Chapter IV

KARMAKĀNDĀ A STUDY

Introductory

Work or Karma may be rightly regarded as the most important topic in the Bhagavadgītā. Infact, it is in this field that the Bhagavadgītā has made a signal contribution to the Indian philosophical thought. In connection with other doctrines it may be said with justification that the Bhagavadgītā follows the Upaniṣads. But with regard to Karma it has much original to say, though it is to be admitted that the Īsāvāṣya has given some hints of this sort. Before the Bhagavadgītā, in the Upaniṣads and in the sacred literature of the Buddhists and the Jains, the attitude towards Karma was that it caused bondage. This is a fact acknowledged by the Bhagavadgītā. The previous view therefore, was that it should be avoided or
renounced. However, this solution has not been accepted by Bhagavadgītā. The Gītā in clear terms prefers Karma to sannyāsa and opines that perfection can be reached through Karma and that it is to salvation. Karma is obligatory and it is impossible for any one to avoid it. The Gītā teaches the right method of Karma in three places. It says that coupled with knowledge and devotion, Karma is the surest and easiest way to salvation. Knowledge removes the binding aspect of karma and karma is not to be renounced. Karma itself is an object of knowledge, and it is to be thoroughly known before either performance or renunciation. The self does not work and hence is not bound by it. All actions should be either cast off on Krṣna or laid on the Absolute for salvation. Yoga is nothing but skill in karma, to do it and yet to be able to escape from it. This can be done by abandoning the attachment to the fruit of Karma. Disinterested, selfless Karma is the way to the release of the individual and the betterment of the universe as well. Hence, it is superior to renunciation of Karma, for this latter achieves only the release of the individual. The wise should not, and must not neglect the world and must work for its betterment. One's own release is too selfish and not ideal
for the wise.

A man has liberty to offer his activities, gifts, penance, worship, even his food, drink etc. to God as a sacrifice. This broader notion comes when one's mind becomes purified by performing different activities prescribed in the karmakāṇḍa. To perform one's own duty is to worship the Lord and in the language of the Gītā, Karma.

The theme of Mahābhārata itself is a battle between the righteous few and the unrighteous many. So the battle becomes inevitable. Then, under the call of duty to vindicate the righteousness of Arjuna's brother Dharmaputra, Arjuna is placed in the battlefield in his chariot with Lord Kṛṣṇa as his charioteer. At this moment Arjuna is overtaken by delusive sentimentalities and his sense of righteousness, stands blurred. Lord Kṛṣṇa in the crucial context has to deal the Divine Song to lift the disciple from the darkness of delusion caused by his ego-sense which in turn projects feelings in him of 'I' ness and 'my' ness and making him totally forget the omnipresent and all-pervading Reality which seemingly for-
gets ahead the phenomenal world of names and forms with its seeming destructions and constructions. The Gitā helps mankind to detect the lesser among the evils and thereby arrive at correct judgements in things and situations and proceed to action, to total surrender to the Lord without expectation of any fruit for the performer.

The story of Mahābhārata, as a whole, symbolises the conflict between good and evil. Then, Gitā is preached at a time of urgent demand for a broad-based technique of Right action for liberation. Thus Kṛṣṇa is made to expand and restate the Vedic truths in the language needed at the context at which the discourse commenced, the wider context of life in which he lived. As Arjuna could not understand how the path of renunciation stressed by the Lord could be reconciled with the part of action to which he had been placed at the battlefield, Kṛṣṇa classifies the path of Realization as two fold-one, the path of knowledge of the sārūkyans (Jñānayoga) and the path of action advocated by the Yogins. Kṛṣṇa prescribes the path of knowledge to the Meditative, and the path of action to the active. The path of action is not a path in itself but it is the
means to the successful ascension to the path of knowledge which is the direct path towards the goal of self perfection.

Of the Karmakāṇḍa, Bhaktikāṇḍa and Jhānakāṇḍa the first one establishes with impeccable logic the essence of the pure self indicated by the word Tvam of the Upaniṣadic saying Tattvamasi. All the first six chapters of the Gītā, therefore, ultimately deal with Tvam which is not different from Tat.

1. Prathamādhyāya

Unlike in the case of other adhyāyas Madhusudana does not name the first adhyāya in his Gitagūḍhārthadipikā. However, he has adjoined a long introduction to the work in the beginning of the first adhyāya.

The first chapter begins with a conversation between Dhrtarastra and his minister Sanjaya. Dhrtarastra asks Sanjaya what his sons and the sons of Pandu do in the Dharmakṣetra of Kurukṣetra. Then Sanjaya is describing the men assembled in the field of battle. At first Duryodhana estimates the most
important people, generals and forces of the army of the Pāṇḍavas. Next he asserts the importance of his own army. After that Sanjaya describes every thing including the soundings of the conchshells of the two armies.

Arjuna's Survey of the two Armies.

Having indicated the nervousness of the Kauravas, Sanjaya narrates the courage of the Pāṇḍavas. After a reconnaissance of the army of the Kauravas in position, and seeing that the battle is about to begin, Arjuna whose ensign bears the figure of monkey, takes up his bow and tells Hrsikesa Oh Acyuta please place the chariot in the middle of the two armies. Then the charioteer Acyuta did the same. Arjuna observes the army and gets a good view of those people spoiling for a fight. He gets an idea about the important persons with whom he will have to fight in the impending war. Arjuna overwhelmed on seeing his kinsmen in the battle field, speaks in grief. Being ignorant of the true nature of self, Arjuna falls an easy prey to grief and confusion. He says that victory in war has no utility even in present life and that he should desist
from this sin of fighting which will result in the destruction of kinsmen. Arjuna sits down upon the chariot seat and lets slip his bow and arrows, his mind being full of grief.

2. Sarvagītārthasūtraṇādhyāya

In the Gīgūdādurthadīpikā the second adhyāya, Sarvagītārtha sūtraṇādhyāya, deals with the points that a man should give up all attachment to karmas and their fruits and that the distinction between self, karma etc. is to be made.

The two armies representing the will of the people have marshalled themselves. Arjuna, fighting for the Principles of Dharma, has no right to think of his own personal honour or dishonour in the battle. Then Krsna refers to the doctrine of the indestructibility of the self, appeals to his sense of honour and martial traditions, reveals to him God’s Purpose and points out how action is to be undertaken in the world. The motive here is eradication of evil by chastisement of evil-doers and conquest of territory and amassing of wealth. He follows up by saying that their superiority is not just because of their age but because of their great spiritual attain-
Arjuna does not wish to live after killing these Kauravas who are raged against him. The successive questions indicate the fitness of Arjuna to pursue the way of wisdom. When he says that he sees no good in killing, his judgement of values, his knowledge of what is permanent and what is ephemeral is to be cleared by Kr̄ṣṇa.

**Distinction between the self and body.**

There is really no reason to feel sorry for the death of Arjuna himself or Bhismā or others. Yet Arjuna is lamenting that they may lose their lives through him. Of what use is victory or empire without them and so on? The Lord has already pointed out how his grief and compassion are unenlightened. Arjuna is speaking things which no intellectual should ever utter. He utters wise words but does not get the sense thereof. All this confusion flows from his mental perturbation. True great souls like Vasistā grieved over loss of friends. But once the true nature of self is realised by contemplation and reatiocination, there cannot be any grief, for the
bodies wrongly apprised as friends are not alive or dead. An intelligent person is not excited without material accessories of life. Where should he live or how would his survivors live in his absence? Their untruth is confirmed in subsequent empirical experience of duality. The uncaused self suffers from no negation. It does neither commence existence or cease to exit at any particular point of time. It is completely different from the transient body. This immutable self-assumption of another body is comparable to the morphological changes of the existing body due to childhood, youth and age. The destruction of the body should not depress a wise person.

The nervous system makes models of external objects, the organism comes in contact with. These mental moulds are produced and destroyed. It is the mind that apprehends heat or cold and pleasure or pain is merely the effect correlative of the experience. The infinite and imperishable self does not get such sensation. Self is immutable and without any attributes, and it cannot take on the characteristic of the ephemeral mind. Thus heat and cold are just instances representing all sensations producing all manner of emotional reactions,
relating to one's own body to other bodies and to unseen bodies. These pleasure and pain originating from union with or separation from the bodies and which are extremely momentary or mutable are essentially different from true self.

Purusa is that which lies in its entirety in bodily abode. To this Purusa pleasure and pain are the same, they being appearances without any characteristics of reality. Reality is immutable of self. Pleasure and pain are suggestive of countless mental moulds. The glory of the wise has been described by the 'Sruti as that which does not grow or decay by works. The modifications of mind are liable to increase and decrease and do not affect the wise. The sun gives light to all eyes, but is not itself. In the same way the minor essence of all beings is not affected by the sorrows of the world. Such a wise individual who knows this qualifies for immortality, liberation.

Real and Unreal.

The unreal has no being, there is no non-being of the real too. The truth about both these has been seen by the
knowers of the truth. The Lord says that the essence of the real and unreal has been discerned and determined by reflection and interpretation of the saying of srutis and smṛtis by the wise who, have realised Brahman. The wise have discovered the unexceptionable essence sat. Sruti says:- The pots and jars are unreal, mere names and colours, percepts and concepts their material, the clay alone is the real.

Real (Sat).

Reality which is pure consciousness is not limited by space, time or entity and so is imperishable. The sense-world is impermanent, limited and dense. It cannot reveal its existence, consciousness which is Reality, unitary and infinite. It imposes the light of Reality on the sense-world and thereby supports it as a ground. The next sloka reveals the theory of indurtructibility of self. The materialists hold that the characteristics of the self being embodiment, it cannot escape death since bodies are always liable to death. The self may be conscious revealing principle but must be mortal.
Self or Atman

To think that self kills or that it is killed is equally wrong. The self neither kills nor is killed. People who think that the self kills or is killed are not aware of the true nature of self. It is immutable and subject to no action either as actor or as an entity acted upon. Because of its immutability the self can be neither the subject nor object of discrimination. The scholars mention six varieties of mutations of all birth, existence, growth, change, decay and death. The self admits of none of these variations. It is not born and at no point of time was it non-existent. It is thus without birth and death, eternal.

He who knows this to be indestructible, eternal, unborn and inexhaustible can never conceive of killing it or being made to kill it. In the present context the Lord advises him to fight but the arguments are applicable to all work. Then the Lord reveals that the self is immutable. Just as in this world, a man casts off the clothes that have been worn-out and put on other which are new, in the same manner, the man embodied self abandons old bodies, and without undergoing any change enters others which are new. The intention is
clear from the word new. The ancient view that this emphasises immutability of self is very clear. The embodied self is not cut by the weapons as he has no parts. So fire does not burn him into ashes. Neither does water wet Him, for the power of water, lies in disjoining the parts of the thing, which is made up of parts, by wetting it, and this cannot take place in the partless self. wind cannot dry up the self. The self is eternal, all pervading, stable, immovable and ancient. A truth that is thus eternal, homogenous and all pervading must necessarily be stable because it has no change. Therefore, Krsna advises Arjuna not to grieve over such an unavoidable thing. Beings such as sons and friends are mere combination of material elements. And having come into existence their middle state previous to death is perceived. He has come from non-perception and is going back to non-perception.

The material cause of this world is that unmanifest spirit, conditioned by Avidya. The universe is materialised spirit. It follows that matter will dissolve in spirit. But the self cannot be killed. Therefore, Krsna advises Arjuna not to grieve regarding any creature whether it be Bhisma or any body else.
Duty of Kṣatriya.

Lord Kṛṣṇa has rightly pointed out that fighting is the best rite for a Kṣatriya. He points out that fighting is Kṣatriya's duty. But Arjuna's feeling that no good is to be gained by killing kinsmen in the battle is hereby refuted. The Lord says that the rite of fighting gives a direct access to heaven. If Arjuna desists from war he will be covered with shame. He says that if he kills his superiors in war it will come for criticism by neutrals. If he desists from it he will be abused by enemies. So the Lord says to Arjuna that fighting benefits irrespective of victory or defeat.

Principles of Karmayoga.

In the previous verse Arjuna is taught about the principle of Reality of the ultimate self. Knowledge of this principle removes all evil, everything that is undesirable. It is quite possible that inspite of this teaching, Arjuna may not have attained that sublime high state of consciousness owing to his mental deficiency. In such an event he must adopt Karmayoga in order to eliminate that deficiency and to realise self. This practice is characterised by dispassion, a spirit of
renunciation or non attachment to results of Karma.

Arjuna is engaged in works over which he has control, he must never have the sense that the fruits of such actions over which he has no control are to be enjoyed by him. As Arjuna will perform works free from desires, he will not be the cause of the fruits of his works. The works apply to devotion with equanimity. By implication Arjuna is being characterised as inefficient. Even unconscious works are able to eliminate the defective individuals of their class. Arjuna, inspite of being conscious, refrains from destroying the bad elements of his kind. Alternatively disinterested works chasten the mind and enable the doer to realise self and thus make him transcend virtue and vice. Thus, Karmayoga is the technique of liberation.

Men of wisdom possessing evenness of mind, cast off the fruit of works, they escape from good and bad births. Then they attain knowledge. Arjuna has prayed for instructions as to the preferable course of conduct. The Lord advises him to do his duty in a spirit of disinterestedness. The wisdom
contained in Vedantic sayings like Tattvamasi will then dawn on him. This work is Yoga. And it is being equanimous in success and failure. Success (Siddhi) consists in the attainment of knowledge as the result of the equanimous mind.

Non-attached works are the means to self-realization while desire-oriented works lead to the cycle of worldly life. One should take resort to self-knowledge for protection against all obstacles, as it is only this that removes all evil. Those are busy themselves in mundane works become poor slaves to the clock work cycle of life and death. The Bhadāranyaka Upanishad says that he who leaves this world without acquiring the knowledge of the immutable will be tied up with this cycle. So Arjuna should avoid such poverty of spirit by adopting the means of non-attached works.

The man who has evenness of mind casts off in this world both merit and sin through attaining mental purity, will destroy the illusion and all its effects and thus place him in the state of eternal bliss. This is the highest end of man, the attainment of Godhood.
When mind, distraught by the constant dinnings of the Karmakāṇḍa on the numerousness of works and the multiplicity of their fruits, stabilises in ultimate Reality, then he will have the awareness of self. This is the ultimate fruit of all Yogas. It is produced by imparting instruction on the Mahāvākyas like Tattvamasi.

Sthitaprajña

Arjuna asks Kṛṣṇa how can sthitaprajña a person of steady wisdom absorbed in meditation, be identified? When not in tune with the infinite, how does he converse, discipline his body and senses and conduct himself?

The Lord answers the four questions till the end of the Second chapter.

When a man completely abandons all the various desires that enter his heart and is satisfied with the true innermost self in himself, then he realizes the supreme Truth. Then he is said to be a wise man, one whose knowledge arises from the discrimination of the self. He who has abandoned all desires connected with progeny, possessions and the world.
who has renounced all works, who delights in the self and plays with the self he is a man whose knowledge is steady.

The sage has no attachment even for the life of the body. He does not exult in pleasure, nor is he averse to the pain that may fall on him. When he is thus free from delight and distress, his knowledge arising from dissemination becomes steady. When he completely withdraws the sense from sense-objects as the tortoise does its limbs from all sides his knowledge or Prajñā is steady.

The senses are dangerous. They agitate the mind of the man who is inclined to sensuous objects. Having thus agitated the mind, they carry it away by force, while the man is wide awake and though the mind is possessed of discriminate knowledge. Therefore, one should bring the senses under control and sit calm and intent on, Vasudeva, the innermost self of all i.e. he should sit thinking that he himself is none other than He. The knowledge of that devotee is steady who, thus seated, has by practice brought the senses under his control.
On the attainment of peace, there is an end of all the devotee's miseries such as those pertaining to the body and the mind. For, the reason of the poor minded man soon becomes steady. It remains fast, in the form of the self.

To the unsteady man who cannot fix the mind in contemplation, there can be no wisdom, no knowledge of the true nature of the self. To the unsteady, there can be no meditation, no intense devotion to self-knowledge. So to him who is not devoted to self-knowledge there can be no peace, no tranquility. Therefore, one's knowledge is steady whose senses have been entirely restrained from sense-objects.

To all beings the Supreme Reality is night. Night is by nature tāmasic, and it causes confusion of things. The Reality is accessible only to a man of steady knowledge. Just as what is day to others becomes night to night-wanderers, so to all beings who are ignorant and who correspond to the night-wanderers, the Supreme Reality is dark, is like night, for it is not accessible to those whose minds are not in it. With reference to that Supreme Reality, the self-restrained yogin
who has shaken off passions and subdued the senses, and who has shaken off the sleep of Avidyā, is fully awake. When all beings who in reality sleep in the night of ignorance, imbued with the distinct notions of perceiver and things perceived, are as it were mere dreamers in sleep at night, that state is night in the eyes of the sage who knows the Supreme Reality, for it is nescience itself.

The person of steadied mind checks the flux. Though the water of the rivers and rains from the clouds continue to fill it up, the sea never transgresses its limits. It remains steady like a rock. Similarly, the sensations, so much striven for by the vulgar, flow into the minds of the liberated as inescapable fulfillment of their destiny. But they stay unmoved like the sea. The person buffeted about by Avidyāic experience is distraught by works and their results and drowns himself in the sea of sorrows. The fruit of wisdom is renunciation, which switches off distractions and brings about embodied liberation. A wise man's sensibility continues to function but leaves no traces. This continuance of sensibility is due to the unhurting of destiny and is unrelated to his essential self.
Who has no attachment even for bare necessities of life, who regards not as his even those things which are needed for the mere bodily existence, who is not vain of his knowledge, such a man is of steady knowledge. That man who knows Brahman, in short, becomes the very Brahman. This is the Brahmic state attaining to which none is deluded. Remaining in this state even at the last period of life, one attains to the felicity of Brahman. The chapter is being concluded by mentioning the fruit of Karmayoga and thus extolling that discipline.


This chapter mainly deals with the way of karma. Krsna's eulogy of the spiritual exercise directed by the soul (buddhiyoga) and his apparent disparagement of action naturally lead Arjuna to ask Him why He urges him to commit a violent deed. Krsna explains that it is, in fact, quite impossible to live at all without acting and that all action should be regarded as a sacrifice. Then comes a digression on the institution and utility of sacrifice and the origin of the whole world process.
Again Krsna bids Arjuna to act but without attachment just as He Himself as God Almighty does. In this he should set an example to others just as He Himself does.\textsuperscript{33} Everyone acts in accordance with his own nature, and since one's nature corresponds to the caste into which one is born, one should rigorously perform the duties appropriate to one's own caste.\textsuperscript{34}

To Arjuna's question why men do evil against their will, Krsna replies that it is due to desire and anger, like brigands on the road. The chapter ends with an exhortation to know the self which is yet higher than the soul. Only thus one can conquer his arch enemy, desire.

Madhusudana sarasvati concludes the chapter with a verse:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Upāyah karma niṣṭhātra prādhanyenopasamhṛtā,}

\textit{Upeya jñānanisthā tu tadgunattvena kārtیā.}\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}
4. **Brahmārpaṇayogādhyāya**.

In this *adhyāya* Madhusudana points out the Lord’s Divinity and insists on human devotion to and belief in Him. The importance of dedicated and disinterested *karma* as a means to supreme knowledge, for the unenlightened, has also been stressed.

At first, the Lord reveals to Arjuna that he taught the technique of the *karmayoga* through the immortal Vedas to Vivasvan, who in turn, imparted the same to Manu, the ancient law-giver, who again taught it to Ikṣvaku, the ancestor of the solar dynasty that ruled over Ayodhya for a long period of time.

Arjuna asks Kṛṣṇa about the different births of beings. Then Kṛṣṇa reveals to the utter dismay and disillusionment of Arjuna the fact that both had many births in the past and the present birth is a continuation of previous lives one had before. And now Kṛṣṇa speaks of his omniscience. Just as in common experience the sun seems to rise and set everyday but actually he has not that diurnal motion, so does the Lord
appear to assume numerous bodies in sport, purely out of pleasure and not out of the impulsion of Karma, as in the case of common men like Arjuna. The Lord knows everything about his previous births as well as those of others.

Though he is unborn, though by nature his power of vision is indecaying, though he is by nature the Lord of all creatures from Brahma down to grass, yet, ruled over by nature he appears in this world in material forms. The māyā of Visnu which is made up of the three guṇas—which deludes the whole world knows not Vasudeva, its own self. The Lord appears through his own māyā but not in reality, unlike others.

The purpose of the Lord's birth.

When practice of virtue is on the decline and vice prevails, the Lord appears in a body. This will make one believe that He is a created being. Vice is nothing but unbridled indulgence in prohibited works and it brings in its train of infinite misery. 36 In his love for humanity He comes to earth to administer a corrective. The address Bharata hints at Arjuna's love of wisdom. Also growth of vice causes untold suffering
to the righteous, the people who follow the scriptural way. The wicked, the pervertors of humanity are destroyed. In the process, the true way is firmly established. 37

The people know God's real nature of homogeneous concentration of unique truth, consciousness and bliss and realise that the birthless is shamming birth for the weal of the world. As they see Truth they are freed from rebirth and achieve God, integrate with Reality that is Vasudeva the God.

The Lord proceeds to indicate that seekers attain liberation from their own merit and not from preference of the Lord for some of them in comparison to others. The Lord proclaims that He rewards the seekers in whatever way they approach Him. He lends His power to all and in whatever form they seek, in that from He serves. The Lord, the unmanifest eternal life-force fulfills all desires of the seekers according to the type of their invocations.

They who long after success in actions sacrifice to the Gods, such as Indra and Agni. The Sruti says that he who, on the otherhand, worships a separate God, thinking He is
The fruit of action reaped in this world of men by those who, with selfish ends in view, sacrifice to external gods, performing the works enjoined on them according to their caste and order, it is for this world of men that Vedic injunctions are meant. By the expression so on in this world of men the Lord implies that even in other worlds actions produce results.

The four castes have been created by Īśvara, according to the distribution of guṇas and of actions. The actions of Brāhmaṇa, in whom sattva predominates, are serenity, self-restraint etc. The actions of Kṣatriya, in whom rajas predominates and sattva is subordinate to rajas, are heroism, display of energy etc. The actions of a Vaisya, in whom rajas predominates and tamas is subordinate to rajas, are agriculture etc. The action of a sudra in whom tamas predominate to rajas is only servitude. These are the four castes. This fourfold caste exists in this world.
The Lord proclaims that actions do not taint Him nor has He any anxiety for the fruits of actions. Desire can taint only an ego which is the self functioning through a given mind and intellect. This realization is knowledge. This knowledge liberates individual karma. This liberation enables him transcend caste distinctions.

The great king Yayati, Yadu and others attained salvation by working in this egoless spirit. So Arjuna must do his duty and emulate the great. This is the eternal law followed by the great in all epochs and in all ages.

**Action and inaction.**

The Lord wishes to instruct Arjuna about the correct discernment of quality of *karma*. The theory of *karma* He reveals is the most profound and difficult to grasp. One has to know about right actions, wrong actions and inaction. The really intelligent, the really disciplined person is he who sees no execution in execution and execution in non-execution. He performs all works with impunity.\(^{40}\)

One whose works are all free from desires and pur-
poses, whose actions, good and bad are consumed in the fire of wisdom which consists in the realization of inaction he is the wise who knows Brahman and he is called a real sage or Pāṇḍita. Such a person is liberated alive. He is Jīvanmukta. In his non-integrated state he may be engaged in religious or secular works and may even be doing them with meticulous care, but in his own judgement he is inactive, knowing for sure that the self does nothing. His sense of duality of other-ness has been eliminated. He, from whom all desires have departed, by whom the mind and the body have been controlled, by whom all property has been disowned, who does mere bodily action and who is without attachment even for that action, who incurs no sin which will produce evil effects, who seeks liberation in as much as it causes bondage, is liberated from both dharma and adharma or is liberated from saṁsāra.

The man who has realized Brahman sees that the instrument by which the oblation is poured in the fire is nothing but Brahman, that it has no existence apart from that of the self. The action performed by him who wishes to set an example to the world is in reality no action as it has been
destroyed by the realization of Brahman in action.

Some yogins, devotees to action, perform only sacrificial rites in devotion to the Gods. While others who know Brahman, the Absolute, sacrifice the self by the self in the fire of Brahman. The oblation in this latter sacrifice is yajña, the self, for yajña is enumerated among the terms synonymous with Ātman who is reality, Brahman, but who is conditioned by the upādhis with all their attributes super-imposed upon Him. This oblation of the self poured by the self into Brahman as described is the real, consciousness, the infinite. 41 Brahman is consciousness, bliss. 42 Brahman is immediately cognised by all, and is the inner-most self of all. 43

Some yogins sacrifice their senses in the fires of restraint (samyama). The plural fires is used because the restraint differs with each sense. They are ever engrossed in restraining their senses, while others sacrifice the objects of senses in the fires of the several senses. They regard it as a sacrifice to direct their senses only to the unforsidden objects of senses. All the activities in the sense-organs and the organs
of action, are offered into the knowledge kindled by the fire of right understanding and is called the yoga of self-restraint. The functions of the senses and of the vital air are completely dissolved while the yogin concentrates the mind on the self.

This chapter deals with various sacrifices. They have their origin in the I. But they all stem from actions either vocal, physical or mental. They are all subject to the cosmic force to human karma.

Wisdom-sacrifice is superior to the sacrifice performed with material objects. Ultimate wisdom, in which terminate the fruits of all works can only be acquired through a guru. The prospective disciple should prostrate himself before him and ask him questions as to the true nature of the individual, the cause of the bondage, the means to redemption and other allied matters. He must also render to the guru obedient service. Then, the teacher would teach and generate wisdom relating to the ultimate Reality and effect salvation. He must both be a sage and a philosopher.

With the realization of wisdom all diversity will van-
ish and illusion will blow off. In reality, there is completely identity between Thou and That which is Lord Krsna himself. He is the unified support and content of the cosmic manifestation. The multiplicity is a foist on that one ground as it has no independent reality apart from the ground. Let Arjuna realise his identity with the Lord and all his ignorance would disappear.

This world with its content of virtue and vice is like an uncharted ocean difficult to cross. The ship of wisdom is the only craft which can take one safely to the other side. There will be no return voyage. The ocean of existence represents the fruits of all works, good or bad. To an aspirant of liberation even virtue is injurious, for, it also ties one up to the cosmic process.

One who sees the supreme Being renounces all actions of dharma and adharm by virtue of yoga or knowledge of the Supreme Being. He attains this stage when his doubt has been cleared as under by the realization of the oneness of the self with Isvara. Doubt is the most sinful. It is born of
ignorance and lies in the buddhi. Kill it by wisdom, by right knowledge of the self. The word Ātman means the self. Arjuna’s doubt, here, is about the self. Arjuna has been asked to kill the doubt concerning the self. It implies also that the doubt is one cherished by Arjuna.

Madhusudana concludes this chapter with the following verse:

Svasyānishattva bādhena bhakti’sraddhe dṛṣṭikṛte
dhitetuh karmanisthā ca harihahop saṁhṛtā.

5. Svarūpaparijñānādhyāya.

The two previous chapters defined the principles of karma and wisdom. In this and the following chapter will be discussed the comparative efficacy of karma and of renunciation.

Arjuna asks the Lord with a view to know which one of them karmayoga or sannyāsa is better for a man who has no knowledge. Then, Krsna replies that both renunciation
and action lead to the highest good. But works are surely to be preferred to renunciation. Works and renunciation are conflicting and he who is engaged in works can hardly be called a sannyāsin. The Lord clears up this doubt by explaining that works and their renunciation are the exoteric and esoteric means to the same end of self realization. 

The Blissful life of a sage.

The man who is with full control of his senses and a mental renunciation of works, lives in this body with nine doors, in perfect ease. He does nothing nor causes anything to be done. The indwelling spirit, the master, does not create physical works, or their agency or their fruition. The principle that is responsible for all efforts is unconscious matter. The sages whose intellect has that as its content, who are conscious of their essential identity with Reality, who are established, and whose only goal is Reality, are not reborn; for, all their virtues and vices are eradicated by True knowledge. He who has realised Brahman, who is established in Brahman, suffers from no illusion attains to steadfastness of mind. He is neither elated by pleasure nor depressed by pain. And one whose
mind is not influenced by sensations of the external world, remains at peace, is happy with itself and is united with Reality, enjoys imperishable bliss. He who seeks delight in self, is enamoured of self, visualises self, becomes integrated with Reality is the real yogin who merges in Brahman.

The path of Nirvāṇa

The sages merge in Brahman and live only for the welfare of all beings, their sins are dissolved by the righteous acts, their doubts are dispelled, their minds are one-pointedly pinned to Reality. The hermits, who have shed craving and anger, who have their minds under control and have realised the self, merge themselves in Brahman, in life as well as death. The philosopher-sage drives away all sensations, with eyes riveted between the eyebrows and breath held in his nostrils, his mind, senses and intellect come under control, under restraint, and so he is bereft of love, hate, fear or anger. His one and ultimate goal is liberation. Such a man lives free from bondage. Also he attains peace, realising the Lord as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and penances, the supreme Lord of all the worlds and the selfless friend of all beings.
Madhusudana ends this chapter with the following verse:

Aneka sādhanābhyāsa niśpannam Harīna-ritam.
sva sva rūpasārūjaṁ sarvesāṁ mukti Sādhanam.

6. Adhyatmayogādhyāya.

In this chapter Madhusudana reveals a further elaboration of the previous one. Theory and practice, renunciation and active life are not mutually exclusive, they complement each other, and the first is the culmination of the second.

The Lord says that there is no difference between Sannyāsa and yoga. Karma is described as the means for a sage seeking yoga. When one does not feel attracted to sense-objects or to actions, renounces the will to enjoy or the work and is free from expectations, he is said to have ascended the state of yoga. He who has control over his mind and senses attains a mental quietness, he is in union with self inspite of distractions from heat or cold, pleasure or pain, honour or insult. He who is satisfied with knowledge and wisdom following there from or remains unperturbed, has his senses under full control and makes no difference between dust or
stone or gold, is a real yogin, the integrated individual. The best yogin is he who makes no difference amongst friends, comrades, foes, neutrals, appeasers, mischief-makers, well wishers, the virtuous and the vicious.

Practice of yoga.

The Lord proceeds to prescribe for him who practises yoga the particular modes. A yogin should be prepared for the āsana in a normally clean and level place. The seat should be firmly fixed and on no account mobile. On a kuśa mat should be placed a tiger's or deer's skin covered with a soft piece of cloth or silk. Seated on such āsana one should concentrate one's thoughts on a single idea, restrain mind and senses, and stay merged in that one thought. This is necessary for purification and sublimitation of mind. The Lord's intention here is to show the excellence of continued and ceaseless practice of meditation.

From a mystical point in the central canal at the bottom of the spinal cord to the top of the head, the body should be kept straight and firm. The eyes must not be closed completely forth as it would facilitate sleep nor should they be
kept wide open to avoid excitement from distracting sensations. They should be kept half closed and glued to the tip of the nose. For perception of other objects will disturb yoga. In such a posture the yogin should take his seat on his Āsana. Such yogin’s mind would be completely free from the vagaries of love, hate and fear. His mind will be tranquil and serene. He should take the order of the self-disciplined Brahmācārin and conduct himself like one, by serving the guru and eating what he gets through charity. The mind will have no empirical mould. It will be impregnant with pure spirit. It will flow in a stream of thought appertaining to the Lord alone. Because he is the supreme bliss, he is the highest end of man.

Such a yogin, with his mind under control practises uninterrupted unitive contemplation. The serenity of mind thus attained consummates in liberation and he attains to supreme Reality. The yogin should eat neither more nor less than what is suitable for him. Or it may mean this yoga is not possible for him who eats more than the quantity prescribed for a yogin in the yogāsāstra.

Now, the Lord speaks of the disciplines that help. To
him who resorts food and recreation within prescribed limits, and who sleeps and who wakes up at the prescribed hours, to him accrues yoga which is destructive of the misery of Saìnsāra.

When owing to an extreme indifference to the sense-world, the mind is under full control and devoid of all moulds and free from the pollution of rajas and tamas, it is constituted of pure Sattva, and is known as the subtle inner organ in its pure state. In this state, it lies merged, integrated in the immediate and inmost essence, the self. Although defunct, it cannot help reflecting that self revealing truth. All non-essential sensations are subdued by the dominating spirit. The mind there stays firmly merged and still in Truth.

The mind of yogin, with drawn from senses, united with the supreme, can be compared to a lamp in a windless room, having no blicker. When the mind is restrained from all quarters by the practice of yoga, the yogin sees the self-supreme. When seeing the self by the self who has been purified by samādhi he attains satisfaction in the self. The vision of Reality is produced by the authoritative śrutis of Vedānta. In this state the yogin is steeped in ultimate bliss, which tran-
scends senses and is apprehended by mind in its purity. Having attained to this state and fixed in it one does not deviate from this ultimate principle.

One whose mind sheds all forms of existence becomes an expression of the supreme delight of Being. Once this state is acquired by ceaseless practice, it makes all other acquisitions pale into insignificant worthlessness.

Severance from union with pain is called yoga by a set of irony. Having thus concluded speaking of the effect of yoga, the Lord again refers to the necessity of it, with a view to show that determination and non-depression are the necessary means to yoga.⁶⁹

Directions for the practice.

Cravings are caused by the wish to secure objects under the illusion of their pleasurable nature. These should be forsaken completely, without the least trace. The senses must be restrained from running after their objects totally.⁵⁰ One who fixes his thoughts on the supreme Essence, holding his intellect firmly to it, with perseverance, escapes from thinking, and slowly withdraws from the sense-world.
One who makes the mind constantly abide in the self, bearing in mind that the self is all and that nothing else exists practices the exact yoga. This is the highest form of yoga. The mind should be pulled away from all objects that generate destruction or dissolution. It should then be submitted to self, the Resplendent principle of Delight. All other functions should be eliminated. The 'Smritis say that when the five sense-organs along with mind stay out, the intellect does not function, it is the supreme state. This stilling of the senses is called yoga.

The effect of Dhyānayoga.

The practice of yoga as indicated previously, fixes the mind on self. The mind becomes functionless and so tranquil. It has no content barring its weird indispositions. The yogin is really in a state of mindlessness. The two pre-conditions of this mindless state are:- (a) the elimination of Rajas, the force of destruction and (b) the elimination of Tamas, the force of dissolution. Alternatively, it may be held that with the cutting off the mind, the yogin becomes devoid of virtue or vice, the cause of the cycle of existence. His works become
qualitatively neutral. He becomes convinced, that everything is nothing but the Absolute and thus himself becomes integrated and identified with Reality. He becomes liberated in life and attains to infinite bliss. Thus with a ceaseless concentration of mind and renunciation of virtue or vice, the yogin enjoys infinite bliss.

The seer, whose mind remains unruffled in the state of yoga sees self in the universe and the universe in self. Everything, everywhere, is clearly visible to him, to him there is no diversity or he sees that the self and Brahman are one. Through this mindless concentration emerges the vision of the pure Essence, the principle which is denoted by the words Tvam and Tat. The upanisadic saying Tat Tvam asi equates the two. Sankara and his followers hold the upanisadic view, that the experienced world is illusory. In their view when the knowledge of the support of all experience is confirmed, the mind and other experienced objects. Which are illusorily posited on that support, are eliminated from cognition as illusory foists. This easily produces the so-called mindlessness, makes the mind defunct. Therefore, these vedantists made ultimate
wisdom, the knowledge of \textit{Brahman} independent of yoga.

He who sees the Lord, the self of all, in all beings, and who sees \textit{Brahman}, the creator, and all other beings in the self of all, he has seen the unity of the self. The self of all beings never leave his presence, nor does that wise man leave Vasudeva's presence.

He who realizes the Lord, as the support of this Universe and identifies himself with Him, remains in Him, freed from the trammels of sense-experience, quite irrespective of his conduct in the world of experience.

Having thus explained the words \textit{Tat} and \textit{Tvam} in their purity, the Lord now says how these two words denote essentially one entity. Kr\textsc{s}na is the ground and substratum of all existence and is the content of all. \textit{Tvam} and \textit{Tat} are one with him in Essence without any difference in kind.

He who sees that what ever is pleasant to him is pleasant to all creatures, and that whatever is painful to himself is painful to all beings is one who has realised the truth. The Lord says that the mind is restless and uncontrollable. But even so a person who self-control can with practice and renun-
cation achieve mindlessness. Indifference means freedom from desire for any pleasure seen or unseen, attained through a constant perception of evil in them. It is by practice and indifference that vikṣepa the passage of thought in the direction of external objects, can be restrained. A person with unbridled mind, will never be able to switch off mind, in spite of his having attained wisdom. He has no practice and renunciation. On the contrary he exhibits a keenness to prattle about Vedānta and defiles his mind by indolence and other faults. There is no objection to ascribing this psychic state to the deed of the past lives to the destiny in other world. People engage in works on the off chance of a favorable Destiny.

This is a completely disturbed view of the Law of Karma. Karma is not fate. Arjuna thought that such a man would meet destruction. He has faith in the efficacy of yoga but does not strive in the path of yoga, and during the last moments of life his mind wanders away from yoga with memory lost. Having failed to attain the fruition of yoga namely right knowledge-what end does such a man meet? Having failed in both the path of karma and the path of yoga? Does he
not perish like riven clouds, without support in utter confusion over the way of Truth? He prays to the Lord to eradicate this doubt by extracting its root viz. vice and other faults. No God or sage is capable of doing this. For, he is the supreme Lord, Omniscient, the Author of all scriptures, the greatest preceptor and all merciful.

The Lord said that the person who follows the scriptures does not come to grief either in this world or in the next. So the yogin does not perish. Never does a person engaged in doing good, fall into any nether regions. Having attained to the world of the righteous and having dwelt, therefore, eternal years, he who failed in yoga is reborn in a house of pure and wealthy, in the family of the Righteous-those who worship by the Aśvamedha. Or else he is born in quite a different family that of poor wise yogins. A birth in a family of this sort, in a family of poor yogins, is more difficult to obtain than the one mentioned above. In both types of embodiment, the knowledge acquired in past life subsists and the yogin advances to consummation from the renewed effort.

The man who fails in yoga is born on towards per-
fection by the force of the practice in the former birth. A sannyāsin who has failed in yoga who works in the path of yoga, only wishing to know its nature, even he will free himself from the world of Bhrāma, from the effects of the observance of Vedic karma. In the course of many births, he acquires facility in yoga little by little and by the aggregate facility thus acquired in many births he is perfected. Then, he obtains right knowledge and reaches the Supreme goal.

This chapter is concluded with a description of the highest yogin of all yogins, the highest is he who concentrates on Lord Vasudeva. He is engaged in ceaseless thought on the Lord, the Narayana, the God of Gods, forsaking all doubts and conflicts. It makes no difference. He is the Lord’s devotee, the highest yogin.

The karmacānda or the first part of the Gitāgūḍhārthadīpīka deals with the importance of dedicate and disinterested karmayoga as the cause of chastening of the mind. All the six chapters of the first kānda have been ably interpreted by Madhusudana following the footsteps of his great master Srisankara whose commentary actually facilitated Madhusudana to achieve his aim.
NOTES AND REFERENCES


2. Ibid., II.47 to 57, V 2 to 13, XVIII.2-12.

3. Ibid. VII.1, 17, 18, IX.13, 14, X.10.

4. Ibid. 29, VIII 1.


8. Ibid. p. 5

9. One of the Vedic statements of the Śāmaveda.

10. B.G. I-4-6.

11. Ibid. 7-9.

12. Ibid. 14-18.


14. Ibid. 28-46

15. असोयानवासोक्तवाल्प्राज्ञावादायन्तिस्कीब्धितासे.

   गतासुनागतासुनिःश्च नानुसोकांति पादिताः

16. Verse 11 to 38 deal the wisdom of the Śāṅkhya philosophy.
18. Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya schools also hold the same view.


20. Na jāyate mriyate vā kadācit
nayam bhūtvābhavitā vā na bhūyah
Ajo nityah 'sāśvato'yam purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne 'sarīre, B. G.II, 22

21. Ibid. 22.

22. Ibid. 23.

23. Acchedyoyam adahyoyam akletvo'soṣya evaca,
nityaḥ sarvagataḥ sthānur acaloyain sanātanaḥ


26. Kārmaṇyevādhiśrastemāphaleṣukadācana
mākarmaphalahaṭurbhūṁmāţesangostvakarmanī.

27. The knowledge of the Absolute Reality.

28. Evenness of mind in success and failure is called yoga.


30. Ibid. 55-72.

31. Ibid. 3-9.

32. Ibid. 10-16.

33. Ibid. 19-26.

34. Ibid. 27-35.

35. HariharaKrpaLu Dvedi, M.M.,
Srīmad Bhagavadgītā with the Gūḍhārthadīpikā
Commentary of Madhusudanarasasvati,
Culcutta, p. 420.
36. YadāyadāḥidharmasyaglānirbhavatīBhārata
   Abhyuddhānāmadharmasyatadātmānamāṁsrjāṁyakaham.
   Ibid. 7

37. Ibid. 8


40. Gupta, S.K., Madhusudanasaraswati on B.G.,
    Delhi, 1977, p. 84.

41. Tait. up. 2-1.

42. Brh. up. 5-9-28.

43. Brh. up. 3-2-1.

44. Ātma samyama yoga.

46. Seven on the top of the body—two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and one mouth, two expelling organs at bottom.


48. B.G.Vi, 18.

49. Ibid.

50. The steadiness of mind is intended.

51. Cha.up. VI, 8, 7.