textsuperscript{124}Tyaga: Literally: “abandonment.” Renunciation—the relinquishment of the fruit of action.
He who agitates not the world,
   And whom the world agitates not,
Who is freed from joy, envy, fear,
   And worry—he is dear to Me.  

He who is free from dependence,
   Pure, skilled, unconcerned, untroubled,
Renouncing all undertakings—
   That devotee is dear to Me.  

He neither rejoices nor hates,
   Nor grieves, nor desires, renouncing
Both good and evil, and full of
   Devotion—he is dear to Me.  

He is the same to friend and foe,
   And in honor and dishonor;
In heat and cold, pleasure and pain;
   And ever free from attachment. 

Who deems blame and praise as equal;
   Silent, content with anything,
Homeless, steady-minded, full of
   Devotion—he is dear to Me.  

They who follow this Immortal
   Dharma, described, endued with faith,
Deeming Me as the Goal Supreme,
   Devoted—are most dear to me. 

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the twelfth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Devotion.
Arjuna said:
Prakriti and Purusha and
The Field and Knower of the Field,
Knowledge, and that which should be known–
I wish to know these, Keshava.¹²⁵

The Holy Lord said:
This body is known as the Field,
And he who knows it thus is called
The Knower of the Field by those
Who know of both Field and Knower.¹

Know Me also, O Bharata,
To be the Knower in all Fields.
The knowledge of Field and Knower
I consider as the knowledge.²

What the Field is–its properties,
Modifications, cause-effects,
Who He is and what His powers,
That do you hear from Me in brief.³

This has been sung by the Rishis
In many ways, in sacred chants,
In passages about Brahman,
Full of convincing reasoning.⁴

The great Elements, Egoism,
Intellect, the Unmanifest,
The ten senses¹²⁶ and the one–mind–
The five objects of the senses;⁵

¹²⁵ “In some of the books you will not find this verse. If you include this verse also, the number of verses of the Bhagavad Gita will come to 701. Some commentators look upon this verse as an interpolation.” (Swami Sivananda in his Gita commentary.)

¹²⁶ The five jnanindriyas (organs of perception) and the five karmendriyas (organs of action).
Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain,
   The aggregate, intelligence,
And steadfastness: thus is the Field
   Briefly described, and its aspects.  

Absence of both pride and deceit,
   Harmlessness,\textsuperscript{127} patience, rectitude,
Approach of teacher,\textsuperscript{128} purity,
   Stability and self-restraint.  

Indifference to sense objects,
   And absence of egotism,\textsuperscript{129}
Keeping in mind the evils of
   Birth, death, old age, disease, and pain;  

Non-attachment and non-clinging
   To son, wife, home, and all suchlike;
Constant evenmindedness in
   Desired and undesired events.  

Unswerving devotion to Me
   With single-minded yoga, and
Frequenting secluded places,
   Distaste for others’ company;\textsuperscript{130}  

Constant in knowledge of the Self,
   Seeing the goal of truth-knowledge–
This is said to be true knowledge.
   The contrary is ignorance.  

I shall describe what must be known,
   Which bestows immortality–
Beginningless Supreme Brahman:
   Neither being nor non-being.  

\textsuperscript{127} Ahimsa
\textsuperscript{128} Acharyopasanam: Approaching a teacher, or sitting near a teacher.
\textsuperscript{129} Pronounce as four syllables: e-go-tis-m.
\textsuperscript{130} Janasamsadi: crowds of people, or society.
With hands and feet everywhere,
   Eyes, heads, and faces ev’rywhere,
With ears throughout the universe—
   THAT stands, pervading ev’rything. 13

Shining by functions of senses,
   Yet without senses; detached, yet
Maintaining all; free from gunas,
   Yet experiencing gunas. 14

Outside and inside all beings;
   Both the unmoving and moving;
Incomprehensible because
   It is subtle and far and near. 15

Undivided, yet It exists
   As if divided in beings:
The sustainer of all beings—
   He absorbs and generates them. 16

The Light even of lights, It is
   Said to be beyond all darkness;
Knowledge, the One Thing to be known,
   Goal of knowledge, within all hearts. 17

Thus Field, knowledge and that which must
   Be known has been briefly stated.
Knowing all this, My devotee
   Attains to My state of being. 18

Know Prakriti and Purusha
   Are both beginningless; and know
That all modifications and
   Gunas are born of Prakriti. 19

In production of the body
   And senses Prakriti’s the cause;
Pleasure and pain’s experience,
   Originates from Purusha. 20
Purusha within Prakriti
   Undergoes Prakriti’s gunas;
Birth in good and evil wombs comes
   From his attachment to gunas.  

The Supreme Purusha is called
   The Looker-on in this body:
The Permitter, the Supporter,
   Experiencer, Lord, and Self.  

He who thus knows the Purusha
   And Prakriti with the gunas,
Whatever be his state in life,
   He shall never be born again.  

Some perceive the Self in the Self
   By the Self through meditation;
Others by Sankhya yoga, and
   Still others by karma yoga.  

Others, again, not knowing thus,
   Worship as they hear from others.
Even these, too, go beyond death,
   Devoted to what they have heard.  

Whate’er is born, the moving or
   The unmoving, O Bharata,
Know it to be from the union
   Of the Field and the Field-Knower.  

The one who truly sees is he
   Who ever sees the Supreme Lord
Existing equally in all
   Beings, deathless in the dying.  

Since seeing the Lord equally
   Existing ev’rywhere in all,
He injures not the Self by Self,
   Then goes unto the Supreme Goal.
The one who truly sees is he
   Who sees that all actions are done
Solely by Prakriti alone,
   And that the Self is actionless. 29

He sees the sep’rate existence
   Of all inherent in the One,
And their expansion from That One–
   He then becomes one with Brahman. 30

Being without beginning and
   Devoid of gunas, unchanging,
This Supreme Self, though embodied,
   Does not act, and is not tainted. 31

As the all-pervading ether,
   Through subtlety is not tainted,
The Self seated in the body
   Is not tainted in any case. 32

As the sun alone illumines
   This entire world, in the same way
The lord of the field illumines
   The entire field, O Bharata. 33

They who with the eye of knowledge
   Distinguish Field, Field-Knower, and
Freedom from beings’ Prakriti,
   They indeed go to the Supreme. 34

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the thirteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Distinction Between the
Field and the Knower of the Field.
The Holy Lord said:
I shall tell you supreme knowledge
Which is the best of all knowledge,
Having known which all the sages
Attained to highest perfection.

Resorting to this knowledge they
Attain identity with Me,
At creation they are not born,
Nor tremble at its dissolving. 1

For me great Brahma is the womb,
And in that do I place the egg.
The origin of all beings
Then comes from that, O Bharata.

Whatever be the forms produced
Within all wombs, Son of Kunti,
Of them Brahma is the great womb,
And I the seed-casting Father.

Sattwa, rajas, and tamas—these
Gunas born of Prakriti bind
Fast in the body him who is
Indestructible, embodied.

Sattwa is stainless, luminous,
And free from defect, yet it binds
By attachment to happiness
And by attachment to knowledge.

131 The idea is that the liberated are not impelled into birth at the beginning of the creation cycle nor are they unsettled at its dissolution. That is, creation and dissolution do not affect them in any way since they have severed all bonds with it.
Know rajas’ nature is passion,  
    Producing thirst and attachment;  
It binds fast the embodied one  
    By the attachment to action.  

Tamas is born of ignorance,  
    Stupefying the embodied;  
It binds by miscomprehension,  
    Indolence, and sleep, Bharata.  

Sattwa ’ttaches to happiness,  
    Rajas to action, Bharata;  
And Tamas, obscuring knowledge,  
    Attaches unto delusion.  

Sattwa prevails over rajas  
    And tamas; and rajas prevails  
Over sattwa and tamas; and  
    Tamas over sattwa, rajas.  

When through each sense of the body  
    The light of knowledge clearly shines,  
Then it should be known that sattwa  
    Is there fully predominant.  

Activity, undertaking  
    Of actions, greed, unrest, longing–  
When rajas is predominant  
    All these arise, O Bharata.  

Darkness, inertia, heedlessness,  
    And delusion—all these arise  
When tamas is predominant,  
    O descendant of the Kurus.  

If the embodied one meets death  
    When sattwa is predominant,  
Then he attains the stainless realms  
    Of the knowers of the Highest.
Meeting death in rajas, he’s born
   Amid those attached to action;
Dying in tamas, he is born
   From the wombs of the deluded. 15

The fruit of good action, they say,
   Is sattwic and pure; verily,
The fruit of rajas is pain, and
   Ignorance the fruit of tamas. 16

From sattwa arises wisdom;
   From rajas, greed; while from tamas
Arises miscomprehension,
   And delusion and ignorance. 17

The sattwa ’biding go upwards;
   Rajasics dwell in the middle;
Tamasics, abiding in the
   Lowest guna, do go downward. 18

When the seer beholds no agent
   Other than the gunas and knows
That which is higher than gunas,
   He attains unto My being. 19

He who goes beyond these gunas
   Which are the source of the body,
Is freed from birth, death, disease, pain,
   And attains immortality. 20

Arjuna said:
By what marks, O Lord, is he known
   Who has gone beyond the gunas?
What is his conduct, and how does
   He pass beyond these three gunas? 21
The Holy Lord said:
He who hates not the appearance
   Of light and of activity
And delusion, O Pandava,
   Nor yet longs for them when absent;
22

He, sitting like one unconcerned,
   Who is not moved by the gunas,
Knowing: “The gunas operate,”
   Stands firm and is unwavering.
23

The same in pleasure or in pain,
   He sees earth, stone, and gold alike;
Alike to pleasing, displeasing,
   Firm, the same in censure and praise;
24

The same in honor and disgrace,
   The same to friend and enemy,
Renouncing all undertakings–
   He has gone beyond the gunas.
25

He who renders service to Me
   With unswerving devotion, he,
Going beyond the three gunas,
   Is fit for union with Brahman.
26

“I am the abode of Brahman,
   The Immortal, Immutable,
Abode of Eternal Dharma,
   Abode of the Absolute Bliss.”132
27

Om Tat Sat
Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fourteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Division of the Three Gunas.

132 This is the realization of the liberated person.
Chapter Fifteen

The Yoga of the Supreme Spirit

The Holy Lord said:
There is th’ eternal Ashwattha
With roots above, branches below,
The sacred hymns, the leaves; he who
Knows it, is a Veda-knower.

Below, above, spread its branches,
Nourished by the gunas; its buds
Are sense-objects; and in the world
Below its roots give rise to acts.

This its form is not here perceived–
Its end, origin, existence.
Having cut this firm-rooted tree
With the axe of non-attachment–

Then that goal is to be sought for,
Which, attained, they never return:
“In that Primeval Purusha,
Fount of actions, I seek refuge.”

Without pride, delusion–attachment conquered–
Dwelling in the Supreme Self, without desires,
Freed from the dualities–pleasure and pain–
The undeluded reach that eternal Goal.

That the sun illuminates not,
There shines neither the moon nor fire;
For that is My Supreme Abode,
Going whither they return not.

An eternal part of Myself,
Becoming a soul in this world,
Takes on the senses and the mind
And abides within Prakriti.
When the Lord obtains a body
   And when He leaves it, He takes these
And goes, as the wind takes the scents
   From their seats: the flowers and herbs. 8

Thus presiding over the ear,
   The eye, the touch, the taste, the smell–
As also the “sense” of the mind–
   He experiences objects. 9

When He departs, remains, enjoys,
   Accompanied by the gunas,
The deluded do not see Him–
   Those with the eye of knowledge see. 10

The yogis, striving, behold Him
   Dwelling within themselves; but the
Unrefined, unintelligent,
   Even though striving, see Him not. 11

The light which resides in the sun,
   That light illumines the whole world;
That which is in the moon and fire–
   Know that light to be Mine as well. 12

Entering the earth, I support
   All beings with My energy.
Having become the wat’ry moon,
   I Myself cause all plants to thrive. 13

Dwelling within living beings
   In the form of digestive fire,
Joined with prana and apana,
   Do I digest the fourfold food. 14

I am seated within all hearts;
   Memory, knowledge, and their loss
Proceed from Me: for I am the
   Veda’s Goal, Author, and Knower. 15
Two Purushas are in this world—
The Changing and the Unchanging.
All beings comprise the Changing,
   Kutastha is the Unchanging.  

But there is also the Supreme
   Purusha, called the Highest Self,
Immutable Lord, Who pervades
   All the three worlds and sustains them.  

I transcend the Changing and am
   Above even the Unchanging,
So in this world and the Veda
   I am called the Supreme Spirit.  

He who, free from delusion, thus
   Knows Me as the Supreme Spirit,
He, knowing all, thus worships Me
   With all his heart, O Bharata.  

Knowing this most secret teaching
   Imparted by Me, one awakes
To the highest enlightenment—
   All his duties thus accomplished.  

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the fifteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Supreme Spirit.

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Purushottama
The Holy Lord said:
Courage, purity, firmness in
   Knowledge and yoga, almsgiving,
Sense-control, sacrifice, study,
   Austerity, and uprightness, 1

Harmlessness, absence of anger,
   Truthfulness, renunciation,
Tranquillity, truth, compassion,
   Uncovetousness, gentleness, 134

Boldness, forgiveness, fortitude,
   Purity, absence of hatred,
Absence of pride—all these belong
   To one born for a divine135 state. 3

Flamboyance, arrogance, anger,
   Self-conceit, harshness, ignorance—
All these qualities belong to
   One born for a demonic136 state. 4

The divine state is deemed to make
   For liberation—for bondage,
The demonic; but do not grieve:
   You are born for a divine state. 5

134 To maintain the meter, the complete list could not be given. It is: “Non-injury, veracity, absence of anger, renunciation, serenity, non-calumny, compassion for beings, freedom from desire, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness.”

135 Daivim: The state of a deva or “shining one.” In this instance it means those positive souls who are progressing toward divinity.

136 Asurim: The state of an asura, one who dwells in darkness (a-sura—without the light). Here it means those negative souls who are turned away from divinity and moving further into degradation of consciousness and mode of life.
There are two types of beings in this world: divine and demonic. The divine type has been described; now hear of the demonic type.

Those of demonic nature know not what to do or refrain from; purity is not found in them, nor is good conduct, nor is truth.

“The universe is without truth, without a basis, without God, produced by mutual union, with lust for cause—what else?” say they.

Holding this view, these ruined souls small-minded and of cruel deeds arise as the enemies of the world, bent on its destruction.

Filled with insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride, and arrogance, holding evil thoughts through delusion, they fouly work.

Beset with immense cares ending only with death, and regarding gratification of lust as the highest—feeling it is all;

Bound by a hundred ties of hope, given over to lust and wrath, they strive to gain by unjust means wealth for sensual enjoyment.

“This today has been gained by me; and this desire I shall obtain; all this is mine, and now this wealth also shall be mine in future.”
“I slew that enemy, and more
    I shall slay. For I am the Lord,
I enjoy, I am successful,
    Perfect, powerful, and happy.  14

“I am rich and well-born,” they say,
    “Who else is equal unto me?
I will sacrifice, give, rejoice.”
    Thus deluded by ignorance,  15

Led astray by many fancies,
    Covered by delusion’s meshes,
Addicted to gratifying
    Lust, they fall into a foul hell.  16

Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with
    The pride and foolishness of wealth,
They sacrifice in name, for show,
    Contrary to the prescribed forms.  17

Given over to egoism,
    Power, insolence, lust and wrath,
These malignant people hate Me
    In both themselves and in others.  18

These malicious evildoers,
    Cruel, most degraded of men,
I hurl perpetually into
    Only the wombs of demons here.  19

Entering the demonic wombs,
    And deluded birth after birth,
Not attaining to Me, they fall
    Into still lower conditions.  20

Yea, triple is this gate of hell,
    That is destructive of the self–
Lust, anger, and greed; therefore one
    Should forsake ev’ry one of these.  21
The man who has got beyond these
Three gates of darkness, Arjuna,
Practices what is good for him,
And thus goes to the Goal Supreme. 22

He who sets aside the counsels
Of scriptures from desire’s impulse,
Attains not unto perfection,
Nor happiness, nor Goal Supreme. 23

The scriptures should be your guide in
What should be done and what should not.
Knowing what the scriptures prescribe,
You should act here within the world. 24

Om Tat Sat
Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the sixteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Division between the Divine and the Demonical.
Arjuna said:
Those who set aside prescriptions
   Of scriptures, doing sacrifice
With faith, what is their condition:
   Sattwa, or rajas, or tamas?  

The Holy Lord said:
Threefold is the embodieds’ faith
   Inherent within their nature–
The sattwic, rajasic, and the
   Tamasic. Do you hear of it.  

Each one’s faith is according to
   His natural disposition.
Yea, the man consists of his faith;
   In truth, he is what his faith is.  

The sattwic men worship the gods;
   Rajasic: Yakshas, rakshasas;
The others–the tamasic men–
   The pretas\textsuperscript{137} and hosts of bhutas.\textsuperscript{138}  

Those of extreme austerities–
   Unscriptural–given to show
And egoity, impelled by
   The force of lust and attachment,

Do torture, senseless as they are,
   All the organs in the body,
And Me, the body’s indweller.
   Know them as of demonic will.  

\textsuperscript{137} Pretas are ghosts, spirits of the dead.
\textsuperscript{138} Bhutas are ghosts and also various kinds of low-evolved spirits.
The food also liked by each one
    Is threefold, as is sacrifice,
Austerity, and almsgiving.
    Hear from Me now their distinction.  

Food building life, purity, strength,
    Health, joy, cheerfulness, appetite,
Savory, agreeable, and
    Substantial—such the sattwic like.

Foods that are bitter, sour, salty,
    Excessively hot, pungent, dry,
And burning, the rajasic like—
    Producing pain, grief, and disease.

That which is stale, tasteless, stinking,
    Cooked overnight, refuse, impure,
Is the food the tamasic like.
    This is the truth, O Arjuna.

That sacrifice which is offered
    Without desire for reward and
According to scriptures’ command,
    Intent, as duty, is sattwic.

That which is performed, Arjuna,
    Seeking for fruit, and for vain show,
Know that to be a sacrifice
    Rajasic in its character.

Sacrifice unscriptural and
    Without the offering of food,
Without mantras, or gifts,\(^{139}\) or faith,
    Is tamasic in character.

Worship of gods, twice-born, teachers,
    The wise; purity, continence,
Straightforwardness, non-injury—
    Are austerity of body.

\(^{139}\)That is, without offering to the priests.
Unvexing speech, agreeable,
    True, beneficial, practice of
Self-study–these are said to form
    What is austerity of speech.  15

Steady serenity of mind,
    Kindliness, silence, self-control,
Honesty of motive–all this
    Is called mental austerity.  16

This threefold austerity done
    With highest faith by those without
Desire for fruit, also steadfast
    Is considered to be sattwic.  17

Austerity practiced to gain
    Welcome,\textsuperscript{140} honor, worship, and with
Ostentation, is rajasic,
    Unstable, and transitory.  18

Austerity with self-torture,
    Done out of a foolish notion,
Or for the purpose of harming
    Another, is called tamasic.  19

That gift which is given to one
    Who does no service in return,
In a fit place, to one worthy–
    That gift is held to be sattwic.  20

And what is given with a view
    To receiving in return, or
Looking for the fruit, or again
    Reluctantly, is rajasic.  21

The gift given at the wrong place
    Or time, to unworthy persons,
Without respect or with disdain,
    That is declared as tamasic.  22

\textsuperscript{140} Satkara–hospitality with honor.
“Om, Tat, Sat;” this has been declared
The triple title of Brahman.
By That were created of old
Brahmins, Vedas, and Sacrifice.  

Sacrifice, gifts, austerities
According to the scriptures, are
Begun with utterance of “Om,”
By the expounders of Brahman. 

Uttering “Tat,” without desire
For fruits—thus are sacrifice, gift,
And austerity then performed
By seekers of liberation.  

“Sat” is used with the meaning of
Reality and of goodness;
So also the word “Sat” is used
In the sense of auspicious acts.  

Steadfastness in sacrifice, gift,
And austerity is called “Sat:” 141
Also action in connection
With these is designated “Sat.”  

Whate’er is sacrificed, given,
Or done, whate’er austerity
Is practiced without faith, is known
Here or hereafter as “Asat.” 142  

Om Tat Sat
Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, ends the seventeenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of the Division of Threefold Faith.

141 Real or true.
142 Unreal or false.
Arjuna said:
I desire to know sev’rally,
   O mighty-armed one, the truth of
Sannyasa,\textsuperscript{143} O Hrishikesha,
   As also of tyaga,\textsuperscript{144} Krishna.

The Holy Lord said:
Renouncing desire-based actions
   Sages consider sannyasa:
Abandonment of all works’ fruits
   The wise declare to be tyaga.

Some say action should be renounced
   As an evil, while others say
That sacrifice, austerity,
   And gift should not be relinquished.

Hear the conclusion regarding
   Tyaga, O best of Bharatas.
Tyaga has been declared to be
   Of three kinds, O Tiger of Men.

Sacrifice, gift, austerity—
   Should not be relinquished, but done;
Sacrifice, gift, austerity
   Are purifying to the wise.

But even these works, Arjuna,
   Should still be performed, though leaving
Attachment and the fruits; such is
   My best and certain conviction.

\textsuperscript{143} Renunciation, “casting aside.”
\textsuperscript{144} Abandonment, “turning from.”
But the renunciation of 
    Required action is not proper.
Abandonment from delusion 
    Is declared to be tamasic.  

The relinquishment of action 
    From fear of trouble or of pain, 
Is rajasic relinquishment, 
    Producing not the fruit thereof.  

When work is done only because 
    It should be done, leaving aside 
Attachment and the fruit as well, 
    That relinquishment is sattwic.  

Relinquishers of sattwic kind, 
    Steadfast, with doubts dispelled, hate not 
Uncongenial work, nor are they 
    Attached to the congenial work.  

Actions cannot be entirely 
    Relinquished by the embodied, 
But the relinquishing of fruits 
    Of action is relinquishment.  

The threefold fruit of all action-- 
    Uncongenial, congenial, mixed-- 
Accrues to non-relinquishers, 
    But not to the relinquishers.  

Learn from Me these five causes for 
    The accomplishment of all works 
As are declared in the Sankhya 
    Which is the end of all action:  

The body, agent, the senses, 
    The functions of manifold kind, 
The presiding divinity, 
    And that which is also the fifth.  
Whate’er action a man performs
   By his body, speech, and the mind–
Whether right or just the reverse–
   These five alone are its causes.

He who through a non-purified
   Understanding looks on his Self,
The Absolute, as the agent–
   He of distorted mind sees not.

He who is free from egoism,
   With intelligence untainted,
Although he kills all these people,
   He kills not, neither is he bound.

Knowledge, the known, and the knower
   Form the threefold cause of action.
The instrument, purpose, agent
   Are the threefold base of action.

Knowledge, action, and agent are
   Declared by Sankhya to be of
Three kinds, from the distinction of
   Gunas: hear them also duly.

That by which in all is seen the
   One Indestructible Substance
Inseparate in the sep’rate–
   Know that knowledge to be sattwic.

But that by which in all are seen
   Many beings of many kinds
As diff’rent from one another,
   Know that knowledge as rajasic.

Confined to a single effect
   As the whole, and without reason
Or basis in truth, trivial–
   Know that knowledge as tamasic.
Action without love or hatred
    And without desire for the fruit,
And free from any attachment
    Know that action is called sattwic.  23

Action done desiring desires,
    With self-conceit and much effort,
O Dhananjaya, know as truth:
    That action is called rajasic.  24

Action that’s done through delusion,
    Without heed to the consequence,
Loss, damage, or ability:
    Know that action as tamasic.  25

An agent free from attachment,
    Humble, endued with courage and
Ardor, and unaffected in
    Success or failure, is sattwic.  26

One passionate, desirous of
    Action’s fruits, greedy, malignant,
Impure, easily elated
    Or dejected, is rajasic.  27

Unsteady, vulgar, obstinate,
    Wicked, dishonest, indolent,
Despondent, procrastinating–
    Such an agent is tamasic.  28

Now hear the triple distinction
    Of intellect and fortitude,
According to the three gunas
    Exhaustively and severally.  29

That intellect which knows the paths
    Of work and renunciation,
Right and wrong acts, fear, fearlessness,
    Bondage and freedom, is sattwic.  30
That intellect of mistaken
  Apprehension of dharma and
Adharma, of right and wrong acts,
  That intellect is rajasic. 31

That intellect enveloped in
  Darkness, regarding adharma
As dharma, and seeing all things
  Distortedly, is tamasic. 32

Fortitude by which the functions
  Of the mind, prana, and senses
Are regulated, unswerving
  By means of yoga is sattwic. 33

That by which one regulates the
  Mind to dharma, desire, and wealth,
From attachment to all their fruits,
  That fortitude is rajasic. 34

That by which the stupid does not
  Give up sleep, fear, despondency,
Grief, and overweening conceit,
  That fortitude is tamasic. 35

Now hear from Me of the threefold
  Happiness whose enjoyment is
Learned by practice, and by which one
  Attains unto the end of pain. 36

That which is like poison at first,
  But like amrita at the end;
Born of self-realization’s light–
  That happiness is called sattwic. 37

That arising from the contact
  Of object with sense–at first like
Amrit’ but like poison at last–
  That happiness is rajasic. 38
That which begins and results in
Self-delusion arising from
Sleep, sloth, and miscomprehension,
That is declared as tamasic. 39

There is no entity on earth,
Or in heaven among the gods,
Found devoid of these three gunas,
Born of Prakriti, Arjuna. 40

Of Brahmans and Kshatriyas and
Vaishyas, as also of Shudras,
The duties are distributed
According to guna-nature. 41

Calmness, restraint, austerity
Purity, patience, uprightness,
Knowledge, discernment, piety–
These are the duties of Brahmans. 42

Valor, splendor, courage, and skill,
Also not fleeing from battle,
Generosity, sovereignty–
These are duties of Kshatriyas. 43

Agriculture, husbandry, trade,
Are the duties of the Vaishyas,
And Shudras' duty is service–
Arising from innate nature. 44

Devoted to his own duty,
Man attains highest perfection.
How by his duty he attains
Perfection, that now hear from Me. 45

From Whom all beings do come forth,
By Whom all this is pervaded,
Worshipping Him with his duty,
A man attains to perfection. 46
One's own dharma, though imperfect,
   Is better than another's though
Done to perfection. The duty
   Of one's own nature brings no ill. 47

The duty to which one is born
   Should not be relinquished, although
Faulty, for as the fire by smoke
   So defect envelops all deeds. 48

He whose mind is ever detached,
   With subdued heart, without desires,
Attains by renunciation
   To perfect freedom from action. 49

Arjuna, learn from Me in brief
   How, having reached such perfection,
He attains Brahman, that supreme
   Consummation of all knowledge. 50

Endued with a pure intellect;
   Subduing body and senses,
Relinquishing the sense-objects;
   Leaving attraction and hatred. 51

Dwelling in a secluded place;
   With body, speech, and mind controlled;
Abstemious, e'er engaged in
   Meditation; dispassionate; 52

Forsaking ego, power, pride,
   Lust, wrath, possessiveness; freed from
The notion of “mine;” and tranquil–
   He's fit for union with Brahman. 53

One with Brahman, tranquil-minded,
   Neither grieving nor desiring;
The same to all, he thus attains
   Supreme devotion unto Me. 54
Devoted, he knows Me in truth,
What and Who I am; then having
Known Me in My reality,
He forthwith enters into Me. 55

Though doing all actions always,
Always taking refuge in Me,
By My grace he attains to the
Eternal, immutable State. 56

Resigning mentally all deeds
To Me, as to the highest goal,
Resorting to buddhi-yoga,
Thus ever fix your mind on Me. 57

With mind fixed on Me, you shall by
My grace surmount all obstacles;
But if from self-conceit you will
Not hear Me, then you shall perish. 58

If, filled with pride and self-conceit,
You wrongly think: “I will not fight,”
In vain shall be this your resolve,
For your nature will compel you. 59

Fettered by your karma born of
Your nature, what you, deluded,
Desire not to do, you shall have
To do—though in spite of yourself. 60

O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in
The hearts of all beings, causing
Them by His Maya to revolve
As if mounted on a machine. 61

O Bharata, with all your heart
Take refuge in Him; and you shall
Surely attain unto supreme
Peace and the eternal abode. 62
Thus has wisdom, more secret than
   All other secrets, been declared
To you by Me; now reflect on
   It fully, then do as you please. 63

Now hear again My supreme word,
   Most secret of all, because you
Are dearly beloved of Me;
   Therefore I shall speak for your good. 64

Fill your mind with Me, devoted,
   Sacrifice and bow down to Me.
You shall reach Me, for truly I
   Promise you—you are dear to Me. 65

Relinquishing all dharmas, you
   Should take refuge in Me alone;
Then I shall fully liberate
   You from all sins; wherefore grieve not. 66

Never speak this to one without
   Austerities or devotion,
Or one who renders not service,
   Or to one who cavils at Me.145 67

He who with supreme devotion
   To Me teaches this most supreme
Secret unto My devotees
   Shall doubtless come to Me alone. 68

Nor among men is there any
   Who does dearer service to Me,
Nor shall there be another on
   The earth dearer to Me than he. 69

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145 “This shall not be spoken of by you to one who is without austerity, nor to one who is without devotion, nor to one who does not render service, nor to one who does not desire to listen, nor to one who speaks evil of Me.”
And he who studies this sacred
   Dialogue of ours, shall worship
Me by knowledge’s sacrifice;
   This is My certain conviction.  70

And even that man who hears this,
   Full of faith and free from scoffing,
He, liberated, shall attain
   The happy worlds of the righteous.  71

Has this been heard, O Pritha’s son,
   By you with a one-pointed mind?
Moreover, has the delusion
   Of your ignorance been destroyed?  72

Arjuna said:
Yea, destroyed is my delusion,
   And I have gained my memory
Through Your grace, and my doubts are gone.
   I am firm; I will do Your word.  73

Sanjaya said:
Thus have I heard this wonderful
   Dialogue of Vasudeva
And the high-souled son of Pritha,
   Causing my hair to stand on end.  74

By grace of Vyasa have I heard
   This supreme, most secret yoga,
Direct from Krishna, Yoga’s Lord,
   Himself the one declaring it.  75

I recall again and again
   This wondrous, holy dialogue
Between Krishna and Arjuna
   And rejoice again and again.  76
As I recall and recall that
   Most wonderful form of Hari,
Great is my wonder, O King, and
   I rejoice again and again. 77

Where’er is Krishna, Yoga’s Lord,
   Where’er is Arjuna, there are
Splendor, victory, wealth, and right
   Order: such is my conviction. 78

Om Tat Sat

Thus in the Upanishads of the glorious Bhagavad Gita, the science of the
Eternal, the scripture of Yoga, the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna,
ends the eighteenth discourse entitled: The Yoga of Liberation by Renunciation.
1)  
_Sanjaya said:_  
To him who was thus overcome  
By pity, and whose eyes were filled  
With tears, downcast and despairing,  
Madhusudana spoke these words:  

2:1

2)  
_The Holy Lord said:_  
This body is known as the Field,  
And he who knows it thus is called  
The Knower of the Field by those  
Who know of both Field and Knower.  

13:1

3)  
Know Me also, O Bharata,  
To be the Knower in all Fields.  
The knowledge of Field and Knower  
I consider as _the_ knowledge.  

13:2

4)  
I am the Self abiding in  
The heart of all beings; I am  
The beginning, the middle, and  
Also the end of all beings.  

10:20

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146 Sri Ramana Maharshi said that this verse is the quintessence of the Gita—the Gita in a single verse.
5) Of that which is born, death is sure,
    Of that which is dead, birth is sure.
Over the unavoidable,
    Therefore you never should lament. 2:27

6) Neither is the Self slain, nor yet does it die,
    Nor having been will it e’er come not to be,
Birthless, eternal, perpetu’l, primeval,
    It is not slain whene’er the body is slain. 2:20

7) This self cannot be cut, nor burnt,
    Nor wetted, nor dried: ’tis changeless,
All-pervading and unmoving,
    Immovable, eternal self. 2:24

8) That by Which all is pervaded–
    Know That is indestructible.
There is none with the power to
    Destroy the Imperishable. 2:17

9) The unreal never comes to be,
    The real does never cease to be.
The certainty of both of these
    Is known to those who see the truth. 2:16

10) As the all-pervading ether,
    Through subtlety is not tainted,
The Self seated in the body
    Is not tainted in any case. 13:32
11) That the sun illuminates not, There shines neither the moon nor fire; For that is My Supreme Abode, Going whither they return not. 15:6

12) The unmanifest, eternal, Is declared as the Supreme Goal, Attaining Which they return not. This is My supreme dwelling place. 8:21


14) He who sets aside the counsels Of scriptures from desire’s impulse, Attains not unto perfection, Nor happiness, nor Goal Supreme. 16:23

15) The one who truly sees is he Who ever sees the Supreme Lord Existing equally in all Beings, deathless in the dying. 13:27

16) By single-minded devotion I may be known in this true form, Seen in reality, also Entered into, Scorcher of Foes. 11:54
17) Each one’s faith is according to His natural disposition. Yea, the man consists of his faith; In truth, he is what his faith is. 17:3

18) The man of faith, and devoted, And the master of his senses, Attains this knowledge, and having Attained quickly finds Supreme Peace. 4:39

19) To them, the constantly steadfast, Worshipping Me with affection, I bestow the buddhi-yoga By which they shall come unto Me. 10:10

20) Out of compassion for them, I, Abiding in their hearts, destroy The darkness born of ignorance By the shining lamp of knowledge. 10:11

21) But those whose ignorance has been Destroyed by knowledge of the self— That knowledge of theirs, like the sun, Reveals then the Supreme Brahman. 5:16

22) Above the body are senses; Above the senses is the mind; Above the mind is intellect; Above the intellect: the self. 3:42
23) Thus, knowing Him Who is above
   The intellect, and restraining
The self by the Self, then destroy
   That enemy, that foe: desire. 3:43

24) As fire reduces wood to ash,
   In the same way, O Arjuna,
The fire of knowledge does reduce
   To ashes all karma–know this. 4:37

25) Whose undertakings are devoid
   Of plan and desire for results,
Whose actions are burnt in the fire
   Of knowledge–him the wise call wise. 4:19

26) Released from desire and anger,
   With thoughts restrained, those ascetics
Who know the Self, find very near
   The bliss of Brahma-nirvana. 5:26

27) With intellect set in patience,
   With the mind fastened on the self,
He gains quietude by degrees:
   Let him not think of any thing. 6:25

28) Whenever the unsteady mind,
   Moving here and there, wanders off,
He should subdue and hold it back–
   Direct it to the Self’s control. 6:26
29) Controlling sense, mind, intellect;
   With moksha as the supreme goal;
Freed from desire, fear, and anger:
   Such a sage is forever free. 5:28

30) He, disciplined by yoga, sees
    The Self present in all beings,
And all beings within the Self.
    He sees the same Self at all times. 6:29

31) Those who direct their thoughts to Me,
    Worshipping Me with steadfast mind,
For them I secure what they lack
    And preserve that which they possess. 9:22

32) Of them, the wise man, e’er steadfast,
    Devoted to the One, excels;
Supremely dear am I to him,
    And he is dear to Me, as well. 7:17

33) At the end of his many births
    The wise man takes refuge in Me.
He knows: “All is Vasudeva.”
    How very rare is that great soul! 7:19

34) When he completely casts away
    All the desires of the mind,
His self satisfied by the self,
    He is called “of steady wisdom.” 2:55
35) He who abandons all desires
   Attains peace, acts free from longing,
Indifferent to possessions
   And free from all egotism.\textsuperscript{147} 2:71

36) He who agitates not the world,
   And whom the world agitates not,
Who is freed from joy, envy, fear,
   And worry–he is dear to Me. 12:15

37) The same in honor and disgrace,
   The same to friend and enemy,
Renouncing all undertakings–
   He has gone beyond the Gunas. 14:25

38) He who is content in the Self,
   Who is satisfied in the Self,
Who is pleased only in the self:
   For him there is no need to act. 3:17

39) He has nothing to gain by acts;
   Nothing to gain by inaction;
And no need of any being
   For any purpose soever. 3:18

40) Content with what comes unbidden,
   Beyond duality, envy,
The same in success or failure,
   E’en though acting, he is not bound. 4:22

41) O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in
   The hearts of all beings, causing

\textsuperscript{147} Pronounced as four syllables.
Them by His Maya to revolve
   As if mounted on a machine. 18:61

42)
O Bharata, with all your heart
   Take refuge in Him; and you shall
Surely attain unto supreme
   Peace and the eternal abode. 18:62

Om.
He, Who seated in Arjun’s car,
Spoke the Gospel to Arjuna
And removed his distress, may that
Embodiment of Grace save us!148
Om Tat sat.

148 These four lines were written by Sri Ramana to be included in the recitation of the forty-two verses he selected as the
essence of the Gita’s teachings.