

bhagavad- gita

treatise of self-help

Bhagvad-Gita is the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue.

- William von Humboldt,
who wrote seven-hundred verses in
praise of Bhagvad-Gita.

In this modern rendition, the beauty of the Sanskrit slokas is reflected in the rhythmic flow of the English verse of poetic proportions. Besides, the attendant philosophy of the song that is Bhagvad-Gita is captured in contemporary idiom for easy comprehension.

It is a matter of consensus that Bhagvad-Gita in the present length of seven hundred slokas has many an interpolation to it, but no meaningful attempt has ever been made to delve into the nature and extent, not to speak of the effect of these on the Hindu society at large. The methodical codification of interpolations carried out here, for the first time ever, puts the true character of Gita in proper perspective. Identified here are hundred and ten slokas of deviant nature and or of partisan character, the source of so much misunderstanding about Bhagvad-Gita, the book extraordinary, in certain sections of the Hindu fold. In the long run, exposing and expunging these mischievous insertions is bound to bring in new readers from these quarters to this over two millennia old classic besides altering the misconceptions of the existing adherents.



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verse in contemporary idiom
with codification of interpolations

BS Murthy

Dedication

To Grand Parents,
Paternal,
Bulusu Thimmaiah -
Lakshmi Narasamma,
Maternal,
Challa Kameswara Rao -
Suramma
And parents,
Peraiah Sastry and Kamakshi,
In whose care my destiny
So favourably placed me.



Bhagvad-Gita: treatise of self-help by BS Murthy

Introduction

The spiritual ethos and the philosophical outlook that the Bhagvad - Gita postulates paves the way for the liberation of man, who, as Rousseau said, 'being born free, is everywhere in chains'. But equally it is a mirror of human psychology, which enables man to discern his debilities for appropriate redressal. All the same, the boon of an oral tradition that kept it alive for over two millennia became its bane with the proliferation of interpolations therein. Besides muddying its pristine philosophy, these insertions affect the sequential conformity and structural economy of the grand discourse. What is worse, to the chagrin of the majority of the Hindus, some of these legitimize the inimical caste system while upholding the priestly perks and prejudices.

This rendition seeks to restore to the Gita, its original character by ridding it of hundred and ten interpolations, which tend to keep the skeptics away from it. And ironically these muddle the understanding of the adherents as well. In the theatre of man as nothing surpasses the drama of war, the stage for unveiling the Gita's unrivalled philosophy was set on the battleground of Kurukshetra at the threshold of the battle of Mahabharata.

Awe Unfounded

The Bhagvad Gita, popularly known as Gita, with its twin tracks of spiritual ethos and philosophical outlook, helps man commute to the destination of human excellence on the broad gauge of life. The unsurpassed art of living that the Gita expostulates, paves the way for the 'liberation of man' and that's what makes the Gita, which probably is around for over two millennia now, the treatise of self-help.

Nonetheless, all along, its spiritual track has come to acquire primacy with its protagonists being the religiously inclined men and women for most part. Even Mahatma Gandhi, the most famous and ardent advocate of Gita of our times, was eloquent about the spiritual solace that it afforded him. Needless to

say, the innumerable commentaries on the Gita that appear in print or get voiced in discourses invariably come from people with religio-spiritual orientation. Insensibly, all these led to the public perception of the Gita as a spiritual tome, and that has brought about a situation where everyone swears by it but few venture to approach it. That is due to, either the general lack of spiritual inclination in man, or his palpable apprehension that, anyway, it might be beyond one's comprehension. And those who attempt to read any of the commentaries give up soon enough – bowled either by the spiritual spin in theological jargon or tired of those lengthy commentaries. Oh, don't these texts tend to exhibit the commentator's own scholarship in Vedanta! In the bargain, hardly any reach the end, which would have helped them understand themselves better. What an irony in that having been bogged down in the semantics, one fails to grasp Krishna's message that's tailor made for him! And it is all about realization made difficult.

The public or private discourses on the Gita relatively fare better for they enthrall the audience by the eloquence of the speaker besides the interest the interspersed anecdotes elicit. However, amidst all this verbiage, the profundity of Krishna's message would seldom register in the minds of those who try to seek it. Of course, the commentary-discourse route misses on the essential ingredient of understanding - contemplation. After all, Krishna himself recommends to Arjuna at the end of his talk, s63, ch.18, *'That thee heard of this wisdom / For task on hand now apply mind'*.

If only Sanskrit, the *deva bhaasha*, the language of the gods for the Hindus, and for the 18th Century British intellectual Sir William Jones, 'is of wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either' were in currency now, it would have been a different proposition. Thus, the average person needing no interpretative crutches might have read the Gita in its pristine beauty, speculating about the profound wisdom lying in the sophisticated philosophy it postulates. That would have afforded one to view human nature, including his or her own, in that contemplative mirror enamelled by the Gita. But that might be if and when Sanskrit, by the will of the gods, becomes a language of the masses in times to come.

But for the present, English, which many proud British linguists humbly held as the second best language in the world, is the right medium for contemplating the Gita even in the native land of Sanskrit. Of course, in verse sans commentary, and this is an attempt with that objective, needless to say, with divine inspiration.

What is the Gita all about that made many western intellectuals, though alien to the Hindu philosophy sing its praises? It is owing to its emphasis on human emancipation as opposed to the religious conditioning of man. Thus, its universal appeal jells with the hearts and minds of people, irrespective of their religious beliefs and cultural sensitivities. Simply put, the philosophy the Gita portrays is meant to help one imbibe the right attitude to lead life, but not to buttress his religious dogma of God. How this was achieved is the wonder that is Gita, cast in the Hindu mould but shaped into the secular form! After all, it might have been in the realms of human genius aided by some divine metallurgy.

The stage chosen for unfolding the grand philosophy is in itself reflective of the brilliance of the Gita. Nothing ever surpasses the drama of war in the realms of life and so is the case with the accompanying debate about its rights and wrongs. At the threshold of the epic battle of Mahabharata, on the sacred grounds

of Kurukshetra, Arjuna, the Pandava Prince, suffers from qualms at the prospect of killing kith and kin in the Kaurava camp besides all those whom he adores therein. It has always been in the nature of man to worry about the prospect of his death besides that of his near and dear. Thus Lord Krishna, a friend of the Pandavas who happened to be Arjuna's charioteer, opens this classic discourse in s11, ch.2 by chiding his disciple and setting its trend as well, '*Averring as knowing / Worried over trivia! / Reckon never wise / Dead and alive both*'.

What follows in the best part of the remaining 643 verses spread over 17 chapters can be summarized thus: The Supreme Spirit through Nature causes the birth of all beings. Thus, the indwelling spirit in the beings is a divisible part of the same Indivisible Supreme Spirit. The spirit lying within beings is subject in degrees to virtue, passion and delusion, the three attributes of Nature. It should remain the human endeavour to free the indwelling spirit from these nature-induced influences. This, however, is not possible for any in a single birth, and indeed, it would take the sustained effort of lot many births for that. Thus, in the end, the soul could be tended towards that state of purity, which matches with that of the Supreme Spirit. As and when this happens, the indwelling spirit merges with the Supreme Spirit which is nothing but moksha. Understandably, from that state of unison with the Supreme, man never returns to be born again. This is about the spiritual goal of man in this world. In short, it's in the nature of the Supreme Spirit to separate the wheat from the chaff by bringing beings for dalliance in the domain of the Nature. While a pass ensures merger with the Supreme Spirit, failure keeps man ever in limbo. It is thus left for man to reach the Supreme, and the Gita shows him the way.

In the Gita lie the tools that tend one's spirit to that pristine purity, and that makes it the kitbag of moksha. Were it to postulate reaching that state through devotion alone, it would have been no more than a Hindu religious scripture, though of immense quality. In this, it is to be appreciated; the one thing that is common with the Oriental as well as the Semitic religions is the stress upon good human conduct. Nevertheless, the commonality seems to fork at some length, what with the Semitic religious precepts having their own caveat conditional. Well, Hinduism and its derivatives, Buddhism, Jainism etc., advocate virtue per se as the ideal human condition. But at the other end of the religious tunnel, Judaism, and its siblings, Christianity and Islam, obliging the faithful to uphold their dogmas, provide a religious code to human virtue.

It is thus, the Gita, without any religious dogma, deals with all aspects of human nature, and what is more, proposes corrective approaches for a peaceful, purposeful and realized life. And this makes it the Treatise of Self-help for one and all, irrespective of his or her religious orientation and social background. Figure it out for yourself as Arjuna could do.

Now back to where it all began - the misleading image of the Gita as something that cannot be comprehended, even by the spiritually oriented, leave alone the mundane minded, without the guidance from a guru, well versed in the nuances of theology. Nothing could be farther from truth considering what Arjuna averred after having heard Krishna, '*Glad O Lord / Gone are doubts, / Sense I gained / With Thy words.*' (s73, ch.18).

And consider this. Arjuna was an educated prince and an exemplary warrior but with no specialized knowledge or training in theology. Yet he found no difficulty in grasping the centrality of Krishna's advice that helped dispel his

doubts. After all, it could be expected that Krishna who knew his friend's limitations on that count would have fashioned his discourse suitably. And won't that bring the Gita into the orbit of average human understanding? More so, Krishna's discourse was intended to be a ready reckoner for Arjuna and not an assignment in spirituality to be attended to as homework, with reference books and all, leaving the battlefield for the day.

But then why all this spin of spiritual intricacy on such a straightforward man-to-man talk! We must appreciate that the philosophy of the Gita is the apogee of the Hindu thought process that evolved through the Vedas, the Brahmasutras and finally the Upanishads. In a way, the Gita is the Seal of the Hindu Wisdom, for it separates the ritualistic chaff from the spiritual grain in the granary of *sanaatana dharma*. For those well versed in these and other such works, it is a tempting proposition to delve into the conceptual origins of a given *sloka* of the Gita in those ancient classics. But to what avail all that, and what is sought to be proved after all! That the Gita was a plagiarized work of Vyasa?

Well, didn't Vyasa place the Gita in proper perspective with 'the end of the chapter averment that it is the quintessence of the Upanishads and the Brahmasutras'. Yet this futile exercise of backward integration of the Gita with the Upanishads and others continues, giving rise to myriad interpretations to what is essentially a simple and straightforward message that Krishna intended for average human comprehension. In modern parlance, Bhagvad-Gita is like the Board Note, and it does not behove the board members to pore over the relevant files.

Though some well-meaning men and women have all along tried to straightjacket the Gita as a 'Book of Work', still it is the scriptural tag that sticks to it. Admittedly, this is not only detrimental to the Great Gita but also the misfortune of the common man who would have otherwise ventured to read it, and benefited as well. Thus, this work should be viewed as the outcome of an urge to place the Gita in its proper perspective for the utmost common good. On the degree of its success could depend how it would have served the cause of the Lord and that of man for whose benefit the Gita, the Treatise of Self-help, was fashioned, though not as scripture. It pays to recall the words of Krishna, '*That thee heard of this wisdom / For task on hand now apply mind*'.

Now it is left for all to deliberate and decide whether the Gita *per se* was Krishna's unrivalled divine revelation, or Vyasa's philosophical discourse nonpareil. It is noteworthy that each of the eighteen chapters of the Gita has this post script - this chapter, with so and so designation, has the bearing of the Upanishads, possesses the knowledge of the Brahmasutras and deals with the science of its application. And the Upanishads, as we all know, were but the works of man, though of divine proportion.

Thus, if we were to concede that the Gita was a divine disclosure, then that would suggest that Krishna borrowed from the Upanishadic philosophy to fashion his discourse! Won't that mean Lord Vishnu in His *avatar* as Krishna, relied on the works of man to formulate moksha for him! That is an absurd proposition, at any rate that is, isn't it? Well, it's a matter for man to deliberate and decide.

Last but not the least is the sectarian twist some interpolations give to the Gita to the hurt of the majority of the Hindus. Understandably, the offended sections

view this secular text with suspicion, and thus keep away from it altogether, missing so much as a consequence of the same. In 'All About Interpolations' that follows, this aberration is sought to be corrected, and it is hoped that for the general good of the Hindus this aspect of the Gita would be set right for all times to come.

All about Interpolations

It was long suspected there could be interpolations in the Gita as it was being received down the ages through oral tradition. One way to scent the nature of these, if not zero in on every one of them, is to subject the text to the twin tests of sequential conformity and structural economy. Sequential conformity is all about uniformity of purpose sans digression and structural economy but represents the absence of repetitiveness. If the body Bhagvad Gita of 700 slokas were to be scanned for possible fault lines on the above lines, the result would be but positive.

It must be realized that Bhagvad-Gita is the quintessence of the Brahmasutras and the Upanishads, themselves the offshoots of the Vedic spiritual roots. Those esoteric portions that relate to spiritual knowledge apart, the Vedas contain ritualistic nuances of religious ceremonies. It is the latter that has been the source of the temporal power, which the priestly class of Brahmans came to exert on the Hindu religious mind. And these very people happened to be the principal protagonists of the Gita.

It is pertinent to note that while postulating *nishkaama karma*, the theory of disinterested action, Krishna is critical of the ritualistic aspects of and expectations from the Vedas (s42 - 45 and s53 of ch.2.). Indeed, the guiding philosophy of the Gita is all about action, pure and simple, to tend one on the path of duty without attachment. Were the message to be allowed to percolate down, wouldn't it have hurt the Brahmans, the gods' own angels on earth as the Narayana Upanishad proclaims, where it hurts most? Herein lies the provocation for the m to dilute the philosophy, and the opportunity was theirs, being the repositories of the very message. Won't the priestly perks associated with the rituals of death do, to cite an example?

If upon its death, as Krishna avers, the soul were to transmigrate into another body, what for are the elaborate rituals for the dead! It is against this background that we might appreciate those interpolations that tend to advocate the ritualism on one hand, and the Brahman preeminence on the other. However, the non application of mind on part of the Hindus who vouchsafe for these aspects of the Gita is indeed saddening.

Nevertheless, such interpolative *slokas* that are at variance with the avowed purpose of the Gita would show themselves up for ready pickings. In a seemingly about turn from s42- s45 and s53 of ch.2, s9-s16 of ch.3 formulate the procedural aspects of the rituals and the divine backing they enjoy. These, and such other aberrations highlighted in the prefaces of the chapters in this work were clearly the handiwork of the priestly interests to obfuscate the impact of the anti ritualistic thrust of the Gita.

On one hand, these interpolations were meant to impart legitimacy to their creed by advocating the same through the revered text. And on the other, these

were meant to stall the threat the Gita might pose to their calling in the long run. Likewise, the sprinkling of *slokas* that seek to confirm the pre-eminence of the priestly class or affirm their prejudices cannot be anything but interpolations. To cap it all, are the s23-s27 of ch. 8 which literally mean that if a person dies when the moon is on a scent he would attain moksha, other way round were it in descent, and such like. These *slokas* espousing superstition, simply put are out of tune. Nevertheless, when interpreted figuratively they jell with the overall message of the Gita as if to prove that the discourse of reason cannot be polluted even by superstitious insertions. Be that as it may, there is an uncanny element in these artful interpolations in that they were inserted in the narrative in such a manner that if read casually they effectively merge with the text. More so for the religiously conditioned Hindu whose upbringing conforms to the ritualistic regimen.

Next is the aspect of structural economy. One finds similitude of a given content in many a *sloka* in the same or in a different context throughout the text. Obviously, some of them are interpolations but which were the originals and which are the imitations, may be impossible to find out for they smugly fit into the overall structure. Be that as it may, save lengthening the discourse, they do not belittle the same and fortunately not even tire the reader, thanks to the exemplary charm of Sanskrit as a language. In this context, it is relevant to note that Krishna indicated in s19, ch.10 that he would reveal a few of His Glories, but what we have is a twenty-two *sloka* block of the same, s 20-42, in the same chapter and another twenty, s15-s31 in the next. One can be certain that many of the *slokas* in them contain interpolative padding. Nevertheless, these *slokas* make an exciting reading notwithstanding the faux pas in s36 ch.10 where fraud in gambling is described as the Glory of the Supreme. However, s12 -s15 of ch 15 in similar vein are interpolations being digressions.

If after deliberating, one decides that the Gita is more a work of Vyasa's genius than any divine revelation by Lord Krishna, then he or she might come to the conclusion that the concluding s78 of the last chapter meant to impart divinity to the discourse is an interpolation.

However, no exercise of this kind would be complete unless the four pairs of *slokas* that have the same first lines are scrutinized. With the common first line, *sreyaan sva-dharmo vigunah*, s35, ch.3 and s47, ch.18, seek to perpetuate caste oriented duties by discouraging any switch over, and thus are clear interpolations. S15 and s 28 of ch.6 both open with *yunjann evam sadaatmaanam* and the message too remains more or less the same though contextually different. Yet it appears that the former could be an interpolation. S34, ch.9 and s65, ch.18 not only start with *man-manaa bhava mad-bhaktto* but also mean same thing. In the ninth chapter as discussed in the introduction therein, s32 and s33 are clear interpolations. It also need be noted that s 31 has the chapter closing character about it. Now follows this repetitive chapter-concluding *sloka* after two interpolations, s32 and s33. Logically speaking s34 is but an interpolation to help a proper chapter closure by slightly altering s65, ch.18. S7, ch.16 and s30, ch.18 both start with *pravruttim cha nivruttim cha* line but are contextually different and thus remain above suspicion.

Identified here in this third edition are 110 *slokas* of deviant nature in the entire text that could be taken as interpolations with reasonable certainty. However, so as not to besmirch the general tenor of the discourse in this Treatise of Self-help, the same are interpreted in a broader perspective, but not in their narrow sense

intended by the interpolators. Be that as it may, there naturally arises a hypothetical question - What if the priestly interests of yore had seen to it that the said philosophy defining *slokas* of the second chapter that are inimical to their creed were omitted altogether? In that case we would have been left with no option but to take the perplexing interpolations with a pinch of salt in the absence of any clue to negate them as such.

Chapter – 1: Arjuna's Dilemma

In this opening chapter, the grand stage for the discourse nonpareil is set on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Gathered with their armies are the estranged cousins, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, all set to join the battle. After reviewing the relative strengths of the opposing formations, Duryodhana, the Kaurava prince, fancies his chances. On the other hand, Arjuna, alias Paartha, the spearhead of the Pandava forces, is beset with moral indignation. He begins to see the futility of a fratricidal war that would result in the death of kith and kin in numbers. To Lord Krishna, who dons the role of his charioteer, a distressed Arjuna enumerates the ills that visit society in the wake of wars. Exasperated in the end, he expresses his intent to rescind from the impending war regardless.

The contrasting attitudes of the principal combatants of the Battle of Mahabharata are illustrative of the dualities inherent in human nature, exemplified by man's proclivities. Duryodhana as well as Arjuna meticulously prepared for the battle ahead, and both were bent upon fighting to the finish. But when the chips are down, while Duryodhana dreamt of victory, Arjuna suffered from qualms. It is this inherent duality of human nature that so prominently figures in Lord Krishna's discourse in the coming chapters.

In popular parlance, this chapter, comprising 47 *slokas* (verses), is known as *arjuna vishaada yoga*, *Arjuna's Grief*. However, it is worth noting that though Arjuna's demeanour in the battlefield personifies grief, it's the dilemma of his persona that gives cause to it. Thus, there is merit in this chapter being rechristened as *Arjuna's Dilemma*. On the other hand, it is the supreme irony, or in the fitness of things, depending on how one views it, that this Treatise of Self-help should begin with Dhritarashtra's query, whose blind love towards his son Duryodhana brought things to this pass.

One might notice the inconsistency in Duryodhana's assessment of Pandava forces in that while in s3-s6 he considers them formidable, in s10 he dismisses them as pygmean. Maybe it has something to do with his state of mind on the eve of war.

1

Thus spoke Dhritarashtra:

Appraise Sanjay as my sons

Gathered at the battleground

Face the sons of my sibling

Eager for the war on hand.

2

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Eyeing Pandavs there lined up

So to assess relative strengths

Reached Duryodhan, Dron in time.

3

Find *acharya*, said the Prince,

Pandav force thus there arrayed

None other than by Drushtadyumn

Whom thou taught all tricks of war.

4

Virat 'n Drupad, so Yuyudhaana

With Bhim 'n Arjun they stand out.

5

Dhrushtaket, the one to dread

King of Kashi and Purujit

Kuntibhoj 'n Saibya too

Chekitan, their force augment.

6

Uttamouj 'n Yudhamanyu

Abhimanyu so Vikranta

Draupadi's offspring not to speak

Five-star generals all no less.

7

For thy feel of our own strength

Roll-call heroes of ours O, revered.

8

Thou with Bhishm, Karn 'n Kripa

Make all four our Field Marshals,
 Bhurisrav, Aswatham 'n Vikarn
 Our Marshals, near Field Marshals.

9

With their lives on line for me
 Adept at weaponry varied all
 Abound valorous in our ranks
 Past masters of group warfare.

10

Nurses Bhishma force our vast
 Lot it's Bhima's tend their small.

11

Let's close ranks in well laid files
 Cover we flanks for Bhishma's guard.

12

Words by these moved
 Grandsire Bhishm,
 Warrior verily unrivalled
 War cry he gave with his conch.

13

Egged by Bhishma, geared Kauravs
 War cries their rent, those high skies.

14

Krishn 'n Arjun, in their turn
 From chariot of white stallions
 Gave in kind they with kindred.

15

With Panchajanya, Lord Krishna
 Broke sound barriers with Arjun
 Who blew to hilt Devadatta
 As blared Bhima, his Paundra.

16

Blew conch Yudhisthir full throated
 Anantavijaya in tandem
 With his siblings, Nakul 'n Sahadev,
 Blew who Sughosh 'n Manipushpak.

17

King of Kashi, master archer
 Sikhandi Marshal, their formidable
 Saathyaki, Drushtadyumn 'n Virat
 Warriors they all never vanquished,

18

Drupada as well Draupadi's progeny
 With their hero Abhimanyu
 Blew, O monarch, at one go
 Conchs of theirs to deafening sound.

19

Tumult that ensued shook the ground
 Bewildered Kauravs, as skies roared.

20

When came time to join lines
 So it happened O my Lord
 With his Gandiv in harness
 Hanumaan's ensign in flutter

Arjun stared at Kauravs hard
 And thus spoke to Lord Krishna.

21/22

Thus spoke Arjuna:
 Pray posit chariot ours upfront
 So that I can have a look
 At those itching for this war.

23

Time I discern those backing
 Duryodhan the evil minded.

24

Thus spoke Sanjaya:
 Upfront Krishna took Arjun
 In their chariot drawn by four.

25

Beseeched Krishna then Arjun
 That he behold Bhishm 'n Dron
 As well all those there gathered.

26

Espied Arjun his clansmen
 Grandads, uncles, brothers and all
 Teachers as well friends of note.

27

At the sight of
 His kinsmen,
 He in distress
 Spoke worried.

28

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Disturb kinsfolk here gathered

Feel I parched, it nauseates too.

29

Horrify no end prospects war

Un-grips Gandiv, looks I'm sick.

30

Looks like it's an illusion

Lord I envision bad omens all.

31

Crave I not for power or pelf

What's it worth to kill Kauravs?

32

Know not avails what empire

What sort pleasures it entails!

33

Whom all we wish well in life

Here they face us risking same.

34

Us they oppose

Dads, grandads

Sons, grandsons, so uncles

Brothers-in-law 'n teachers too!

35

Were the stakes be sky high like

Ruling earth 'n heaven as well

Let those Kauravs itch for fight

I won't have this war on hand.

36

Go as they on sinful path

Why earn sin by killing them.

37

See I no gain by their end

Why then kill our kith 'n kin?

38

Blinded by greed, bent on deceit

Fail they foresee, war ruins the race.

39

Wiser for the woes of wars

Why not Lord we rescind now.

40

Die aged en masse dharma's votaries

Won't that let go youth ours haywire?

41

Sex ratio adverse that war ensues

Turns women soft on caste barriers.

42

Fallen women all go to hell

What is more their bastards rob

Posthumous rites of forebearers.

43

Liaisons low of women wanton

Set our race on ruinous course.

44

Is it not said, O My Lord

Fail who dharma are hell bound.

45

What urge killing kith and kin,

Why should we sin lusting crown?

46

Disarm I now on my own

Let them harm me if they deem.

47

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Thus O Raja

Despaired Arjun

Arms he threw

And sat distressed.

Ends thus

Arjuna's Dilemma,

The First Chapter

Of Bhagvad-Gita

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter -2: All about Life

This character defining chapter of the Gita comprising 72 *slokas*, known as *saankhya yoga, Realization through Knowledge*, is regarded by many, as the peerless part of the great epic.

Arjuna's dilemma, meanwhile, turns into grief, as the horrific prospect of slaying Bhishma, his revered grand uncle, and Drona, his venerated guru, sinks into his consciousness. Boggled down by sentiment, Arjuna appeals to Lord Krishna for guidance. The Lord's response starting with the epoch making eleventh *sloka*, '*Averting as knowing/ Worried over trivia! /Reckon never wise / Dead and alive both.*' is indeed the curtain raiser to the grand discourse.

It is apparent that the sentiment of causing death and destruction plagues Arjuna. Thus, Lord Krishna brings the very issue to the fore to dispel the unwarranted fear of death by stressing upon the transmigratory nature of the indwelling spirit of all beings. Then the Lord proceeds to enlighten Arjuna about his duty to fight as a warrior besides touching upon the infamy of surrender. To enable Arjuna overcome the predicament of attachment, Lord Krishna elaborates upon the precepts and practices of detached action, besides its spiritual and philosophical connotations. As a way of caution, the Lord finally explains to Arjuna how his sensual nature hinders man to act in true detachment. This chapter, indeed, is the spectrum supreme of the kaleidoscope of wisdom that Bhagvad Gita is.

1 .

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

In pity Krishna

Addressed Arjuna,

Bogged in sorrow

With tears profuse.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:

Oh, what affliction

At this juncture!

Wholly un-Aryan

Unholy as well!!

3

Mind-set impotent that unnerves

Strengthen thou for fight on hand.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Adore as I, how dare I

Make Bhishma 'n Dron target?

5

Better I go with begging bowl

Than earn disgrace slaying them,

Would the scepter ever glitter

In the bloodstained hands of mine?

6

Those us oppose

We hate hurting,

What use war

Who victors are?

7

About my duty I'm in doubt

Tell me kindly what is right.

8

Beset by doubts,

Saddled by grief

Would I be joyous

Were I the king?

9

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Bent to rescind

Arjun had no more to speak.

10

Make I privy O my Lord

Speaks as Krishna to Arjun

Stood who there in confusion.

11

Thus spoke the Lord:

Averting as knowing

Worried over trivial!

Reckon never wise

Dead and alive both.

12

You and Me

As well these,

Have had past

Future as well.

13

Wise all realize

Embodies selfsame spirit in one

From birth to death, in every birth.

14

Sensual feelings, grief 'n joy

Transient are like, heat and cold.

15

Weigh who pain 'n pleasure equal

Such are those on path freedom.

16

What's not real, it's never been

And that's true, it's ever there
 That's how wise all came to see.

17

Spirit in lay us All-Pervading
 Given that not to destruction,
 What sense doth it make to think
 That's immutable gets destroyed!

18

Perish all bodies, Spirit not therein
 Know this truth, and take up arms.

19

With no slayer, nor one slain
 Whoso feels that he might kill
 It's in delusion that he harps.

20

Unbound being ever unborn
 Ageless since it's endless too
 Goes on Spirit, beyond life-span.

21

Spirit as entity hath no birth
 How can thou kill what's not born!

22

Change as men fade if clothes
 So doth Spirit as frames are worn.

23

Hurts no weapon the Spirit in thee
 Nor scathe elements, wind, water 'n fire.

24

Unalterable 'n Eternal

Immovable but pervades all

Permanent 'n so Everlasting

Spirit thus none can ever destruct.

25

Can sans form Spirit get bound?

Get right answer thou won't burn.

26

Prima facie if thou feel

Subject Spirit is to rebirths

Why grieve over end of frame?

27

Dies as one

For like rebirth,

Why feel sad

Of what's cyclic.

28

Isn't thy lament over that

Un-manifested to start with

Gets manifested just as guest

And bids adieu in due course.

29

Seen in wonder, spoken in awe

Spirit none knows that lies in him.

30

Dies not Spirit as die beings

What for man then tends to grieve!

31

Being a warrior dharma thine

That thee fight with all thy might.

32 .

For martyrs of unsought wars

Ever open are heavenly gates.

33

If thee back out from duty

Imperil thou thy own dharma

And that earns thee infamy.

34

What for lead a dishonoured life

Why leave legend dubious behind!

35

Amiss be taken thine intent

Treat thee coward thy friends 'n foes.

36

Count on thou thy detractors

Besmire they thy character,

Damned be thine obituary

By their campaign of slander.

37

If slain, heaven; alive, it's reign

Resolve to fight with right intent.

38

Shed thy sentiment, guilt unhinge

Eye not gain as wage thou war.

39

It's this knowledge that liberates

And helps thee act, with no restraint.

40

Goes not waste

Effort thine ever,

Zeal for action

Frees from fear.

41

In their resolve

Succeed firm,

Mind as wavers

Lose infirm.

42

Unwise use all enticing

Flowery language to further

Rituals Vedic in their scores

Not the knowledge of Vedas.

43

Eyeing heaven with mind mundane

Go for ceremonies such in hope

Of having best of both the worlds.

44

Pursue if thou wants with zeal

Instincts then would spin thy mind.

45

Aspects three of life, reveal Vedas four
 Transcend thou dualities, in them as inherent.

46

Well-waters draw Veda-dependent
 Banks on reservoir dwell all realized.

47

Hold as patent on thy work
 Reckon thou not on royalty
 With no way to ceasing work
 Never mind outcome but go on.

48

It's but yoga
 If thou strive
 Wants without
 Emotions bereft.

49

Work well greedy with motive
 Work wise not with result in mind.

50

Wise not sentiment bring to work
 That's hallmark of art of work.

51

Freed from bonds with mind even
 Act wise regardless ever composed.

52

Clears if reason one's illusion
 Bothers he not to what's over

Or for what might lie in store.

53

Stands as firm mind thy clear

Steer thou clear of path rituals.

54

Thus spoke Arjuna:

How to spot the yogi true

Were he there ever in the crowd?

55 .

Thus spoke the Lord:

Blessed are strong with blissful self

Helps them that slight all that tempts.

56

Oblivious of misfortune

Not the one to crave for fun

Sways not ever by his feelings

Stays thus yogi ever even.

57

Unfettered by attachment

Compliments to indifferent

Adversity by unshaken

Wisdom thus is personified.

58

Stimuli those of organs sensory

Tortoise like wise draw into shell.

59

Senses reined

Who so abstains,

Sans he longing

Turns he godly.

60

Senses as may tend them rash

Wise as well stray, from right path.

61

Rein in senses, hone thine effort

Rely on Supreme, that's true wisdom.

62

Leans man on

Lends what charm,

Brings that want

And that's fault.

63

Despair is what clouds reason

Brings that ruin through deeds mindless.

64

Yield to senses sans craving

Cap as thou thy wants dubious.

65

Calm that offsets woes of life

And that equable makes thy mind.

66

Lacks mind focus as it strays

Robs that peace 'n joy thereby.

67

As in seas sans boat rudder
 So course sensual man loses.

68

With tight leash on their senses
 Wise with ease lead poised lives.

69

Ignoring all ignorant crave
 Wise take note what folks not note.

70

Subdues as sea, rivers it holds
 Wise keep cool while wants taming.

71

Freed of ego 'n wants as well
 Blessed are wise who lack longing.

72

State it's that of true being
 With no tenseness of being,
 Life ever in that mode being
 Makes what one with All-being.

Ends thus:

All about Life,

The Second Chapter

Of Bhagvad-Gita

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter -3: Theory of Action

This chapter of 42 *slokas*, known as *karma yoga*, *Theory of Action*, covers the whole gamut of action. It is apparent that not all *slokas* here could be originals. It is pertinent to note that Lord Krishna was unequivocal, in s 42- s45, and s53 of the previous chapter, about the fallacy of the Vedic rituals, and the lack of wisdom in those that clamour for ceremonies, which promise rewards here and in hereafter.

Given that postulation and going by the contextual nature of this chapter that emphasizes action, the s9 -s16 that eulogize the benefits of ritualistic sacrifices should be viewed. In this context, it is pertinent to note that while describing the Omnipresence of Supreme Spirit in chapter 10, it is postulated that among the Vedas, the Supreme Spirit is Sama Veda, symbolizing music (s22), and not Rig Veda or Yajur Veda, both associated with ritualism. And again, in (s25) of the same chapter, it is averred that among the sacrifices, the Lord is *tapo yajna*, prayer muted, and not *Asvamedha*, the horse sacrifice. Thus, these eight *slokas* seem to be clear interpolations. Besides, s17,s18 and s35 are not only out of context but also break the continuity of the discourse. S24 is but an analogy of s23 and thus is an interpolation. However, the readers may note that these *slokas*, if interpreted in the ritualistic sacrificial sense, would broadly convey that -

9. Man is not attached to his actions performed in ritualistic sacrifices but all other actions bind him.
10. The Creator wanted mankind to prosper through sacrifices, which shall be the milch cow of man's desires.
11. Foster the gods through sacrifices
12. Fostered by sacrifices, gods would bestow desired enjoyments, but they are thieves who do not return anything to them (gods).
13. Those that partake the remnants of sacrificial food are sinless.
14. Food that sustains mankind comes from rains, which are but the outcome of sacrificial ceremonies.
15. Brahma is seated in sacrifice.
16. Who follow the above regimen would attain moksha.

To appreciate the background for these interpolations, one might refer to '*All about Interpolations*' of this book. Bypassing these would tend them on the path of sequential thinking outlined by the Lord for the enlightenment of man.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Capping wants, if betters action

How come Thou then push for war!

2

Find I hard to grasp all this

Thou be forthright, what is right.

3

Thus spoke the Lord:

Apply knowledge 'n be freed

Or thou make tango, with forgo

Precepts these yore, I fashioned.

4

Work-shy being, is no freedom

Dormant being, makes no living.

5

None like for man, non-action

Keeps him nature ever engaged.

6

Refrains if one, ever craving

Restraint it's but misleading.

7

Reins as carnal, tucked in mind

Strive who doth in deeds excel.

8

Lest thee should stake survival

Turn thy back not on thy work

19

Ever thee act at par duty

Let that be thy goal of life.

20

Lead mankind in Janaka's route

To moksha en route deeds selfless.

21

As and when thou prove thy worth

Emulates world then acts all thine.

22

Left with none to gain or prove

Keep I Myself ever engaged.

23

Were I to fail to self-exert

Man might follow suit as well.

25

Strive as wise to act freely

Get bound unwise ever restrained.

26

Waste not breath, ill-informed with

Wise show ways through their own deeds.

27

Gloat as egotists of their deeds

Sourced are acts in one's nature.

28

Those that see the senses lie
 Behind the deeds are truly freed.

29

Let go wise, who swear by
 Joys of life that nature tends.

30

Act not with fear or favour
 Unto Me leave, right 'n wrong.

31

Whoso takes, this advice
 Feels no burden ever engaged.

32

Who this lets go mindlessly
 Gropes in darkness, ever in life.

33

Beings as by nature ruled
 In spite of their self-restraint
 Wise too tend to lose their way.

34

Pays it to see grips avarice
 Senses those thine nature tends.

36

Thus spoke Arjuna:
 Why should one with right intent
 Stray ever on the wayward ways!

37

Thus spoke the Lord:

Well, it's passion, lust 'n wrath

Drag that man on path painful.

38

Flame 'n mirror as shrouded

Without let by smoke 'n dust

As well embryo in the womb

Wisdom is by wants clouded.

39

Wise all tend to cap all wants

Which like fire all burn to core.

40

Veiled off wisdom sees not man

Mind and body steeped in wants.

41

Rein in matter with thy mind

Thus thou nip thy wants in bud.

42

Score over senses sensuous feelings

Betters that mind, bettered by knowing

But above all Spirit that reins supreme.

43

Let thy Spirit

Rule the roost,

Restrain thou

Thy mind mischievous.

Ends thus:

Theory of Action,

The Third Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter -4: Practical Wisdom

This chapter of 42 *slokas*, known as *gjnaana yoga*, *Spiritual Knowledge*, is replete with practical wisdom as well.

So in this chapter as with the previous one, there are interpolations galore. *Slokas* from 24 to 32 that are of religious/ritualistic nature seem clearly out of context and character. Prior to this seemingly interpolated body of eleven *slokas*, the nature of the Supreme Spirit and the conduct of those who realize it are dealt with. Thus, the discontinuity in the text brought about by the body of these interpolative *slokas* would be self-evident. Among these is s24, in which the nature of Brahman is described in terms of sacrificial fire, the oblation, its ladle, and the sacrifice *et al*, an antithesis of the Gita at any rate. And the other *slokas* of this group that describe states of yogic practices may be enlightening in their own way though out of context. But s34 that advises Arjuna to seek wise counsel is irrelevant in the context of the discourse fashioned to set his fears at rest in the battlefield of Kurukshetra itself.

That brings us to the first of the caste-oriented precepts in the *Gita-chaatur varnyam mayaa srustam* (s13). The plain reading of this *sloka* would have us believe that the Lord Himself created the four-caste system, of Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra, to suit the inclinations of a given soul towards certain earmarked calling of social and spiritual life in this world. And then, as a rider that is vague at the very best; Lord Krishna says that though He is the author of it all, He should not be deemed as the doer. These so-called caste characteristics and duties as well figure in s41-s48 of the concluding chapter, which are discussed therein.

It is imperative that we try to see whether these *solkas* belong to the original text, or are mere later day insertions, meant to sanctify the Aryan caste credo with the underpinning of 'exclusivity of duties' through the venerated Gita. It should not be lost on one that s11's return of favour by the Lord is juxtaposing to the stated detachment of His as espoused in s14. On the other hand, s12 that is akin to s20, ch.7, itself an interpolation, and s13 do not jell with the spirit of the philosophy.

Just the same, one school of thought tends to view *chaatur varnyam* as a way of general differentiation amongst men. However, this would not cut much ice since common sense suggests that Lord Krishna would have been aware that this turn of phrase is likely to be viewed in caste colours rather than in general terms. That being the case, the Lord would have been circumspect in his word choices to convey his scheme of things governing man's birth if they aren't as narrow as the Aryan caste system propounds.

Or is the *chaatur varnyam* His real will, whether one likes it or not? The answer could be found in the Lord's averments as one reads on. The four types of beings the Lord identifies by their nature and disposition are - the virtuous, the vile, the passionate and the deluded. Isn't the proposition that people of a given nature and disposition could be bracketed into one single caste so absurd? After all, even a

given family provides many shades of human nature in its members, won't it? That being the case, could Krishna be so naive as not to know about it! Above all, hasn't He declared in s 29 ch.9, '*None I favour, slight I none / Devout Mine all gain Me true*'. *Slokas* like *chaaturvarnyam* that would be encountered intermittently in the Gita are but mischievous, if not malicious, interpolations meant to buttress the Aryan caste prejudices and thus should be dismissed as such.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Advice this to Sun I gave

Told he Manu

Ikshvaku thus got in turn.

2

Followed world My word for long

Lost which mankind in due course.

3

It's but love I nurse for thee

Made Me reveal this Secret

Wisdom Supreme I gave Sun.

4

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Born of now, how come Thou

Did Sun advise there for long!

5

Thus spoke the Lord:

Born all here times umpteen

Aware am I but know not thou.

6

Beyond the pale of birth 'n death

On My volition I take birth.

7

Wanes if good 'n vile gain reign
Know it's then that I come forth.

8

It's thus I from time to time
Manifest here to uproot ill
And uphold well for public good.

9

Grasp who this true self of Me
Are bound to become one with Me.

10

So with who lead poised life
Reining in their base instincts.

14

Detached Am from what happens
It's this knowledge that frees man.

15

Men of yore all came to know
That's how one can free himself.

16

Aspects action, inaction too
Wont to puzzle the wise even.

17

Apart actions' rights 'n wrongs
Inaction no less confounds man.

18

Grasping action, in non-action

Inaction in action, discern wise.

19

Whoso privy to this truth

Gives up wants all senses seek.

20

He that content leans on none

Resigned he lives in thick of things.

21

Mind if keeps thy greed at bay

It's no sin thou meet thy needs.

22

One that truly well realized

Happy being with his share

Rids of envy from his mind

Easy he feels ever engaged

Treats he alike grief 'n joy

Wins 'n losses not to speak.

23

Acts of man to favour none

Grace they have of deeds selfless.

33

Better wise deeds than acts selfless

Wise thus strive to better themselves.

35

As 'n when thou this realize

In us both then world discern

And get rid of thy illusions.

36

Voyage by thy boat knowledge
 Helps thee cross all seas sinful.

37

Fire as wood to ashes turns
 So spark wisdom burns thy sloth.

38

None that betters this wisdom
 Realize thou by striving hard.

39

Hone thy senses steeped in faith
 And thou be wise 'n freed of all.

40

Besides those who this doubt
 Here as above suffer uncouth.

41

Doubts at bay with analyzed thought
 Detached deeds of applied knowledge
 That's how regardless wise all work.

42

Thus O Arjun,
 Sever doubts with thy sword wisdom
 And fight thy foes with all thy strength.
 Ends thus:

Practical Wisdom,
 The Fourth Chapter
 Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter -5: Art of Renunciation

This chapter of 29 *slokas*, known as *karma sanyaasa yoga*, *Renunciation of Action*, is in response to Arjuna's plea at the beginning of the chapter, '*Pray be clear, as Thee aver / Act 'n give up in selfsame breath*' Lord Krishna sets the tone for self-help in this chapter with the opening statement, '*Give up all 'n thou be freed / So's the case with selfless work/ But know latter scores much better*'.

S18 avers the Omnipresence of the Supreme in Brahmans, cows, elephants, dogs and dog eaters. This tasteless description could be but an interpolation as it is so ill behoves the Lord's eloquence and sophistication of expression seen throughout. Incidentally, the succeeding s19 makes it clear that whoever recognizes Him in all beings attains the Supreme State in life itself. It may be noted that s29 and s30 of next chapter also run along the same lines. S27-s28 that deal with yogic practices and s29, which asserts the Supreme as the beneficiary of sacrificial rituals, are but interpolation for reasons that bear no repetition.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Pray be clear, as Thee aver

Act 'n give up in selfsame breath.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:

Give up all 'n thou be freed

So is the case with selfless work

But know latter scores much better.

3

Wise neither want, nor they shun

That's how they give up ever engaged.

4

Way action 'n path learning

Know not ignorant not different.

5

Work highway 'n lane freedom

Know the learned are the same.

6

What thou forego if thee cease

Deeds selfless make acts forsake.

7

Such one realized

Self-willed, dutiful

Within self remains

Without ever engaged.

8

Privy to this will realize

On his body as it works

Say hath he none to name one.

9

Wise do realize needs physical

Urges are they driven by genes.

10

Spreads on lotus leaves as water

Sticks none sin of deeds duteous.

11

Wise in selfless work engage

Forego while they self-purify.

12

Wise ever stay cool never in want

Bog down but naive ever in want.

13

Covetous not 'n ever laid back

Wise in tune with Supreme lay.

14

It's his nature, not the Spirit

Makes man act by wants induced.

15

Takes not Supreme credit or fault

Grasp none have of this uncouth.

16

He that keeps his bias at bay

Sun-like he shines being wise.

17

In clear conscience 'n fairness

Gives man freedom faith in Him

19

Keeps who equity ever in thought

Faultless being attains he Brahman.

20

In state Brahman,

Gloats never man as smiles fortune

Nor loses heart when things go wrong.

21

Joys induced all tire one soon

Stay self-joyous all blissful souls.

22

End as in grief joys of flesh

Go not wise for pleasures such brief.

23

Subdue lust 'n rein in wrath

Leads that to thy state of joy.

24

Live in ease the true knowing

Enjoy they all within themselves.

25

With pure intent sans ill-will

Realized all reach State Supreme.

26

Unmoved by his mind subdued

Stays ever free the self-realized.

Ends thus:

Art of Renunciation,

The Fifth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-6: Practice of Restraint

This chapter comprising of 47 *slokas*, known as *aatma samyama yoga*, *Self Restraint*, deals with all aspects of self-control needed for renunciation in action. Here Arjuna's queries as to what would be the fate of man were he to fail midway, in his efforts at self-control (s37). Even if it were the case, assures the Lord, still one wouldn't come to grief here or hereafter (s40). What is more, after being born many times over, eventually he attains moksha (s45). Further in s46, the Lord asserts that such a man is superior to the ritualistic character, and concludes in s47 that he remains His most blessed devotee.

Seen in this background, s41 and s42 are clearly interpolations not only for affecting the continuity of the text but also for what they contain. S41 would have it that those who perform the *asvamedha* (ritualistic horse sacrifice) would reach heaven to be born again rich. Likewise s42 would have us that, or such would be born in learned homes. It would seem that s46-s47 are digressions, but in effect they carry forward the Lord's discourse from s32, at which point Arjuna interrupted Him with his queries.

S10-s17 deal with aspects of ascetic practice and do seem to be interpolations, even going by what is stated in the very opening verse, besides breaking the continuity in the proposition.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Forego none if forsake chores

Eye not gain 'n thou get freed.

2

If thou let go its godly

Makes that hard thy self-interest.

3

Uphill though the way forsake

As 'n when thou make it there

Stay thus put with no more strain.

4

Reining senses sans motive

Wise on selfless deeds focus.

5

Noble or naughty it's thy make
Self thus thine but shapes thyself.

6

Mind if reined, it's thy friend
Foe it turns, let when loose.

7

Overcome if vicissitudes
Vibe thee well with Me Supreme.

8

Valuable or be otherwise
Treat all alike self-realized
Thus they remain ever even.

9

Wise is one, folks who treats
None the fear 'n sans favour.

18

With no longing freed of want
It's then thou reach yogic state.

19

Rooted in self yogi true
Lamp he likens in still air.

20

Restrain mind in self-focus
Beatitude of life that makes

21

Transcends senses if thy mind

It's then thou reach state of bliss.

22

Rooted so on peak of bliss

Wise not bother lows of life.

23

So to live in yogic state

Untie wise from life's bothers.

24

Wise keep tabs on self-impulse

Affects to without are they immune.

25

Wed wise focus with calm mind

Makes that life of theirs tranquil.

26

Pulled by wants as trips the mind

Gain ground wise by self-leverage.

27

Passions languid, mind tranquil

Keep man ever on blissful course.

28

Mind that's pure with self-control

Leads that man to State Brahman.

29

Espy wise in right outlook

Others in self 'n vice versa.

30

Discern Me in what they see

Ever they find Me nearby them.

31

Me who sees in all beings

He's the one that dwells in Me.

32

He's the yogi self-feels who

Joys of others 'n grief as well.

33

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Frail being man, fail I see

Yoga Thou espouse, lasting in practice.

34

Can one ever tame his mind

Like the wind that yields to none?

35 .

Thus spoke the Lord:

Calm 'n custom bring in ropes

Tough ask though to subdue mind.

36

Fail keep going unruly

Persevere self-willed all the way.

37 .

Thus spoke Arjuna:

What if one

Throws up all

Lacks who zeal

Hath though faith?

38

Resolve if dissolves in mid-course

Won't that be like scattered clouds?

39

Kindly dispel all my doubts

Think I none of else for that.

40

Thus spoke the Lord:

Strives if one to enrich self

Ends not in grief here or there.

43

Harnessed habit, of births past

Helps man strive to self-realize.

44

With the reason thus imbibed

Realized outwit scholars there.

45

Awareness of births of yore

Helps the striving gain moksha.

46

Ahead in protocol comes yogi

Learned, ascetics, as all sticklers for rituals.

47

He's the yogi of yogis

Self-inner who fills with Me.

Ends thus:

Practice of Restraint,

The Sixth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-7: Know the Spirit

This chapter of 30 *slokas*, known as *gnaana vignaana yoga*, *Spiritual knowledge and Secular intelligence*, is about understanding the nature of the Supreme through knowing and meditation.

However, s20-s23 besides breaking the continuity in the character of the discourse, would advocate worship of gods for those seeking that Krishna chastises in s42-s44, ch.2. And thus these slokas undoubtedly are interpolations.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

How to retain Me in mind

He in yoga comes to know.

2

Make thee privy that knowledge

Leaves that no scope for some more.

3

Rarely beings seek their self

Of them but a few Me grasp.

4

Earth 'n ether, fire 'n air

Water, mind, sense 'n self

Elements are of My Nature.

5

It's this Nature holds all worlds

But above 'n apart is My Nature.

6

While My Higher Nature brings

Ends all that Low Nature Mine.

7

Better than Me none exists
 On Me hinges whatever exists.

8

I'm that what is sapid in water
 I'm the glow of sun and moon
 I'm the thunder above in skies
 Verily I'm the virility of males.

9

Odour of this earth is Me
 Heat of fire 'n life in being
 As well wisdom in forsake.

10

I'm the seed of all beings
 Intellect as well man's valour.

11

It's Me strength of even life
 As well ardour of sex in order.

12

Virtue, passion so too delusion
 Send I forth though all of them
 Come to dwell in none of them.

13

Spellbound by My these natures
 Knows not man My true nature.

14

If thee forsake well and true
 To Me then thou come 'n grasp

Natures these Mine illusions.

15

Who in Supreme hath no faith

Gripped are by these illusions

And thus go on path wayward.

16

Distressed, desirous 'n knowing

Such pious are those Me worship.

17

Of these but the steadfast man

With pure intent gets My nod.

18

Noble as all worship Me

The knower true is selfsame Me.

19

Once in a while

Births after many,

Born who knows

I pervade worlds.

24 .

Unmanifest Am State Supreme

But saddle Me with form uncouth.

25

Dull in delusion won't perceive

Me that's unborn veiled from them.

26

Am privy to what goes on

But man hath no grasp of Me.

27

Illusions dual, want and wrath

Ever in delusion keep they man.

28

Pure minded sans illusions

On Me such of virtue lean.

29

Seek all those who My refuge

See they Brahman ever in self.

30

Me Be-All 'n End -All grasps

Me he ponders on deathbed.

Ends thus:

Know the Spirit,

The Seventh Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter- 8: Cycle of Creation

This chapter of 28 *slokas*, known as *akshara parabrahma yoga*, *The Indestructible Brahman*, emphasizes the need of unwavering devotion to the Supreme so as to attain Him. It also describes the science of meditation to reach the Supreme by understanding the nature of the Brahman. And s 22 is a seemingly concluding statement of the Lord that only through unswerving devotion the Supreme could be reached from which there is no return (s 21).

Then appear s23 to s28 which if literally taken would imply that if one dies when the moon is on the ascent he would go to heaven and, to hell if it's other way round. Needless to say, these *slokas* spelling superstition in an otherwise thought-elevating treatise are but interpolations. It is worth noting that Sir Edwin Arnold dismissed these as the work of some *vedanti* and thought it fit, justifiably at that, not to include them in his 'Song Celestial'. In this connection it may be noted that the relationship between the state in which a person dies and his imminent rebirth is covered in s 14 and s15 of c14, which seem to be authentic.

It can be seen that s5, places the cart before the horse. Besides, s9-s14 too are interpolations going by their content that's out of context. It is worth noting that s1-s4, s6-s8 and s15-s22, if read together would bear an unmistakable continuity of argument that the interpolations deprive.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

O Lord appraise what's Brahman

Lies what within 'n backs action

Nature of deities besides the beings.

2

What is that guides bodily acts,

What makes yogis realize Thee?

3

Thus spoke the Lord:

Self Imperishable is Brahman

But dwells it yet there in beings

Brings that forth is Act Supreme.

4

Perish as beings all in time

Spirit that lasts of them is Me.

6

In the end the way one tends

Charts that future course he takes.

7

If thou act with this in mind

In the end thou gain Me true,

By My word now opt for war

With thy strength 'n skill I gave.

8

Me they reach whoso keep

On Me focus as they work.

15

Having come to stay with Me

Get they rid of births and deaths.

16

Journey to Brahman holds return ticket

Journeys back none abode from Mine.

17

Wise all realize days Brahman

Ages thousands make with nights.

18

By day as He brings beings

Un-manifests He all by night.

19

It's all rebirths through His day

But with nightfall cease they all

As He wakes up puts He back.

20

My State Supreme that never ends

Un-manifested it's above Brahman.

21

It's My Abode that Supreme

For man to reach not to leave.

22

It's through devotion that thee gain

State Supreme that pervades worlds.

Ends thus:

Cycle of Creation,

The Eighth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-9: The Sacred Secret

This chapter of 34 *slokas*, known as *raja-vidyaa raja-guhya yoga, Supreme Knowledge and Supreme Secret*, describes various ways of attaining the Supreme that lends itself readily for interpolations.

In s13, it is stated that the realized man constantly and single-mindedly remains devoted to the Supreme and in s14 it is averred that such ever remain united with Him in meditation. But it is only in s22 that the protection of the Supreme to those engaged in His service in true devotion is assured. While s23 states that those who worship other gods with faith, worship Him only, albeit defectively, s25 pictures varied outcome of worshipping other gods, a contradiction of s3, ch.1 2. And in s24, He is the Enjoyer and the Lord of all Sacrifice, an anathema to the philosophy of the Gita. Also s15 is but a digression to facilitate s16-s21 and s23-s25. What is more, there could be some omissions from the original, given the seemingly incomplete exposition of the promised dharma in s2.

Further, in s 30 and s 31, it is said that even a reformed sinner is dear and valuable to Him. Then in s 32 it is stated that women, Vaisyas and Sudras could win His favour through devotion, sounding as if they are all in an inferior league. Leave aside the Lord's averment in many a context in this text that the Supreme Spirit lies in all beings, it is specifically stated in s34 of ch.10 that He symbolizes all that is glorious in woman. Given this, and the background of interpolations, s32 surely is a case of trespass. S33 of this chapter is but a jointing medium of the said obnoxious verse and in itself is patronizing in nature towards the virtuous Brahmins.

S7, that contravenes s15-s16 of ch.8 and echoes the interlative s18-s19 of this, is an interpolation. S34, which falls into a separate category, is seemingly an interpolation, for reasons explained in 'All about Interpolations'.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Unenvied as thou I would tell

The art of leading fruitful life.

2

Supreme secret that's sacred

Profound dharma for mankind

Fair and simple, practicable.

3

Fail who follow this dharma

Pay they price in recurring births.

4

Whatever is there I pervade

In My ambit lay beings

Though it's not the other way round.

5

Fail if thou to grasp it thus

Feel as though I'm confined in

What I bring forth 'n sustain.

6

Skies in rooted wind as spreads
Dwell in Me though disperse all.

8

It's I make the Nature bring
Beings hapless in their scores.

9

Since I function not in passion
Bound Am none by acts all these.

10

It's the Nature ruled by Me
Takes the world the way it goes.

11

Though Am Lord of all beings
Give Me human form the naive
And thus they do belittle Me.

12

Vile in delusion lead their lives
In vainness they waste their time.

13

With Me in mind well-meaning
See they beings sourced in Me.

14

With right intent 'n focus
Such Me worship with true faith.

22

Those as meditate 'n worship

Them I take My wings under

26

Hold I dear a leaf even

Offered when by pure minded.

27

Act thou throughout in good faith

Thus thou make Me feel honoured.

28

Rid be thou of all that binds

Freed be thus thou come to Me.

29

None I favour; slight I none

Devout Mine all gain Me true.

30

Start as wicked My worship

Take them all as well realized.

31

Tend I them then turn even

Devout Mine none go restive.

Ends thus:

The Secret Sacred,

The Ninth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-10: Discern the Divine

This intriguing chapter of 42 *slokas*, known as *vibhooti yoga*, *Glories of the Supreme*, characterizes the Omnipresence of the Supreme Spirit. Well, for general human understanding, Lord Krishna identifies the best in heaven and earth that represent all that is glorious about Him. One might note that His avatara that *sama veda* and *tapo yajna*, meditative prayer, symbolize the glory of the Supreme was cited in the introduction to the third chapter.

In the context of what Lord Krishna enumerates as symbolic of the 'Glory of the Supreme Spirit', it is interesting to note that He's the sovereign in humans in s27 but not Rama as one would have expected. However, Lord Rama enters the Hall of Fame as the first amongst the archers (s31). Going by the dispassionate outlook towards life that Lord Krishna expostulates, it is but natural that Lord Rama who personifies attachment to the values of his time is not reckoned as the Glory of the Supreme Spirit. It is another matter that in the Hindu religio-cultural ethos, Lord Rama is revered as *purushottama*, the noblest human.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Earthy lend My words peerless

Bound they regale as thee gain.

2

Sourced though gods 'n seers in Me

Grasp they have none of My source.

3

Me as Lord of all who sees

Turns his back on wrongdoings.

4

Sourced in Me all faculties

State of mind of beings too.

5

Varied I made vicissitudes

As the case with attitudes.

6

Willed I birth of progenitors all
 Seven seers great 'n elders four
 Not to mention sovereign fourteen.

7

Grasps as one the power of Mine
 Keeps he would his mind then firm.

8

Who this gets in My worship
 Tends he then to turn to Me.

9

Whoso to Me thus taken
 Delight he takes in praising Me.

10

Him I help to realize that
 Which is needed to reach Me.

11

Doubts I dispel his for good
 Grant I wisdom to his thought.

12

Thus spoke Arjuna:
 O Lord Thou, Supreme Brahman
 Abode Ultimate, Purifier Primordial
 Indweller Permanent 'n God Primeval.

13

That's how sages down the ages
 Narada foremost described Thee,
 Affirmed Asita, Devala 'n Vyasa

All of that now Thou confirm.

14

None can ever be sure of Thee

Hold I true thus what Thou say.

15

God of gods

O Lord of all,

Thou but know

Self Thy true.

16

Pray Thee confide Thy nature

With which Thou all worlds transcend.

17

How to grasp all aspects Thine,

How to engage Thee in mind?

18

Make me privy, O, My Lord

Forms 'n attributes of Thyself.

19

Thus spoke the Lord:

Of all countless Glories Mine

Suffice thee knew a few of them.

20

I'm the Self of one and all

I'm the beginning as well end

Not to speak of in between.

21

Vishnu Am of all deities
 Sun the luminous of luminous
 Mareechi Am immortal
 As well moon the star of stars.

22

I am the Sama of Vedas
 It's Me Indra, god of gods
 Of all organs, mind is Me
 And so life in all beings.

23

Shankar Am the Lord of Lords
 Kubera, richest of Yakshas
 Of the Vasus know Am Fire
 And Am Meru, peak foremost.

24

In those echelons ruled by gods
 It's Me Bruhaspathi priest of priests,
 Marshal that great Skand on earth
 Besides the ocean among the seas.

25

Bhrugur I am the will realized
 So Am 'Om' that sound supreme,
 Of rituals Am prayer muted
 Himalayas high that kiss the skies.

26

I'm the fig, the tree foremost
 And so heavenly sage Narad,
 Maestro divine Chitraradh Am

Besides Kapila, the sage attained.

27

Uchhaisravas, Am horse foremost

Nectar that was churned in seas

Airavat white, Indra's elephant

Sovereign whoso crowns mankind.

28

Vajrayudh Am weapon mighty

Kamadhenu the cow holy

Cupid who aids to sustain life

Vasuki the fierce king serpent.

29

It's Me Ananth of Nagas

Varun I am of aquatics,

It's Me Aryama, mane of manes

Yama the ruler of beings.

30

Prahlad Am, the demon godly

Among the reckoners, I'm the Time

It's Me lion, of wildlife all

As well Garud that rules the skies.

31

I'm the wind that purifies all

Among the archers Ram I'm

I'm the shark that mighty fish

And the Ganges, ever in flow.

32

Hinge I am that holds all worlds
 Source is Me of spiritual thought
 Of Vedanta, I'm pro contra.

33

Alpha Am of alphabets all
 Likeness I'm in like compounds
 I'm the time of endlessness
 It's Me Brahma of four heads.

34

I'm the death that devours all
 As well brings forth that beings
 Besides what makes woman's glory.

35

Am Sama the grand octane
 Like none metre Gayathri,
 Margasir pleasant month I am
 As well splendid spring season.

36

I'm the splendour of splendrous
 Besides fraud in dice as well
 I'm the goodness in great souls
 Effort that takes to succeed well.

37

It's Me Vasudev of Yadavs
 Of the Pandavs thou art Me,
 Know Am Vyasa of sages
 Poet Laureate, Sukra great.

38

Justice I'm in every court

Policy Am of all conquest,

Secret I'm of every mute

Wisdom Am of what is wise.

39

I'm the seed of all beings

From Me apart none exists.

40

Endless are My attributes

This brief is for just thy grasp.

41

All that's glorious all therein

Is but spark of My splendour.

42

O dear friend need there none to delve in full

Suffice to say it's portion Mine that supports all.

Ends thus:

Discern the Divine,

The Tenth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-11: Nature of Omnipresence

This fascinating chapter of 55 *slokas*, known as *visvaroopa sandarsana yoga*, *Espial of the Universal Form*, is about the character of the Supreme Spirit. Lord Krishna enables Arjuna to espy the All-encompassing Universal Form of the Supreme Spirit by granting him the required ESP. The descriptive nature of the State Supreme falls in the realms of Universal Vision.

Owing to the improbability of their being, s9-s14, make an amusing reading. S3 states that Krishna grants Arjuna the divine sight required to espy His Universal Form. Of course, the ESP that Vyasa granted Sanjaya (s75 ch.18) might have enabled him to monitor the goings on at Kurukshetra in order to appraise the blind king Dhritarashtra about the same. Thus, only from Arjuna's averments Sanjaya could have gathered that he was divining the Universal Form, which obviously was beyond his own comprehension. But s10 - s14 have him describe the Universal Form as though he himself was witness to the same, even before Arjuna utters a word about it. At the same time, the Lord made it clear in s52, '*Ever craved gods 'n angels too / Just to behold what thee beheld*'. Thus, the Universal Form that was seen by Arjuna surely was beyond the scope of Sanjaya's ESP. Hence, s9-s14 that picture beforehand what Arjuna would witness later on are clear interpolations. Contrast this with the parallel situation in s50-s51, when the Lord reassumes His human form, but handled differently by Sanjaya.

The s29 which seeks to emphasize what was already pictured in s28, albeit with not so appropriate a simile, could be but an interpolation.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Thy words compelling, Spirit about indwelling

Uttered in compassion, dispelled my delusion.

2

Besides I've heard, about Thy glories

Origins of beings, and how it all ends.

3

Thou art verily, what Thee aver

Wish I espied, form Thy Divine.

4

If Thou so feel, I'm worthy

Let me espy, Thy True Self.

5

Thus spoke the Lord:

Divine I let thee, divinity Mine

Of hues varied colours 'n kinds.

6

Find Adityas, twelve therein

Vasus eight, and Aswin twins

Rudras eleven 'n Maruts four-nine

Wonders umpteen none else seen.

7

May thou discern in My frame

Much more than thy thought would take.

8

Bestow thee that ESP

Helps which espy form Supreme

Beyond the pale of god's own sight.

15

Thus spoke Arjuna:

In Thou find I

Brahma on lotus,

Gods and sages

Beings 'n serpents!

16

With no beginning

End none sighted,

Boundless find I

In Thee universe!

17

Find I blinding

Light that blazing

From Thy diadem

Club and discus!

18

Thou art Supreme

Indweller Ancient,

Eternal Refuge

Dharma's Guardian.

19

Eyes sun like

And oven for mouth,

How Thou radiate

In arms thy manifold!

20

Fills Thy Frame

The space entire,

Makes Thy sight

The worlds tremble.

21

See in Thee the angelic world

Find them all Thou pray in awe

Spot I sages in their scores

Hear them extol, Thee in hymns.

22

Demigods all 'n celestial folk

Stand they stunned 'n look at Thee.

23

Makes it awful sight Thine terrible

Bear as Thou those weird organs.

24

Perplexed am I by Thy sight

Seems I've lost my sense of self.

25

Discern I nadir in Thy face

Pray assume now Form Normal.

26

See I Bhishma, Dron 'n Karn

Kauravs, ours, making way to mouth Thy wide.

27

Nauseates sight of teeth Thine terrible

Gnashing heads of theirs in smithereens.

28

Rivers as run, towards the seas

So these armies, towards Thy mouths.

30

Consume worlds as mouths Thy blazing

Find I blinding rays those scorching.

31

Who art Thou, this Terrible Thing!

For what avail, mission this Thine!!

Gripped now am with urge to know.

32

Thus spoke the Lord:

I'm the time that infolds all

It's all over for most here

Doomed are they, never mind war.

33

Since I've handed them sentence

Thou art no more than hangman,

Finish them all 'n flourish in turn

Brings as reign thee power 'n pelf.

34

Take up arms 'n lap up crown

For Drona, Bhishma and Karna,

As well Jayadrath with the rest

Truly are they doomed by Me.

35

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Stunned as he by what transpired

Beseached Paartha, Lord Krishna.

36

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Sing Thy praises the rejoiced world

Hither 'n thither run wicked in awe

Bow to Thee those self-realized.

37

Can one fail to worship Thee

Creator's Creator, 'n Universal!

38

Thee the Primal, All-Dweller

Thou All-Knower, One to know.

39

God of gods, O, our Father

Thee I salute on and on.

40

One and All, who pervades all

Thou All-Powerful, praise be Thee.

41

Ignorant being of Thy Great Being

Owing to contempt familiarity bred

Sadly I have been badly behaving.

42

As I took Thee for granted

Kindly forgive, O, Great Soul.

43

Thou art Greater than greatest

None Thee in three worlds equal.

44

Treat me kindly 'n forgive

All I crave for, is Thy grace.

45

Form Thy Current holds dreadful

Pray show Divine Grace of Thine.

46

With mace, discus 'n diadem

Pray assume Thy Form four-armed.

47

Thus spoke the Lord:

As thou please Me, so I've shown

Form My Endless, none else seen.

48

Take to penance

Or pore over four Vedas

None that helps to see this Form.

49

Having beheld My bewildering Form

Now ease with My Form Normal.

50

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

Having said thus Lord assumed

His form normal that calmed Arjun.

51

Thus spoke Arjuna:

O, Lord now I feel normal

With Thy gentle form human.

52

Thus spoke the Lord:

Ever crave gods 'n angels too

Just to behold that thee beheld.

53

Austerities well Vedic grasp

Charity, as well ritual regimen

Get none to what thou had seen

54

Yet in devotion, divines man

Attains besides, Form this Mine.

55

He that takes Me for Supreme

And treats his work as Mine own one,

Gets who rid of his restraints

And keeps his faith in Me always,

He who bears no ill-feeling

Ever on move, he comes to Me.

Ends thus:

Nature of Omnipresence,

The Eleventh Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-12: Doctrine of Faith

This chapter of 22 *slokas*, known as *bhakti yoga*, *Doctrine of Faith*, enumerates the human qualities that are endearing to the Supreme Spirit. In this also are discussed the ways in which one still could win the Lord's favour yet failing to set store on Him.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Pray tell who's better realized,

One that devoted as stated

Or relies who on God Obscure.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:

Me in devotion who worships

Him I reckon as well realized.

3

Having said that add I might

Looks as one to God Obscure -

4

Doth he fine with senses reined

If well disposed towards the world.

5

But it's tough ask nonetheless

For one to realize God Obscure.

6

Whosoever hath faith in Me

And leans on Me heart 'n soul -

7

Him I help to cross over

Ocean vast of births 'n deaths.

8

If thou develop faith in Me

Take for granted I take thee.

9

Were thee to fail develop faith

It's not thou reached blind alley,

Ever Me having in thy mind

Practice lets thee turn the bend.

10

If thou feel that's hard as well

Indulge then in deeds Me please.

11

If thou find that difficult too

Give thyself to Me Supreme

Act then with thy subdued mind

With no thought for what follows.

12

Scores thought over mere roting

Bettors meditation awareness too

What helps man to find moorings

Are acts his with no axe to grind.

13

Kind-hearted 'n considerate

Friendly natured, forgiving too

Lays no store on highs and lows

Suffers no pride 'n possessive not –

14

Who's patient 'n cheerful
 Self-willed as well persevering,
 Who's hearty ever at work
 Makes he devout My beloved.

15

Troubles he none or perturbs
 It's such poised I'm proud of.

16

Who's simple, never in want
 Covets he not in vantage post
 Shakes him none, he keeps his nerve
 It's such who Me please the most.

17

He's My darling who craves not
 Yet won't shun the pleasures of life
 Takes but things all as they come.

18

Treats he equal friends 'n foes
 Scorn or honour minds he not
 Keeps he cool in grief and joy
 Nurses for none soft centre –

19

Pats 'n slights all in the score
 Treats as equal score My man
 Takes he in his stride his lot
 But won't put the blame on Me.

20

Who in dharma this engage

Them I hold in special esteem.

Ends thus:

Doctrine of Faith,

The Twelfth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-13: Field and Farmer

This chapter of 35 *slokas*, known as *kshetra kshetrajnya vibhaaga yoga*, *Field and Farmer*, deals with body and spirit in the first half, and for the rest about *Prakruti* (Nature) and *Purusha* (Supreme Spirit). It may be noted that customarily the first verse that is carried here is either omitted altogether or retained unnumbered for reasons none explained. Thereby to avoid confusion in comparison, the same is numbered 0 in this text. One might notice that s10, advocating asceticism to which Lord Krishna is opposed, doesn't jell with the rest, either contextually or philosophically, and thus should be seen as an interpolation.

S22, which states that the Supreme Soul, lay in beings as a sustainer, consentor, enjoyer and overseer, contravenes its very nature expostulated in s16-s18, ch.15. Besides, as can be seen, it affects the continuity between s21 and s23 of this chapter. S30, akin to s15 is an irrelevant interpolation too.

0

Thus spoke Arjuna:

What is nature 'n its role,

What is spirit 'n its nature,

What is frame 'n who lords it

What makes feeling 'n sixth sense?

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Sees who body his as field

Sees he all there is to see.

2

Knows who Spirit One dwells in all

Knows he all that's there to know.

3

Lend thy ear, as I reveal

Nature of thy frame as well

Spirit that tenants as farmer

Besides Him and His prowess.

4

In chants validate what Vedas

Aspects that well Brahmanas delve

Reasoned wise in varied ways.

5

Subject to reason, ego as well

Steeped is frame in elements five,

Earth, water, fire, ether and air

Organs those ten, as well mind.

6

Desire, derision, pleasure 'n pain

Pitch their tents in frames human.

7

Knowing is being -

Amiable and humble, simple 'n honest

Patient 'n decent, clean and clear

Not to speak of fair and firm -

8

Void of desires, egotism devoid

Passion none for life and times –

9

With no craving for possessions

Fondness none for things of life

None the averse, all the same.

11

Naive though fail to follow suit

Tend all wise to probe nature

And strive to see the Spirit in Me

12

Let Me tell thee what's needed

To let thee grasp the State Brahman

Which if done would bring in bliss.

13

All-Reaching, He's All-Seeing

All Hearing, He pervades all.

14

Organs in His likeness made

Unlinked though to their senses,

He that sustains all three worlds

Unattached though to goings on.

15

In beings all 'n objects too

Within He lies, without as well,

If one comes to grasp this well

It's perception that's Supreme.

16

It's how Brahman dwells in all

Till He ends all what that keeps.

17

He's the Light that leaves no shade

He's the One for one to know

He's the Goal of all learning

He's the Tenant in every heart.

18

It's the knowable of the frame
 Me who worship come to grasp.

19

Spirit 'n Nature, ageless both
 Nature of beings, of Nature born.

20

It's Nature that tends beings
 Binding Spirit to one's own acts.

21

Spirit that lay in beings all
 Inclines to one's attitudes,
 With the ethos it imbibes
 Tends it one to like rebirth.

23

Gets one freed, as he grasps
 Aspects Nature 'n Spirit as well.

24

Indulge who in meditation
 Find they Supreme Spirit in them,
 Some as divine through wisdom
 Others do so by deeds selfless.

25

He who finds this all too hard
 May he obtain wise counsel
 And be rid of births and deaths.

26

Whatever exists in this world

Designs Spirit in Nature's womb.

27

Sees he well, who would see

What doth perish is just the frame

End there none to Spirit therein.

28

Realize if thou Spirit in thee

Same as one that dwells in all

Hurt thou never thine own self

Thereby attain Me Supreme.

29

Beings act per their nature

Thus the Spirit that lay in them

Hath no hand in deeds of theirs.

31

Having none its attributes

Apart being from nature

Spirit hath no qualms of its own.

32

As with ether, spread all over

None the sullied, exposed being

So is the case with Spirit in thee.

33

Sun as one lights all three worlds

It's one Spirit that glows all frames.

34

Aware if thee of Spirit 'n frame

Frees that thou from all bindings

Making way to reach Supreme.

Ends thus:

Field and Farmer,

The Thirteenth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-14: Proclivities to Know

This diagnostic chapter of 27 *slokas*, known as *gunatraya vibhaaga yoga*, *Differentiation of Qualities Three*, details the three human proclivities - virtue, passion and delusion. It concludes with the identification of the realized spirit. It may be noted that s3, s4 and s19 that deal with the Nature and the Spirit are digressions, and thus are interpolations.

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Pass I now thee that knowledge

With which sages free themselves.

2

Knows whoso this reaches Me

Keeps thus births 'n deaths at bay.

5

To tie the Spirit 'n body tight

Uses Nature as its threads

Virtue, passion as well delusion.

6

Spirit as well gets well enticed

By the charms of life well-led

Steeped in wisdom and virtue.

7

Frames of passion as it weds

Spirit gets fond of joys of life.

8

It's in delusion Spirit with sloth

Doth go in tow on wrong path.

9

Gives man virtue life of ease
 Grinds him passion in despair
 Deprives delusion him of reason.

10

Of the trio often
 Takes as lead role one of these
 Others to sidelines are confined.

11

Wearing wisdom on his sleeve
 Radiates virtuous throughout life.

12

Plain greedy, or ever restive
 It's the way all passionate live.

13

Dull in mind
 And perverted
 In work lethargic
 He's but deluded.

14

Peaks as virtue dies as one
 Ascends he the State Highest.

15

Dies if one with passion on hold
 Comes he back to resume things,
 Lives who deluded all his life
 Gets he none better in rebirths.

16

Virtuous sully never their lives

Rue passionate as chase joys

Go down deluded drain of life.

17

Gives as virtue wisdom true

Renders passion unto grief

Leads as delusion into sloth.

18

Echelons virtuous reach higher

Remain 'as is where' passionate

Go down ladder ever the deluded.

20

Out of orbit if thou go

Of Nature that grips thy mind

Freed be thou of recurring births.

21

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Can man ever, rein in matter,

Is there regimen that reins it?

22

Thus spoke the Lord:

With no let or ever hindrance

Whatever it be he lets go,

Takes he things all as they come

With none fondness or distaste.

23

Seeing it all nature's work

From the fringes of conscience
Detached he watches goings on.

24

It's in fairness that he weighs
Affairs of life in fine balance.

25

Sans self, ego, self-realized
Works his way to state tranquil.

26

It's by capping his nature
Wavers he not from the path
That which truly leads to Me
And in end he turns Brahman.

27

It's Me Immortal self of Brahman
Dharma eternal that's All-Blissful.

Ends thus:

Proclivities to Know,

The Fourteenth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-15: Art of Liberation

This unique chapter of 20 *slokas*, known as *purushottama praapti yoga*, *Realization of the Supreme*. S9, s12, s13, s14 and s15 being digressions are clearly interpolations. Beginning with the parable of world as a fig tree, it later deals with the indwelling spirit and the Supreme Spirit, and the perishable man and the imperishable *Purusha* (Supreme Spirit).

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Wise see Nature as fig tree huge

Roots its planted in high skies

Branching down with Vedic leaves

Helps which man reach State Supreme.

2

So to feed on their organs

With its downward roots it ties

Beings all to mundane things,

With man being charged by wants

Supplies he the feed it needs

Through the knots of threefold ways.

3

Man as fails to lay his hands

Roots on those that entwine him

Helps dispassion sunder them.

4

Roots as sundered, one gets freed

To reach the Vedic branch in reach,

Grasps as he the truth there all

Goes he up from branch to branch

To end up on the root utmost

On which Abode Supreme lies.

5

Freed of pride, desire 'n delusion

Climbs as he, in self he dwells,

Feels he same of pleasure 'n pain

Detached he reaches thus Supreme.

6

Sun too doth pale nears it when

Seat of moksha, Abode of Mine.

7

Spirit as lies in beings all

Gets it rubbed with one's nature.

8

Wind as carries scent of flowers

While leaving them as is where,

In like fashion Spirit from frames

Moves its awareness to rebirths.

10

Know not fools in lifetime theirs

Nature of Spirit thus lies in them

But ever on move from frame to frame.

11

This by striving wise realize

Fail though naive in spite of it.

16

Perish all beings though in time

Perishes not the Spirit in them.

17

Self Mine Highest that sustains

Is but different from that One.

18

Since I transcend that perishes

Apart 'n above the eternal One

Vedas vouch Me Soul Supreme.

19

Who aver Me as Soul Supreme

In My worship bring they faith.

20

Grasps who nuances of this science

Turns he wise 'n accomplished thus.

Ends thus:

Art of Liberation,

The Fifteenth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-16: Frailty of Thought

This chapter of 24 *slokas*, known as *daivaasura sampad vibhaaga yoga*, *The Characteristics of Virtuous and the Vile*, deals with all aspects of virtue and evil including how they affect human life.

S19 which implies that the Supreme Spirit condemns to hell those who hate Him is an obvious interpolation that contravenes Lord's affirmative statement in s29 ch.9, '*None I favour; slight I none / But devout Mine all gain Me true*' and other such averred in many a context in this text. Be that as it may, when He is the indweller in all beings as postulated by the Lord himself, won't the interpolative proposition of s19 amount to self-condemnation!

1

Thus spoke the Lord:

Pure in heart 'n courage to boot

Even mind with helping hand

Works who hard 'n tries to grasp

Austere, upright, and well-read –

2

Even tempered, loves he peace

Liberal minded with kind heart

Calm 'n truthful, well mannered

Fickle he not or calumnious

Modest natured covets he not -

3

Free of bias he's fair-minded

Strong in will, he stalls envy

Humble, and he forgives too

He's virtuous thus earmarked.

4

Make all vile, rude guys all

Vainglorious 'n haughty too,

Besides being indignant

No less are they indulgent.

5

Gives as virtue man freedom

Keeps him vileness ever constricted.

6

World is as of good 'n bad

Serves thee to know latter too.

7

Conduct of theirs lacks virtue

Bear they demeanour that's impure.

8

Branding beings sexual products

Reckon not such in God 'n truth.

9

These small minds, of ruined souls

Wreck they world with acts of wrath.

10

Pride 'n lust, long wish list

Vile in conceit live impure.

11

Seeing life as one to gloat

Vile by impulse go to lengths.

12

Seek vile creatures ever shortcuts

On way to wants, they ill-get wealth.

13

Think all vile, in like terms -
 This is mine so let me keep
 Why not have I more of it.

14

Foe this mine I've truly floored
 Won't I tackle the rest of them
 Sure I'm Lord of mine own world.

15

Note all vile, gloat as such -
 Besides wealthy, I'm well-born
 Won't I give and enjoy too.

16

To their hurt in illusion vile
 End up slaves of joys of flesh.

17 .

In vainglory live all vile
 And for show-off spend they well.

18 .

Blinded by pride, lustful lot
 Me they ill-treat lay in them.

20

Live all deluded far from Me
 Depraved ladder they go down.

21

Detours, lust, wrath 'n greed
 Self-destruct to go hellward.

22

Steer if clear, perils these men
See they then the path perfect.

23

In their impulse vile impinge
Upon the scriptures that hold good
And thus keep ever from Supreme.

24

Ordain scriptures rights 'n wrongs
It's now left to choose thy course.

Ends thus:

Frailty of Thought,
The Sixteenth Chapter
Of Bhagavad-Gita,
Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-17: Science of Devotion

This chapter of 28 *slokas*, known as *sraddhaa traya vibhaaga yoga*, *Threefold Devotion*, deals with the spiritual and temporal aptitudes of man. S11-s13 that deal with the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded in ritualistic sense and s 23 -28 concerning *Om, Tat, Sat* and *Asat* of the Vedic hymns are clear interpolations for reasons the reader is familiar with.

However, s7 - s10 that deal with the food habits of the virtuous, the passionate and the deluded would pose a problem in determining whether or not they are interpolations. Can eating habits be linked to the innate nature of man in an infallible manner? Perhaps, some future research and analysis might resolve the universality or otherwise of this averment, and till then, it is appropriate to reserve the judgment on these.

1

Thus spoke Arjuna:

None the regard for scriptures

Who tend to manage life their well

What Thou say of such of beings

Virtuous, passionate or merely deluded.

2

Thus spoke the Lord:

It's one's nature that tends him

To be virtuous, passionate, or deluded.

3

Beings all have faith in some

It's one's nature that shapes it.

4

Virtuous seek gods in worship

Opt passionate to humour ghosts

Turn all deluded towards the Hades.

5

Hoping for there all to gain

Indulge vain in austerities

Though not endorsed by scriptures.

6

It's in delusion they all fast

Emaciating frames of theirs,

Thus in foolishness they all

Famish Mine own Self in them.

7

As with habits so with palates

Come to tend all in three ways.

8

Opt virtuous all recipes fine

Sustain health 'n enhance strength.

9

Hot 'n spicy, and pungent,

Prefer food passionate that ill-suits.

10

Food of deluded is all stale

Long in storage, and impure.

15

Rings with truth 'n laced with warmth

It's speech austere that's well-meaning.

16

Simple 'n stoic

Kind and candid

It's mind austere

With self-control.

17

Wanting none

Never in turn,

Done in concern

Deed it's austere.

18

It's in pretension passionate live

Eye they have on name 'n fame.

19

With troubled mind all deluded live

Hurt themselves 'n others as well.

20

Virtuous deed is that extends

Helping hand to one in need

Guided by the zeal to serve.

21

Deed passionate is quid pro quo

Ever done with some end in mind.

22

Aiding dubious with disdain

It's deed deluded that lacks goal.

Ends thus:

Science of Devotion,

The Seventeenth Chapter

Of Bhagavad-Gita,

Treatise of self-help.

Chapter-18: Thy Looking-glass

This chapter of 78 *slokas*, known as *moksha sanyaasa yoga*, *Realization through Abnegation*, describes such aspects of human behaviour based on the three natures - virtue, passion and delusion - and the path of selfless action. And in the end, the relevance of, and the reverence to, the Gita is described.

One can note that s12 breaks the continuity between s11 and s13 with hyperbolic averments, and s56 combines what is stated in the preceding and the succeeding *slokas*, and thus both are seemingly interpolations.

S41- s48 that describe the allotted duties of man on the basis of his caste are clearly interpolations. In essence, the discourse till s 40 is about the human nature and how it affects man. As can be seen, the duties on caste lines detailed in the said interpolations have no continuity of argument. As in earlier chapters, the text acquires continuity if only these verses are bypassed.

S61 avers that the Supreme dwells in humans and deludes them all by his *maya*. This is contrary to what is stated in s14, ch.5, '*It's his nature, but not Spirit / Makes man act by wants induced*'. Thus, s61 clearly is an interpolation as it contravenes the neutrality of the Supreme Spirit in the affairs of man affirmed throughout by Lord Krishna.

1 .

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Pray Thee tell, for my grasp

All about *sanyaas*, path forsake

And self-denial that's *tyaaga*.

2 .

Thus spoke the Lord:

Lack inclination, it's *sanyaas*

Sans wants work what makes *tyaaga*.

3

Fault some sages effort per se

Others give nod to deeds noble.

4

Make thee privy of three ways

By which, men all give up well.

5

Effort, gift 'n austerity

Take men all on road forsake.

6

Forsake I this vouchsafe when

Acts man with no axe to grind.

7

Avoid obligation, it's no abnegation

Boils it down to, give up of delusion.

8

Forgo made easy passionate opt

Desist from duties that strain them.

9

Indulge virtuous in their work

With no thought of its outcome.

10

With no illusion but diligence

Carries renunciant his duties

Agreeable or otherwise too.

11

Needs one work to sustain life

Relinquents avoid, overloads all.

13

Factors five all deeds engulf

Know them well to free thyself.

14

Prone are acts to these aspects -

Body to sustain, ego that goads

Senses thy lure, life to guard

Faith in deities that tends thee.

15

Be well or so be ill

In word, thought 'n deed as well

Sourced are acts in these aspects.

16

Ignoramus in vain ascribe

Acts of theirs to Spirit in them.

17

It's for thee to realize now

That by killing these Kauravs

Slay thee none of them thyself.

18

Aspects knowable, known 'n knower

Lead to duty, deed 'n doer, in that order.

19

Knowable as well deeds 'n doers

Bracket those freed in three groups.

20

Lay indivisible in frames divisible

Realize virtuous Spirit not perishable.

21

Spirit in them 'n others that lies

Apart 'n unique feel passionate.

22

Failing to see beyond the self

Deluded think like frog in well.

23

Illusions of life virtuous

See in light of limitations

Thus thou carry businesslike

Duties that their life ordains

24

In want passionate come to live

Bogged down by, what they eye.

25

Deluded work in reckless ways

Harm their cause 'n others' as well.

26

Taking well and ever at ease

Senses honed 'n ego evened

Detached virtuous ever engage.

27

Mind as covetous 'n thought impure

Crave passionate all things mundane

Which them excite as well pull down.

28

Verily deluded, vulgar 'n vacillate

Arrogant, dishonest, ignorant 'n malicious

Indolent being remain they gloomy.

29

By natures of these beings

Features intellect theirs vary.

30

Deal virtuous in measures equal

Weigh they fine all deeds their fair.

31

Perspective lack passionate right

In weird ways they tend their lives.

32

Given their state of perversion

Go all deluded in wrong path.

33

Virtuous ever in self-control

Steady they wavering mind of theirs.

34

Things that seem to bring joys

Passionate all with zeal pursue.

35

Proud 'n arrogant, doubting 'n grieving

Bog down deluded in despair.

36

Make a note of these three ways

Pains which banish 'n fetch bliss.

37

What fail sprint 'n serve long run

Virtuous know keep woes at bay.

38

It's the way with thy passion
 To jump at all that what might tempt
 Which would turn sour in due course.

39

Ever in day-dreams
 End up deluded in dreamlands.

40

Beyond the pale of these natures
 None ever exists in three worlds.

49

With no want
 Allegiant to none,
 Freed from action
 Thou forsake.

50

Leads how forsake to Brahman
 Know that Wisdom Supreme now.

51

With pure mind 'n will that's strong
 Wants thou void and firm thy self -

52

Frugal of food, thoughts reined in
 Dwell in self thou sans passion –

53

Lack thou pride, wish 'n wrath
 Give up ego, crave not power

Be content and live in peace
It's then thou come near Brahman.

54

Treat all beings ever equal
And in devotion live tranquil.
It's thou attain State Brahman.

55

It's then one would know Me true
That tends him to be one with Me.

57

Let thy faith in Me be strong
Take Me thou for thy shelter
And ever thee act as My agent.

58 .

It's all smooth sail if heeded
At thy peril thou this ignore.

59

It's thine ego sues for peace
But prevails what is thy nature..

60

Sidetrack might thine illusions
But nature thine would shape thy deeds.

62

Fix thy mind on Me Supreme
Find thou peace in My refuge.

63

That thee heard of this wisdom

For task on hand now apply mind.

64

O, dear friend, let Me tell

Word My final that benefits.

65

If one remains to Me firm

It's My promise I take him.

66

Set all aside 'n have faith

Thus sans sin, reach Me thou

67

None of this for those who lack

Faith in Me and selfless work.

68

Whoso passes this secret

To devout Mine all reach Me true.

69

Know not I a dearer soul

None there ever a better service.

70

Who that studies this discourse

He Me prays in true wisdom.

71

Hears this whoso in good faith

Attains he the Worlds Higher.

72

Looks as if thou got it right

Let not delusions rule thy head.

73

Thus spoke Arjuna:

Glad O Lord

Gone are doubts,

Sense I gained

With Thy words.

74

Thus spoke Sanjaya:

It's what I've heard of that stirring

Dialogue between these great souls

Krishn and Arjun as they spoke.

75

It's with Vyasa's grace I've heard

This peerless art of yogic life

Which Lord Krishna taught Paartha.

76

Found I thrilling, dialogue stirring

Reminiscing I rejoice, again and again.

77

What a wondrous Form that was

Recalling I rejoice, again and again.

78

Wherever yogic Lord Krishna

Joins hands with great Paartha

Goddess Victory, spreads carpet

Heaven on earth to set there ever.

Ends thus:

Thy Looking-glass

The Eighteenth Chapter

Of Vyasa's classic

Bhagavad-Gita,